



# **2019 National Black Members' Conference**

## **Preliminary Agenda**

**18 – 20 January 2019**

**Venue Cymru, Llandudno**

# **2019 Black Members Conference**

## **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

**Venue Cymru**

**18 January 2019 to 20 January 2019**

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### **Organising and Recruitment**

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Recruitment & Organisation

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#### **1. Access to immigration advice and representation to recruit and organise new members**

All Health Trusts in our region have recruited new nurses from the Philippines. Our activists have been working hard to try and recruit them and include them in UNISON.

One of the most useful tools to attract migrant workers has been our immigration advice clinic.

On top of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) helpline accessible through UNISON direct, we have a monthly face to face clinic with a solicitor. This has been a fantastic resource that has allowed us not only to recruit new members, but also have relevant up-to-date advice to organise around immigration issues. This is particularly relevant in the context of Brexit and of the hostile environment.

However, organising around immigration issues requires being able to follow through when someone needs support. At present when immigration and employment collide, we are left with advice only when we also need representation.

Once again, Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to use their influence with all UNISON structures to give access to a more comprehensive immigration advice and representation service to its members and to continue to lead on campaigns against an increasingly hostile immigration environment to give us the tools to properly recruit and organise Black migrant workers

### ***UNISON Northern Ireland***

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#### **2. Young Black members and recruitment**

UNISON has about 63,000 young members and of these there are approximately 5,000 Black members.

There is a noticeable and worrying shortage of young Black members and activists in UNISON. More needs to be done to recruit young Black members and to encourage them to become involved at all levels of the union.

Young Black members are often dealing with discrimination and racism in their workplace and can sometimes be isolated as a consequence of these issues. It is therefore, imperative that we do all that we can to recruit and support young Black members to ensure that their voice is heard and to increase representation within our structures.

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Role models within our communities can be a useful resource in recruiting young Black members by mentoring them. Black men and women who have established themselves within UNISON and can offer support, encouragement and guidance to young Black members.

We recognise the importance of training and are aware that young Black members are not always informed of the training available to them within UNISON. This needs to be addressed as part of our overarching strategy of recruiting young Black members.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the National Young Members Forum to devise strategies for recruiting young Black members and consider ways of promoting the training available to young Black members;
- 2) Encourage regional and branch Black members and Young member's forum to have the recruitment of young Black members on their agenda and work programmes;
- 3) Consider introducing a recruitment award for branches or regions that run successful recruitment campaigns of young Black members;
- 4) Select a young Black member as a speaker at Black member's conference 2020.
- 5) Run a workshop on recruiting young Black members at 2020 Black member's conference.
- 6) Discuss a mentoring programme to be developed at branch and regional level to target young Black members.
- 7) Work with communications and the Young member's forum to devise new recruitment material aimed at young Black members.

#### ***National Black Members' Committee***

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### **3. Black Members Mentoring Scheme – young Black members to be paired with more experienced activists**

UNISON has about 63,000 young members, of whom approximately 8% are Black members.

However, there is a noticeable and worrying shortage of young Black members and activists in UNISON. More needs to be done to recruit young Black members and to encourage them to become involved at all levels of the union.

Young Black members are often dealing with discrimination and racism in their workplace and can sometimes be isolated as a consequence of these issues. It is therefore, imperative that we do all that we can to recruit and support young Black members to ensure that their voice is heard and to increase representation within our structures.

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Role models within our communities can be a useful resource in recruiting young Black members by mentoring them. Black men and women who have established themselves within UNISON and can offer support, encouragement and guidance to young Black members.

This can be achieved through a mentoring scheme aiding new members in becoming more active starting at branch and regional level. Giving young members a list of reliable contacts that they can use will aid in getting more active. It will also help bridge any gaps in communication as each member can be assigned to a specific mentor informing them of how the union works, training opportunities etc. giving them confidence to become activists.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the National Young Members Forum to devise strategies for recruiting young Black members and consider ways of promoting the training available to young Black members;
- 2) Encourage regional and branch Black members and the young member's forum to have the recruitment of young Black members on their agenda and work programmes;
- 3) Consider introducing a recruitment award for branches or regions that run successful recruitment campaigns of young Black members;
- 4) Select a young Black member as a guest speaker at Black member's conference 2020;
- 5) Discuss a mentoring programme to be developed at branch and regional level to target young Black members;
- 6) Have a sign up register for experienced activists to become part of a mentoring scheme to help young black members get more involved.

### ***National Young Members' Forum***

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#### **4. Racism and the fight against fascism – a Trade union issue for Black members**

UNISON has always been at the forefront of this work in the trade union movement and much good work continues to take place. However, more Black activists need to take part and more needs to be done.

The continued rise in the levels of racism and the growth of fascist organisation across the UK demands a refreshed approach by anti racist and anti fascist organisers.

Conference, UNISON continues to raise awareness of the damaging effect on our public services of targeting migrant workers. The intolerant attitudes that scapegoat the most vulnerable members of society should be challenged all year round, not just at election time.

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Racist myths and lies divide our communities and our workplaces and prevent us from organising together. Racist lies can provide the fertile ground and encouragement as we have seen in the media for violent right wing extremism.

The approach outlined here does not cut across the policy work carried out elsewhere in the union but is collaboration between the Strategic Organising Unit, Learning and Organising Services and the National Black Members Committee. This is essentially blending learning and organising approaches with the leadership of Black members in the fight against racism and fascism by the whole union will be essential as we enter Brexit.

Conference, it is the responsibility of the National Black Members Committee to drive the agenda on behalf of Black members to guide and support the objectives of the NEC in the future planning of Black self-organisation in UNISON.

Conference therefore seeks that the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) Indicate the level of participation in the Challenging Racism in the Workplace training that is whether the training was aimed at Lay members, Representatives, or Branch Officers or all of the above to look at creating a hub of mentors for Black members to access support, advice and guidance;
- 2) Look at appropriate resources to challenge far-right groups and highlight UNISON effective work in this area;
- 3) Addressing the issues of the lack of opportunity and promotion in the workplace, mapping and recruiting Black members and setting up Black members Self-Organised groups as one of a number of crucial development strategy and implementation for the future survival of Black members in UNISON.

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#### **National Black Members' Committee**

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#### **Negotiating and Bargaining**

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##### **Negotiation and Bargaining**

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##### **5. Breaking the barriers: Black women in senior positions in the workplace**

Conference believes that Black women are still hugely under-represented in senior roles at work. Research has shown that positions of power in every sector of society are dominated by men.

Research conducted by Operation Black Vote and the Guardian newspaper found that only 3.5% of Black people are at the top of UK's leading 1000 plus organisations, compared with 12.9% in the general population. This under-representation is more profound when broken down into gender, with less than a quarter of those positions being held by Black women.

In a review of race in the workplace, it was found that Black people are much more likely to be overqualified for their jobs than their white counterparts, who often

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### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

advance up the ladder of promotion with ease. In other words, Black talent is not necessarily lacking in abundance but it is seriously lacking in recognition and support.

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), one in eight of the working age population is from a Black background, yet they occupy only one in sixteen of top management positions.

Women still face cultural and social barriers to career progression, including a lack of formal support or organisational policies to help them progress and to tackle harmful attitudes and gender stereotyping.

Existing barriers to women achieving senior positions also include: perceptions about women's potential; an absence of role models; careers information and guidance; career breaks; caring responsibilities; full time working being the existing norm; a lack of talent spotting; and a lack of mentoring.

This is even more so for Black women who often face the double barrier of the gender glass ceiling and racial discrimination. This is particularly evident when looking at management roles.

The Gender and Race Benchmark 2014 found that Black women are the least likely group to hold executive or non-executive directorship positions.

Statistics show that Black women are twice as likely as white women to be leaders in their community – leading a youth initiative, heading up a community or charity organisation. Black women are also more likely to be the primary breadwinners in their families but their experience outside of work falls off the radar of 'management at work'.

There is a serious issue with the lack of Black women representation in senior roles and the evidence is clear that Black people especially Black women continue to be under-represented at senior levels at work.

Conference calls upon the national Black members' Committee, working with relevant service groups where appropriate to:

- 1) Raise employers' awareness of the disproportionately low number of Black women in senior positions, and encourage employers to address this situation with suitable mentoring and training to enable Black women to reach their full potential at their workplace;
- 2) Utilise the challenging racism in the workplace toolkit to examine employers recruitment and retention policies and highlight this disparity, thereby enabling UNISON representatives to challenge blatant discrimination;
- 3) Work with UNISON Learning and Organising Services to educate and support Black women members to increase their confidence to access the structures within their workplace in order to make progress in their career;

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- 4) Encourage the service groups to develop guidance and policies on supporting Black women in the workplace and to place equalities at the heart of the bargaining agenda.

#### **National Women's Committee**

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#### **6. Fair representation of black people in recruitment process**

In 2009, the Department for Work and Pensions embarked on an experiment to understand the scarcity of non white faces in top managerial post in UK's organisations. 2,000 fake job applications were created in response to 1,000 real vacancies across multiple sectors, professions and pay grades. Similar CVs – one with a “traditional Anglo-Saxon” name and one with a name that appeared to come from a migrant community – were sent to employers.

This bold initiative was met with resistance from image conscious business leaders who labelled the experiment “unethical”.

“A waste of taxpayers’ cash” was the label given by Theresa May, who was the Conservative shadow minister for work and pensions at the time.

The results conclusively showed that applicants with white, British-sounding names were far more likely to be called to interview for a position than those whose names were of other heritage.

Nine years later, it perhaps comes as no surprise, that there continues to be a dramatic under-representation of Black people in Britain’s top managerial posts or positions of power. Research conducted last year by the Guardian and Operation Black Vote found just 3.5% non-white faces at the top of the UK’s leading 1,000 plus organisations, compared with 12.9% in the general population. The lack of representation is much worse along gender lines, as it found women occupied less than a quarter of the 3.5%.

In her independent review of race in the workplace, Baroness McGregor-Smith found that Black people are much more likely to be found as overqualified for their jobs than white colleagues, who frequently advance in promotion with ease. This shows that the credentials, experience or potential of those who identify as Black members is not necessarily lacking in abundance, but it is disturbingly lacking in support.

Conference is clear that many of our Black members continue to experience unfair representation in recruitment. It's not a glass ceiling keeping them down but a concrete one. There is also a lack of mentoring or career development. Black members who are able to develop their skills and are being rebuffed in the recruitment for managerial roles are given more responsibilities according to their skills but are still disproportionately paid.

Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Produce branch guides on how to negotiate inclusive and fairer recruitment and selection policies and practices with employers;

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- 2) Consider how to motivate public service employers to improve career progression for Black staff;
- 3) Approach UNISON's Learning & Organising Services and discuss how best to support Black members to acquire the relevant skills to aspire for managerial positions.

### ***Eastern Region***

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#### **7. III health retirement / sickness absence policies**

Black members continue to be disproportionately affected by ongoing austerity, attacks to public services and the welfare state which can, in turn, impact on their health.

Individuals can suffer from physical or mental health issues which make it difficult for them to work without reasonable adjustment being put in place. In recent years some of these are not being provided, or individuals are worried about their financial situation so continue to work when they are unwell which causes further problems to their health.

Managing sickness absence is a part of the employer's general duty to secure the health, safety and welfare of their employees. It is in everyone's interests to have as many workers as possible fit, healthy and in work. UNISON has a key role to play in negotiating sickness management policies and procedures which recognise that the key to managing absence is about creating healthy workplaces and supporting rather than punishing those with ill health and commit to ensure its absence procedures are compliant with its equality obligations under law and assist in creating an anti-discriminatory culture. Furthermore we must be proactive in negotiating reasonable adjustments alongside disabled members.

Where individuals continue to work, inspite of being unwell, this can result in them being diagnosed with a long term illness or suffering an accident or incident. When this occurs, depending on the employers policies, it may be possible to get 'Early Retirement' (may have a different name) before reaching the age of 55 yrs, although it must be recognised that not all members will be fortunate enough to have this option.

Whether you would be able to do this will depend on your employer and their definition of what ill health might be. Normally, the usual definition is where "your physical or mental health is bad enough to stop you from carrying on working, or which seriously reduces the amount you can earn."

This National Black Members Conferences calls on the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) To survey UNISON Black members to find out the numbers who work when sick because of the fear of losing their job or reducing their income;

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- 2) To use Black Action and other UNISON communications to provide information on early retirement;
- 3) To look at what support and training is available for steward when negotiating sickness absence policies and representing members with issues under sickness policies.

### ***Greater London Region***

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#### **8. Bargaining and campaigning for race equality**

Conference notes that The Race Relations Act came into force on 8th December 1965 in Britain, to promote non-discrimination and equality however fifty one years after its creation we note a lack of significant progress in society as members continue to cite numerous blatant examples of racism in our society and workplaces.

The equality act came into force in 2010 but the commitment and promise of a fairer society and equality for Black people was closely followed by the closure of the government department dedicated to dealing with race equality(CRE) , merging it with other equality strands to create the Equality and Human Rights Commission. However, within just five years of the formation of the new organisation it saw a 75% reduction in funding, a strong indicator to all of the new government emphasis around race equality.

Further, the toxic debate played out in the media regarding immigration and a Home Secretary (Theresa May at that time ) who promised to create a hostile environment for immigrants, played no small part in the increase in reported incidents of race hate crimes, said to have increased by 500% following BREXIT, and more recent extremist terror attacks. This environment of hostility started by Theresa May and continued with the policies from her government has continued to have a negative impact on our members in the workplace. There is a growing level of inequality borne out in workplace experiences of discrimination against Black workers.

Conference, we know that leaving it to the country's leadership to change things for the better is pointless and we look instead to people such as Claudia Jones, Bernie Grant, Gloria Mills and our own National Black members committee as our example that persistence can deliver.

But even persistence is useless if it is directed to the wrong place, we must make grass roots members branches and regions recognise that neglecting to negotiate around race is perpetuating the unequal society and urge them to put race on the agenda, as without it nothing will change for Black members of our union.

We applaud the union's work which has been done to resist the advance of far right organisations and Stop Trump coalitions. Conference notes the numerous high profile campaigns to Save the health service, school support staff, police staff, ambulance staff, to save youth services, prevent service closures , libraries day centres redundancies and job losses, however this has not assisted the additional circumstances of Black members who employed in these fields and others, face the underlying issues of disproportionate over representation in disciplinaries,

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redundancies, face bullying, victimisation , are passed over for promotion and in many councils are employed well below a representative percentage level.

We therefore call on the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) To seek to review the bargaining record of the various Service Group Executives with respect to race equality, with a remit to amend work plans to incorporate race inequality;
- 2) To note the recognition of institutionalised racism within organisational structures as a key negotiating and bargaining tool and to encourage the sector groups bargaining structures to respond accordingly;
- 3) To seek to review the union's campaigns with respect to race inequality in the workplace, seeking response and action to address and implement race inequality as a key campaign;
- 4) To report back on all the above to 2020 National Black Members Conference

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### **National Black Members' Committee**

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#### **Campaigning**

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##### Campaigns

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##### **9. Repeal of Buggery Law In Jamaica**

Conference notes the continuing impact of colonial era sodomy laws in many countries around the world including Jamaica. 36 of the 53 states that are members of the Commonwealth still criminalise same-sex acts between consenting adults. Black workers in the UK have a key interest in political and social issues in countries of their family origin.

There are a high number of homophobic and transphobic violent crimes in Jamaica. However there is a complexity to the lived experiences of LGBT individuals on the island. In recent years Jamaican LGBT activists have worked hard to resist oppression and promote LGBT rights in the media and political debate.

The government has gone on record to say:

- 1) It is committed to the equal and fair treatment of its citizens, and affirms that any individual whose rights are alleged to have been infringed has a right to seek redress;
- 2) There is no legal discrimination against persons on the grounds of their sexual orientation;
- 3) It is opposed to discrimination or violence against persons whatever their sexual orientation.

Jamaica's laws do not criminalise the status of being LGBT – only certain sexual acts. Being gay is not illegal but some sex between two men is. Herein lies the

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confusion within this law. This needs to be addressed and resolved. The comments from the politicians outside of parliament are not sufficient. Pressure need to be brought to the debate to move this unfortunate situation forward.

Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to seek to work with the UNISON's International Department to engage with sister trade unions in Jamaica in supporting the current ongoing debate to repeal the buggery law.

### ***Eastern Region***

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#### **10. Black members and the +**

Conference notes that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) self-organised group (SOG) works with inclusive, umbrella definitions of bisexual and transgender. Its bi network is for all members who feel attraction to more than one gender. Its trans network is for all types of self-identifying trans people and for members whose gender identity does not fit into the gender binary i.e. non-binary members.

However, despite these inclusive definitions, some Black members, who the LGBT group consider to be part of the group, are put off. The LGBT group hears repeatedly that when Black members attend its meetings, they feel welcome and included, but before they attended they had been unsure.

This is particularly the case for Black members who do not personally use the label LGBT about themselves, for example people who identify as queer, and people who self-define, for example, as Hijra, Dalit, or Kothi. This highlights the importance of adding plus to LGBT so that more Black members can feel included.

Conference notes that the National LGBT Committee (NLGBC) has undertaken consultation during 2018 on making the LGBT SOG fully inclusive. This followed a motion from the National Young Members Forum (NYMF) to 2017 LGBT conference highlighting the growth in the number of people, and young people in particular, identifying their sexual orientation and gender identity in many different ways beyond a binary definition, and expressing their preference to see the LGBT group move to organise on an LGBT+ (plus) basis.

The overwhelming majority of responses were in favour of the proposal to change the group's name to LGBT+, and the NLGBC has therefore submitted a motion to 2018 national LGBT conference proposing changing the name. UNISON'S Black LGBT caucus are also fully supportive of the proposed name change. Black members who identify as non-binary or other would feel included for the first time if the name change becomes a reality.

The consultation also sought views on what the LGBT group should be doing to make the group more inclusive. The National LGBT committee will consider these responses as part of its ongoing work to improve its polices and practices.

Putting the + in the group's name would not change its existing remit of being a SOG for members who experience prejudice or discrimination because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, but would demonstrate an inclusiveness beyond that conveyed by the current name. This would increase the participation of those Black

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members who previously felt excluded and isolated with no sense of belonging. Every Black member should be able to have a safe space where they can be themselves and feel a part of a union that recognises their identity and promotes their inclusion.

Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the National LGBT Committee to have an article in Black Action, on what the name change would mean;
- 2) Encourage regional and branch Black Members Groups to campaign for support for any rule change proposal from National LGBT Conference to National Delegate Conference regarding changing the name of the group to LGBT+;
- 3) Circulate the guidance/briefings being produced on what the name change would mean.

### ***National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee***

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#### **11. Non-binary inclusion**

Conference welcomes the work initiated by the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group to make UNISON's organisation, events, policies, systems and good practice advice inclusive of non-binary members.

Non-binary people are people whose gender identity is not solely male or female. They may define themselves as both, neither or something different. While non-binary people are of all ages and as diverse as any other cross section of society, increasing numbers of young people in particular are identifying outside traditional binary gender norms.

Black non-binary members currently feel excluded from UNISON in terms of the Self Organised Groups (SOGS) and how the union is organised in relation to the structure of seats that are set aside for those who identify as male or female.

Conference notes that the steps taken at national level towards the inclusion of non-binary members in UNISON have included:

- 1) A factsheet, 'Gender equality: non-binary inclusion', which has been well received across the union;
- 2) A first UNISON survey of non-binary members;
- 3) Changes to a number of UNISON forms, including the national conference monitoring form, and systems;
- 4) An initial review of language in UNISON communications of all forms and a start on addressing non-inclusive language;
- 5) Advice to UNISON service providers.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Conference recognises the importance of working towards the inclusion of Black non-binary members within the Black members self organised group, LGBT SOG, and within the union as a whole, and that the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) has a very important role to play in this.

It is vitally important that Black non-binary members are given the same access to participation and activism in UNISON as those who identify as male or female. As a forward thinking and progressive union it is up to us to ensure that work is done enable full participation of Black non-binary members. This serves to promote the equality agenda that is at the heart of UNISON.

Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- a) Take steps to raise awareness within the Black members SOG of what non-binary means, and what it doesn't mean by promoting training on non-binary inclusion within branches and regions;
- b) Work with the National LGBT Committee to further the inclusion and participation of Black non-binary members in the Black members and LGBT members SOGs, and more widely in our union.

### ***National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee***

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#### **12. Disabled Black Workers and the Disciplinary Process**

Conference notes that Disabled Black workers are disproportionately targeted when it comes to disciplinary processes, which is often linked to racism and discrimination as well as a lack of understanding and support for the barriers faced by disabled people, including those with non-visible/non-apparent disabilities.

Black disabled people are also over-represented when it comes to capability proceedings, again due to discrimination and a lack of reasonable adjustments.

Many Black disabled members are isolated from their branch and do not know they are entitled to reasonable adjustments such as disability leave or changes to performance targets.

Conference notes UNISON's comprehensive guide 'Proving Disability – A Guide to Reasonable Adjustments' which lists potential reasonable adjustments. The guide includes suggested adjustments for workers who have disabilities that are disproportionately present in the Black community, including Lupus, sickle cell and Thalassaemia. Conference also notes UNISON's factsheet on Disability Leave. However not all of our stewards or Black disabled members are aware of these resources.

Conference therefore instructs the National Black Members Committee, working with the National Disabled members Committee where appropriate, to:

- 1) Publicise and promote UNISON's guidance on reasonable adjustments and on disability leave, ensuring the barriers and adjustments related to impairments that affect Black disabled people in particular are highlighted;
- 2) Consider ways of further supporting Black disabled members in the workplace

## 2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- 3) Work with the Labour Link to campaign for a commitment to statutory disability leave and timescales for implementation of reasonable adjustments from a future Labour government.

### ***National Disabled Members Committee***

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#### **13. The Windrush Papers - A Hostile Environment Strategy**

Arriving in UK between 1942 – 1971 from the Caribbean islands. The generation named the Windrush in reference to the MV Empire Windrush, which arrived at Tilbury Docks, Essex, on 22 June 1948, bringing workers from Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and other islands, as a response to post-war labour shortages in the UK.

The entry in to the UK ended with the 1971 Immigration Act, when Commonwealth citizens already living in the UK were given indefinite leave to remain and After this, a British passport-holder born overseas could only settle in the UK if they firstly had a work permit and, secondly, could prove that a parent or grandparent had been born in the UK. It was also not clear that citizens needed to change their Caribbean passport to a British one.

It is difficult to imagine anything more demoralising than the experience the 'Windrush generation' has undergone at the hands of the British Government in the past few years. Cases are mounting up of individuals seeking NHS treatment, passports, jobs or housing only to find themselves having to prove their right to live in the country where they have been legally resident for more than 50 years, or risk being deported.

Traumatic stories have emerged of individuals being made homeless, jobless and refusal of medical treatment, after they failed to produce proof they were never given in the first place. A Londoner who been diagnosed with prostate cancer, was refused NHS medical treatment because his immigration status and billed £54,000.

Evidence that might have put a stop to this mistreatment is the landing cards that recorded arrivals from the Caribbean until the 1960s. These were destroyed by the Home Office in 2010.

In 2014, Theresa May, the home secretary produced a new immigration policy which created a hostile environment toward illegal immigrant by forcing landlords, employers, banks and NHS services to run immigration status checks. It also allowed people to be deported more quickly and avoid lengthy appeals processes. The policy was further extended in 2016 to enforce penalties to any employer who did not follow through with the new policy and further distress to those who cannot prove that they have rights to work/live in the UK.

The Tory government has created a racist hostile environment in which if you can not prove you are British from specific paperwork you are in fact classed as an illegal immigrant and will be deported.

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Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) To continue in raising awareness of the issues facing Windrush generation in 'Black Action,'
- 2) To build and strengthen alliances with other charities and organisation such as the JCWI – Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants who are supporting victims of immigration crisis;.
- 3) Request Labour Link discusses with the Labour Party how to reform the immigration system when it gets elected into government.

### ***Eastern Region***

#### **14. Windrush – what next?**

Conference the way in which the Windrush Generation has been treated is truly appalling. They were invited to the 'Mother Country', as law abiding British Citizens, to help to rebuild Britain 70 years ago, post 2nd World War. Having worked hard and delivered what they were invited to Britain to do, some returned of their own free will to their homelands, while others chose to remain. They did not, however, realise that a 'hostile environment' law awaited them.

Some of the Windrush Generation were heartlessly deported to places they left all those years ago. Others, often children of the Windrush era who came to Britain on the passports of their parents have been forced to stop working, without recourse to public funds. Some have been denied treatment for illnesses such as Cancer, forced to give up social or council housing and made to feel like criminals. They have been forced into debt and become a burden to others.

This conference condemns the Tory Government's actions as institutionally racist, many of which would have been illegal, and holds Home Secretaries, in particular, responsible for the many individual tragedies. Their rights were eroded further as the appeals process effectively made them guilty until proven innocent.

Conference many of you here today are here due to those early pioneers who suffered immeasurable hard times and discrimination during their time in Britain and who paved the way for us to have a better life.

Many who came had a trade or were professionals in their own country. However on arrival they were often denied the opportunity to take up their chosen profession due to racist practices in their places of work, housing etc. They would 'turn the other cheek' when faced with discriminatory situations which today would be regarded as sackable offences. I know many of you will have heard of the signs that read 'No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs'. Can you imagine how these law-abiding British Citizens, some who had to leave family members behind initially, would have felt and the absolutely appalling conditions they had to put up with?

Teresa May and her government have tried to bury their heads in the sand. They must have been aware of the implications that the new Immigration Laws would have

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

on people such as those from the Windrush era, however we must not forget that there was an immigrant target that needed to be met.

The Home Office, have used the disgraceful, divisive rhetoric, including vans with 'Go Home' emblazoned on them, to scapegoat migrants for their failures and to divert attention away from their austerity agenda of benefit cuts, attacks on our NHS and schools, and other public services in particular.

Never forget, we are here and have survived, thanks to the legacy and resilience of the Windrush Generation, who sought a better life for themselves and future generations. We cannot let them down.

We do not trust that this Tory Government can put the situation right. The apology and the promise of compensation are too little, too late. We believe the trade unions must work with Labour and the TUC to protect the rights of workers including migrant workers against exploitation from bosses, deportation and loss of access to public services such as health and education and all racist immigration controls.

Conference calls for the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Produce an article about the Windrush Generations and their most valuable and lasting contributions to British Society;
- 2) Consider the theme for Black History Month in 2019 is "Windrush a time to celebrate our legacy and the commonwealth";
- 3) To work with other Trade union Black workers organisations including through the TUC Black Workers Conference to continue to campaign against the hostile environment, particularly as it has affected those from former British 'colonies' and help establish a network of support for Black workers subject to these illegal policies.

### ***National Black Members' Committee***

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#### **15. Windrush generations and their descendants**

Conference notes the detestable treatment of the Windrush Generation has been truly appalling. They were invited to the 'Mother Country', as law abiding British Citizens, to help to rebuild Britain 70 years ago, post 2nd World War. They came on the promise of equality, carrying the same passports as anyone individual born in the United Kingdom, Colonies and Commonwealth countries.

Having worked hard and delivered what they were invited to Britain to do, some returned of their own free will to their homelands, while others chose to remain. They did not, however, realise that a 'hostile environment' law awaited them.

They withstood the racism whipped up by politicians like Enoch Powell and through many ensuing struggles changed for the better both labour movement and society it is a betrayal and an insult that in retirement they have been told they don't belong.

Some of the Windrush Generation was heartlessly deported to places they left all those years ago. Others, often descendants of the Windrush era who came to Britain on the passports of their parents have been forced to stop working, without recourse

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### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

to public funds. Some have been denied treatment for illnesses such as Cancer, forced to give up social or council housing and made to feel like criminals. They have been forced into debt and become a burden to others.

The U-turn being made by the new Home Secretary Sajid Javid with the introduction of the Windrush scheme and the taskforce for compensation are welcomed. Additionally the resignation and apology by the previous Home Secretary Amber Rudd was needed but more needs to be done.

We welcome the Movement for Justice Campaign to include the descendants and close relatives of the Windrush generation. At its launch Janet Dabby MP, David Lammy MP, Eleanor Smith MP and Baroness Hamwee all spoke in support of this campaign.

Conference calls on the national Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with all appropriate campaign groups and stakeholders to challenge the racism of immigration legislation and its impact on the descendants of the Windrush generation;
- 2) To raise the issues faced by the Windrush descendants and offer support to any UNISON members affected, where possible;
- 3) Prepare and circulate information to all branches about the Windrush campaign, support available from the union for members affected and how they access this.

#### ***Greater London Region***

##### **16. Immigration Costs – Impact on Black Members standing for Local Council**

Conference congratulates UNISON Labour Link for its work in supporting Black activists in standing for elected positions within the UK Labour Party.

Conference notes at the 2013 Census of Local Authority Councillors, there were roughly 20,000 councillors across the UK.

Conference further notes that our elected representatives should reflect the communities they seek to serve, however, within England 85.9% of councillors are white with the most recent survey putting the figure at just four percent for black councillors. This compares to black people making up 14 percent of the population a gap that is widening as demographics become more ethnically diverse. . Operation Black Vote has shown that 25% of those within African-Caribbean and Asian communities are not registered to vote and over 50% of those who are registered do not use their vote.

Conference acknowledges the barriers that exist to prevent black people from standing for election and highlights one of immigration status. With the current fee for an indefinite leave to remain application costing £2,389 and a naturalisation application £1,330 increasing on an annual basis above the cost of inflation this is

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pricing many black people out of engaging fully in the democratic processes and unable to represent their communities as elected representatives.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Continue to work with National Labour Link Committee to provide training and support to Black members seeking to stand as elected representatives at local level as well as at a national level;
- 2) Work with those organisations who share our values in supporting Black people on these issues;
- 3) Continue to Lobby the Labour Party through Labour Link on reforming the immigration system to make it a fairer and more equal system;
- 4) Work across our devolved nations and regions developing local support and mentorship programmes;
- 5) Continue to lobby the home Office over the unfairness of the current immigration system.

#### ***Newcastle Hospitals Unison Branch***

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#### **17. Knife Crime**

Conference notes the alarming spike in knife crime in 2018. In London knife crime has risen by 16% in the past two years and over 50 people were killed by stabbings and shootings in the first 3 months of the year. This gave rise to speculation that the murder rate is higher in London than New York.

Conference notes that the furore over the ‘knife crime epidemic’ served to demonise Black youth who are blamed for the stabbings. Whilst in reality they are victims of the crime. Urban youth music such as ‘Drill’ music has also been blamed for the rise in knife crime.

However, conference recognises that the reason for the rise in stabbings is a consequence of the cuts in services to young people. Young Black people have been worst hit under the Tories austerity programme with Black youth unemployment of 25% compared to white youth unemployment of 12%.

Youth services in particular have been slashed to the bone. Youth services help young people to lead positive lives as members of society.

UNISON’s research has found that by 2016, £387m had been cut from youth services, with the loss of more than 3600 jobs and 600 youth centres. Since then, figures from the House of Commons library show that the amount councils plan to spend on youth services dropped by 53.6% between 2010 and 2017. Local authorities have responded to Tory cuts by reducing youth service budgets, outsourcing to alternative delivery models, and merging youth services with other departments – like social work, youth offending teams, and libraries.

In 2015 in response to Southwark Council’s 60% cut to youth services and merger with leisure services, Damiola Taylor’s father stated ‘More kids will be stabbed if

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

youth services are cut. Bearing in mind the level of killing, stabbing and violence this is not the right time. This is the wrong approach and bad decision of the council'

Conference notes that not only cuts to youth services but cuts to children and adolescence mental health services, schools and education has all had an impact on the lives of young people.

Conference therefore welcomes Labour manifesto commitment, when in government, to reverse the youth service cuts, restore EMA, set a £10 hour minimum wage, ban zero hours contracts and end student tuition fees. Conference notes that Corbyn's anti-austerity message is massively popular with young Black people and amongst our members.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Campaign against youth service cuts and support UNISON initiative in fighting the cuts in youth workers jobs and closures of youth centres;
- 2) Work with Labour Link and support the call to stop youth centre closures and support funding to youth organisations;
- 3) Highlight the campaigns and impact of youth service cuts in Black Action;
- 4) Organise and campaign that local council to use their reserves and borrowing powers to fund youth services

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### **National Black Members' Committee**

#### **18. Gangs, knives and the killing of young Black people**

This National Black Members Conference notes that the number of young people killed in the UK this year through knife crime and youth violence is unprecedented, Young Black men were victims in almost a third of killings in London last year despite only making up 1.4 per cent of its population, according to figures.

It is no coincidence that a significant number of those killed by knife crime are Black youths. Nearly a decade of cuts to public services and austerity measures, which are well documented to have disproportionately affected the Black community, have taken their toll. Black families often find themselves trapped in areas of deprivation, with increased social pressures. Added to this cuts to youth services Black young people can find themselves spending time on the streets as they have no-where else to go, leaving them vulnerable to gangs

Furthermore under this Conservative Government Police numbers have been cut year on year. The latest figures show that between September 2010 and September 2017, the number of police officers in English and Welsh forces fell by 19,921 or 14%, according to the Home Office. This has resulted in reduced Police visibility and little deterrent for gangs not to operate or individuals to carry out violence crime.

Rising violent crime levels have led some to call for more stop and search, and Met Commissioner Cressida Dick has backed its greater use, if it is deemed necessary

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

by police. Despite changes by police, the racial disproportionality in the use of stop and search remain high and of concern with Black people eight times more likely to be targeted by officers than white people.

For Stop and search to be effective it needs to be used correctly. Some argue concerns raised re Stop & Search are being used as an excuse not to deal with the gang culture/increasing number of knife crimes.

The senseless loss of life from knife crime/youth violence, whilst devastating for friends and family, has a wider impact on the Black community. There is also an impact on UNISON members and other public sector workers who work in the NHS or services supporting victims and their families.

Year on year we are seeing innocent Black lives lost due to knife crime and gang culture. This is particularly so within cities but the ongoing violence is also spreading further afield across the UK. An urgent solution is needed and collective action.

This National Black Members Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the London Mayor's office, other politicians, community groups and other stakeholders across the UK to share information, best practice and ideas on how best to promote a positive message of why not to carry a knife and alternatives to gangs;
- 2) Continue to campaign against cuts to public services, especially for young people, to defend quality public services.

This National Black Members Conference welcomes decision of the 2018 UNISON National Delegate Conference for 2019 to be designated as 'The Year of Young Workers' and the commitments to set a target of a 5% increase in young membership and young member activists by conference 2019, and a further 5% in young membership and young member activists by conference 2020, and allocate the resources required to meet this aim. We believe it is essential that part of this campaign focussed on recruiting young Black people both as members and activists as the future of our union.

This National Black Members Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- a) Work with the London Mayor's office, other politicians, community groups and other stakeholders across the UK to share information, best practice and ideas on how best to promote a positive message of why not to carry a knife and alternatives to gangs;
- b) Continue to campaign against cuts to public services, especially for young people, to defend quality public services.

***Greater London Region***

## 2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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### **19. Black Members & Housing**

A decent and affordable home is essential for all. It provides shelter, enables people to put down roots, raise their families, find employment and contribute to society. It's also a prerequisite for good health, the best education chances and a decent quality of life.

Working people need access to decent and affordable homes near their work. It's essential to health and economic well being.

Politics and the Government's austerity policies over the last seven years have played a major role in reducing the amount of decent and affordable housing and are a contributor to the current housing crisis in London and across the UK.

These policies, including ongoing privatisation of services, have resulted in lower wages and higher rents due to less spend on Public services year by year.

This was all done under the name of Austerity and justification to cut the deficit. It was just an excuse to reduce services for the poor and provide more profit for owners of Private Sector.

Housing is one area which has suffered most under the austerity agenda. We face a chronic shortage of affordable housing, which means the majority of workers on modest incomes (many of them UNISON members) are unable to afford a decent home - to rent or buy. As a result many face long commutes.

It is well documented that the housing crisis disproportionately impacts on Black Members.

An article in the 'Evening Standard' dated 17th October 2016 reported that Black Londoners are nearly five times more likely to be homeless than white people. The research showed African and Afro-Caribbean British people are 4.6 times more likely to have been accepted as 'homeless and in priority need' by their local authority compared to white Londoners, according to a race equality think-tank. The Runnymede Trust, which analysed homeless figures from all 33 London boroughs, said the data showed how London's housing crisis was 'disproportionately' affecting Black People.

It called on Mayor Sadiq Khan and councils to devise policies to tackle the 'ethnic housing penalty' and not act in a 'colour-blind' way. Farah Elahi, research and policy analyst at the Runnymede Trust, said: 'These shocking homelessness figures show that beneath London's multicultural image the capital is riddled with stark racial inequalities. The report shows the three worst London boroughs are Haringey, where Black People are 9.5 times more likely to be homeless, Kingston-upon-Thames (9.2) and Harrow (7.5) but the housing crisis is nationwide.'

The housing conditions where Black Members are forced to live are often cramped conditions with overcrowding and sharing of amenities. Standard of management in these accommodations tends to be very poor with no safety checks carried out.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

This has resulted in divisions in communities with Black Members often getting the worst housing deal. When it comes to Local Authorities their excuse has been due to lack of resources.

The horror of the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017 exposed the true conditions faced by Black People living in social housing in London. At least 80 people were killed in this incident with large numbers made homeless and majority of them being from the Black Community.

This National Black Members Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with UNISON Labour Link for decent and affordable housing to be a key policy commitment from Labour;
- 2) Use the information and experiences from the recent Grenfell Tower fire as this exposes all the inequalities mentioned in this motion faced by Black People living in housing. This needs to be done immediately and should be top priority;
- 3) Take the lead with other trade unions to highlight the housing crisis and its impact on Black Member's. This will also unite all workers and increase trade union membership;
- 4) Team up with the UNISON National Health & Safety Committee to campaign to help bring in changes in legislation to make housing safe for all;
- 5) Work with Sadiq Khan as mayor of London, and other stakeholders across the UK, to set targets for new and affordable homes for those worst affected by the housing crisis.

### ***Greater London Region***

#### **20. Black women and mental health problems**

Conference notes that the issue of mental health has been of major concern to our union for some time. Conference welcomes UNISON's Mental Health Bargaining guide designed to assist branches in ensuring that mental health is treated with the critical importance that it deserves.

However, conference is deeply concerned about the high rate of Black women with mental health problems in the UK.

It's been highlighted that Black women experience increased rates of mental health problems compared to other races in the UK.

According to Mental Health Bulletin, nearly 5,000 Black British people per 100,000 Black people accessed mental health services in 2014-2015; 12.7% of those in contact with mental health and learning disability services spent at least one night in hospital that year. That's more than double the percentage in the UK white population.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

According to the NHS, Black British women are more prone than white women to experience common mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, panic, and obsessive compulsive disorders.

The rates of mental health problems are higher than average for Black women because of factors that result directly from their experience as Black women. These experiences include racism and cultural alienation.

Black people are also more likely to enter the mental health services via the courts or the police, rather than from primary care, which is the main route to treatment for most people. They are also more likely to be treated under a section of the Mental Health Act, are more likely to receive medication, rather than be offered talking treatments such as psychotherapy, and are over-represented in high and medium secure units and prisons.

It's been argued that mental health problems are often difficult to diagnose because Black women tend to underplay the gravity of their problems which results in their seeking help for their issues only much later in life or when their illness becomes quite severe.

The Mental Health Foundation concludes that due to the lack of adequate and sufficient data on Black people, they are most likely to be misdiagnosed, under-diagnosed, and they receive and have access to fewer treatments. Black women in particular have lower treatment rates despite the fact that they are one of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in the UK.

Conference therefore calls upon the national Black members' committee to work with the national women's committee and national disabled members' committee to:

- 1) Work with branches and regions to raise mental health awareness among the workforce and communicate policies to assist people with mental health problems;
- 2) Work with the health and safety unit, service groups, the National Executive Council and partner organisations to raise awareness of the high rate of mental health problems in Black women and how they can best be reduced, managed and controlled;
- 3) Promote the UNISON bargaining guide on mental health and the 'women's mental health issues – not to be ignored' guide through branches, regions and national networks;
- 4) Consider producing guidance specifically on Black women and mental health problems.

### ***National Women's Committee***

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#### **21. Black members and workplace mental health**

Conference notes that employers are failing in their duty of care towards all staff with mental health issues, and this has a particular effect on Black Workers. Recent UNISON research found that 25% of local government workers in Scotland had

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

experienced mental health issues at work, and the figure for Black Workers was 50% higher.

Conference believes that the link between inequalities and poor mental health is well known and the origin of workplace inequalities is also well known:

- 1) Discrimination in recruitment, development and promotion practices;
- 2) Discrimination in the increased prevalence of insecure or precarious work arrangements among Black Workers;
- 3) Discrimination in the pay gap for Black Workers and, in particular, the compound pay discrimination experienced by Black women at work; and,
- 4) Discrimination in the form of bullying and harassment at work.

Conference notes that trade unions are actively organised against discrimination in the workplace. However, additional work is required to compel employers to acknowledge and address the higher frequency of mental health problems encountered by Black Workers as a result of discrimination at work.

Conference calls on the National Black Member Committee to work to raise awareness of the significantly higher rate of work related mental health problems among black workers.

Conference calls on the National Black Member Committee to work with Union Regional Learning team to expand its highly successful work on Mental Health awareness to include specific activities targeting the mental health of Black Workers.

And Conference calls on the National Black Member Committee to support affiliates in developing additional measures to support Black Workers when they challenge work related stress through action against hazards including discrimination, peer support between Black Members, networking and organising within their work place.

#### ***Scotland Region***

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### **22. Institutional discrimination in mental health services – the impact on Black disabled workers**

Conference notes that Black people in the UK are disproportionately more likely to be detained against their will as a result of mental ill health. The United Nations Committee for the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) 2017 report expressed concerns about the high number of Black disabled people compulsorily detained and treated against their will. Evidence was presented to the committee of disturbing levels of state violence against Black people who are detained in psychiatric settings and are subject to the use of Tasers in healthcare settings.

Conference further notes that, to work with children or vulnerable adults, many workers are subject to an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. This includes details of any non-conviction information held about them on local police records which the police consider relevant. This can include information relating to their mental health – for example, if they have ever been removed to “a place of safety” by the police under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 (often

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

referred to as “being sectioned”). Although, since 2012, the police are supposed to consider whether the information is relevant, for Black workers, their treatment at the hands of the mental health services may cause the police to deem this information more relevant than they might in the case of other workers.

Disabled Black workers with mental health problems who have come into contact with the police are therefore at risk of being excluded from job roles requiring an enhanced DBS check, including social workers, school staff, NHS workers, probations officers and many other roles our members undertake.

Conference therefore instructs the National Black Members Committee, working with the National Disabled Members Committee where appropriate, to:

- 1) Campaign for reform of mental health legislation and policies to end institutional discrimination against Black disabled people, as recommended by the UNCRPD report;
- 2) Circulate UNISON’s guidance on Bargaining for Mental Health Policies in the Workplace.

### ***National Disabled Members Committee***

#### **23. The Stigma of Mental Health in Black Communities**

Conference, although the topic of Black people’s mental health has returned to conference on several occasions in recent years, it does not appear to be improving. Mental health is a two headed beast for Black communities, firstly stigma attached to mental health prevents individuals from accessing services, when they do eventually access services they are met with services that are not suited to their needs.

The Race Disparity Audit published in late 2017 showed how this two headed beast effects black populations. The data showed that black adults were the least likely to report being in receipt of counselling, therapy medication. Common mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression were most prevalent amongst black women, black men on the other hand are 10 times more likely to have experienced a psychotic disorder within the last year compared to the white male population and the most likely to have been detained under the Mental Health Act.

The Time to Change campaign that aims to tackle mental health stigma across society conducted research looking at the experiences of south Asian populations. The research found that fear, ignorance, social conformity and marriage prospects affected the mental health of south Asian communities and the associated stigma prevented and open discussion about mental health taking place in the wider community. This is particularly concerning as the Mental Health Foundation charity recognises that rates of suicide amongst young Asian women are high compared to other ethnic groups.

If we are to improve the experiences of Black people effected by mental health then we must take a multi headed approach, we can insist that services improve, that they become more culturally appropriate, however we must also insist that we ourselves change how we view mental health. Conference we must fight to get the message across to our communities that a mental health illness is just an illness, as with a

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

physical illness some will be more severe than others, it is not a life sentence, recovery is possible.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with Time to Change to eradicate the stigma surrounding mental health in black communities;
- 2) To produce a leaflet aimed at Black members to raise awareness of the resources that UNISON has to help those effected by mental health;
- 3) Write regular articles covering specific mental health illness's in Black Action;
- 4) Have a workshop at the 2020 NBMC conference on promoting self care with the aim to improving and maintaining good mental health.

### ***Yorkshire - Humberside Region***

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#### **24. Black Women and WASPI**

Conference this Government has done a great injustice against all women who were born in the 1950s.

By increasing the age of women's state pensionable age and not informing them of the true impact this would have on their lives.

At a time when they would be planning for their retirement in the last 2 years of their working lives, instead hearing that they would have to work a further 6 years.

Such shocking news presented many women unable to cope for many this has had a detrimental effect impacting on personal health and well being as well as financial health.

This affects 3.8 million women in the UK and abroad there has been over 8000 complaints, logged with the government.

This has affected all women but the impact upon our Black women who don't know much about this injustice is a greater inequality.

As we are aware of the huge pay gap between men and women, this pay gap was significant for black women who were paid even less than our white female counterparts. Due to the lack of education training and guidance Black women were often taking on more than one job to make ends meet and having to take a break in employment to bring up children and take care of family as the main care givers this having a huge impact on their pensionable income. Black women working longer hours for less pay, less retirement pension, and on top of all this having to work for many more years to make up the financial shortfall in the pay gap and then learning they have to work 6 more years before they are able to retire.

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Conference calls upon the National Black Members Committee to work with Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI):

- 1) To give guidelines and information to our Black Women;
- 2) To carry out a workshop at the next National Black Members Conference to gather an understanding of what WASPI means to women of retirement age and those younger, to gather stories of impact of WASPI - amongst our Black Women;
- 3) For this above information to be collated and featured in Black Action Magazine;
- 4) To publish an article in Black Action Magazine - featuring a member who has been affected by the changes to their retirement age sharing the detrimental impact of this on their personal health and wellbeing and financial health.

#### ***West Midlands Region***

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### **25. Pay Gap**

Conference notes with concern that despite efforts to bring further equality into society, evidence shows that Black workers are still being held back in the work place. Inequalities in employment and income persist and under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) there is no legislation that states that Employers should publish and report on such differentials in pay amongst the workforce outside of gender. It is crucial that under the PSED Employers should also publish differentials in pay in relation to Black workers compared to white workers. It is acknowledged that in Scotland and Wales there is some requirement to publish such data.

A report recently published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission titled, 'Healing a divided Britain: the need for a comprehensive race equality strategy',

highlighted that the number of Black workers in low-paid jobs increased by 12.7% between 2011 and 2014, compared with a 1.8% increase for white workers.

The report also shows that the number of Black Workers holding senior posts remains low, with only 8.8% working as managers, directors and senior officers.

Other analyses show that inequalities in pay between Black and white workers continue to exist and remain largely unrelated to Black people's qualifications. While Black education attainment has improved, these gains have not translated into improved outcomes in employment.

The pay gap between white and Black workers is at its widest for those with university degrees. Analysis of official statistics (by the TUC) shows that Black workers with degrees earn 23.1% less on average than White workers with degrees.

In addition, Black people who leave school with GCSEs typically get paid 11.4% less than their white peers. The pay gap between white workers and Black workers, regardless of their educational attainment, is 5.6%.

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Black workers are over represented in low paid jobs. This trend has risen steadily over time. Overall, Black workers receive lower pay than white people. In 2013, this was at an average pay of less than £10 per hour.

Conference notes that our union continues to challenge employers to ensure decent pay for all workers and that employment opportunities are available to Black workers on equal pay basis for equivalent work. However, it is clear that inequality exists in pay and opportunities, resulting in lower work-related incomes for Black workers.

In addition, it is noted that there is a differential between Black members in terms of a pay gap – Black African, Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi workers are more disadvantaged in the Labour market therefore there is a greater level of detail required when publishing and reporting on this issue.

As rampant inequalities still exist, there is a continuing need to fight it. In addition to the work UNISON is doing to ensure there is reduced inequality in the workplace, it is important that all employers are transparent in how they are tackling inequalities in their organisations between Black and white workers.

Conference asks the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with National Labour Link to lobby MPs to extend the requirements for gender equality reporting to include black workers, this should include:
  - a) Employers publish a breakdown of their employees' ethnic origin including a reflection of the proportional representation of Black workers at all levels;
  - b) In cases where employers pay bonuses to their employees, ensure that they disclose average bonuses paid to Black and White workers;
  - c) Ensure that part of the published information on employees provides details on training opportunities that have been provided to Black workers so that they can compete for jobs that pay better and increase their participation in the higher grades;
  - d) Ensure that published information also highlights strategies to redress inequalities between Black and white workers in their organisations.
- 2) Produce guidance that Regional Black Members Groups can use to encourage employers to carry out the points as set out in points - a, b, c and d as above.

### **Newcastle City**

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#### **26. End Discrimination in State Reciprocal Pension Arrangements**

Conference is seriously concerned that Black workers face a triple whammy of discrimination in the labour market, disadvantage in getting decent and well paid jobs and destitution in retirement caused by low pay, an ethnic and racial pay gap and lack of access to good occupational pensions. The impact of these policies means

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

that in retirement, Black workers among others face a freeze on having their British State pensions increased annually depending in which country they chose to reside in retirement.

Conference believes that the annual increase in state pensions should not be based on the country where a British person chose to reside when they retire but on the fact that they have paid National Insurance contributions to the British State. Conference further believes that the Reciprocal Pensions Arrangements is discriminatory, consigns retired members to poverty and living in lower living standards by being denied their annual increase on their state pensions. Conference calls for an end to this

Indeed, British citizens retiring in 16 countries outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) receive the yearly state pensions increase.

Conference believes that the Reciprocal Pension Arrangements impacts disproportionately against people who are Black retiring and from predominantly Commonwealth countries. The UK State pension is already a pittance compared to other developed countries and there should be no discrimination against people who work in Britain, paid into the National Insurance Scheme and the country in which they chose to reside. Entitlement to the annual increase in state pension should be paid on the basis of pension contributions and not on the country where you chose to retire.

Citizens of 30 EEA countries, Gibraltar and Switzerland will keep their entitlement if they move between those countries. This means that if you live in the EEA countries, Gibraltar and Switzerland and you receive a state pension – you will get an increase in your state pension every year. But if you live in any of the 47 Commonwealth countries (except Barbados, Bermuda, Jamaica and Mauritius) your pension will be frozen at the rate and date of your retirement if you live outside the EU or EEA countries.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the Retired Members Committee and the UNISON Pensions Unit to prepare and action plan to raise awareness of this issue
- 2) Lobby to end this discriminatory application of the state pensions increases between people choosing to retire in the EU, EEA and Commonwealth countries
- 3) Produce a campaign and training pack on this issue.

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### **National Black Members' Committee**

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#### **27. "Local government cuts and impact on Black staff"**

"Conference - we are all aware that Local Government and local services are at a crisis point. Demands and expectations of services are increasing year on year while central government funding is reducing. Liverpool Council will have lost 68 per

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cent of government funding from 2010-2020, the Council has prioritised frontline services, protecting vulnerable adults and children, but drastic cuts have become inevitable, with the Council shedding staff to make savings, but workers doing far more for much less. With the increase in austerity measures imposed by this insidious Tory government, Black staff have borne the brunt, with more Black staff identified for redundancies, or their post's downgraded, recruitment has reduced significantly again this has impacted on Black staff, with evidence suggesting that most Local authorities are not employing Black staff that's reflective of the communities in which they serve. Liverpool has a long established Black community with a Black population of 13.5% and yet the Council only employ 6% of Black staff. The Government's own Race Disparity Audit identifies how Black staff are significantly under-represented across all Government departments, this should not be happening, as Black workers we need to have access to the same equality of opportunities as our White counterparts.

Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with Regional Contacts and NEC Black representatives to scrutinise workforce monitoring data have this included on relevant forums;
- 2) Work with Local Government service group to raise awareness of the race disparities that exist and to develop campaigning tools to deliver effective change;
- 3) Support UNISON'S work of tackling racism in the workplace."

#### *Liverpool City*

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### **28. Challenging Race Discrimination, Inequality and unfair treatment of Black Workers and Workplace Representatives**

UNISON's long-standing campaigns on equality, human rights and anti-racism work make us an attractive and welcoming union for many Black members as well as for migrant workers. As a result we have a large and growing Black and migrant workers membership and strong Self Organised group for Black members.

However, racism remains ever present in our workplaces, and in society. Given our proud history, UNISON is ideally placed to play our part in challenging racism both in society, in our workplaces and within our own movement. We must ensure that UNISON itself challenges all forms of discrimination, and remains a Racism free zone.

All Black Members in UNISON must know that they can rely on all their stewards and branch officers to challenge racist comments and racist banter in the workplace. The union seeks to ensure that discriminatory acts are not committed against any person by the union or by its Lay Officers and Officials. Achieving equality is central to our union's aims and objectives.

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

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Challenging Race Discrimination and winning equality needs to continue to be at the heart of trade union work; every trade unionist, every UNISON member or activist has a duty to challenge race discrimination wherever they see it.

UNISON has a responsibility to lead the way through our campaigns, bargaining agenda and labour movement. Therefore, Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee:

- 1) To work with the National Executive Committee (NEC) UNISON, Service Groups and Self Organised Groups with shared Core Values to enforce a zero tolerance approach to racism within the structures of UNISON by ensuring that Regional Black Members Self Organised Group is represented in every Service Group (including the Local Government) particularly devolved nations by reviewing their Constitutions;
- 2) To work with the Labour Link, and lobby Labour Party as well as the Government and devolved governments to secure statutory time off for Branch Black Member Officers;
- 3) To work with Regional Committees & Councils, Regional Self Organised Groups and Branches to ensure all Branch Officers receive Equality Training.

### ***Cymru/Wales Region***

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#### **29. Black Children and Exclusions**

Conference we all know that as Black people we are disproportionately represented within all aspects of society, this includes education and particularly, exclusions of Black pupils.

The number of permanent exclusions across all state-funded primary, secondary and special schools has increased from 5,795 in 2014/15 to 6,685 in 2015/16. This corresponds to around 35.2 permanent exclusions per day in 2015/16, up from an average of 30.5 per day in 2014/15

National figures from the Department for Education show that 6,685 pupils were permanently excluded from schools in England in 2015-16 – the majority of them in the run-up to their GCSEs – marking a 40% increase over the past three years.

The most vulnerable children are most likely to be excluded. One in two has a recognised mental health need. Excluded children are four times more likely to be from the poorest families and eight out of 10 of them have a special education need or disability. Therefore, it will not be a surprise to learn that Black pupils are significantly over-represented in pupil referral units. Black Caribbean pupils are over three times more likely to be permanently excluded compared with their white British counterparts. As an example, a Black Caribbean boy eligible for free school meals who also has special educational needs (SEN) is 168 times more likely to be permanently excluded than a white British girl without SEN and not eligible for FSM. Why is this, how have exclusions become so unequal? It is argued that the education system tends to marginalise children who do not conform to majority norms. The growth of special educational provision in the 1960s and 1970s coincided with the arrival of immigrants from the Caribbean and South-East Asia.

## **2019 Black Members Conference** **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Statutory categories were developed for children with "limited ability" and those who "showed evidence of emotional instability or psychological disturbance and required special treatment to effect personal, social or educational readjustment". From the outset, these labels of "educationally subnormal" (ESN) and "maladjusted" were disproportionately applied to disadvantaged Black pupils.

For the past half-century, whenever relevant data has been broken down by ethnicity, Black C students have been over-identified as having SEN, and pupils with SEN have been disproportionately excluded.

Black children are twice as likely to live in low-income households compared with their white counterparts. The poorest Black households are expected to experience the biggest average fall in living standards by 2020, equating to a real-terms average annual loss of £8,407. Household and community disadvantage are associated with outcomes that are, in turn, linked to exclusion, including emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties, and under-developed language and literacy development. Children with multiple disadvantages require increased support in school, but are instead more likely to be excluded. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)'s recent report *Making the Difference* estimates that close to 100 per cent of children who are excluded have mental health difficulties, researchers found that 1 in 2 excluded pupils experience recognised mental health problems, compared with 1 in 50 pupils in the wider population. Estimates suggest this might be as high as 100% once undiagnosed problems are taken into account. Meanwhile government data has shown that only one in a hundred children who have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools go on to receive five good GCSE grades.

The government published its Race Disparity Audit in October 2017, a collation of data showing Black-white disparities in a range of lifelong outcomes, including educational attainment, labour market participation, health, wealth and treatment by the criminal justice system. These outcomes are related, and school exclusions can act as a key link in a chain of risk leading to adverse consequences throughout an individual's life, for example, pupils officially excluded from school at age 12 are four times more likely to be in prison by age 24.

David Lammy MP is quoted as saying, "The relationship between pupil referral units [a type of alternative provision maintained by the local authority] and the criminal justice system has become symbiotic, and the rise of exclusions is creating a pipeline of young people into our prison system. There is no fiscal or moral case to go on like this."

Conference we have seen a spike in the numbers of Black victims of crime this year, we now have to say enough is enough, our young Black people deserve a better start in life and not blamed for the inadequacies of this inept Tory government.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the Local Government Service Group to highlight the disparity that exists with Black pupils and exclusions and look at a campaign initiative to address this;

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- 2) Request from the Regional Black Members Committees analysis of local data to campaign for the reduction of Black pupil exclusions;
- 3) Draft an article for Black Action highlighting the extent of the impact on young Black pupils and signpost members to organisations that have been able to offer support to UNISON members.

### ***National Black Members' Committee***

#### **30. Support to Complete Slavery Memorial in Hyde Park**

Conference notes Memorial 2017 is a registered charity with no paid staff, run entirely by volunteers. They have been working since 2002 to erect a permanent memorial to remember enslaved Africans and their descendants.

UNISON General Secretary Dave Prentis joined as a Patron in October 2017 and said: "This memorial is a vital opportunity to remember the brutal impact of transatlantic slavery on enslaved Africans and generations of their descendants, one of humanity's greatest crimes. I'm proud to support it both personally and on behalf of UNISON's 1.3 million members."

UNESCO "This memorial is considered as an important contribution for raising public awareness on the history of the slave trade and slavery." Ali Mussa Lye.

Lord Oates, a Patron, has raised the subject twice in the House of Lords in 2016 and 2017. To date we are trying to get government support but the memorial is an uncomfortable truth for many, consequently there has been many obstacles to overcome to bring this to fruition.

To date the memorial has a proposed memorial sculpture, planning permission from Westminster City Council, 1,116 sq. meters site in Hyde Park's Rose Garden for an Enslaved Africans Memorial Garden. They need to raise £3.3 million to cover the cost.

This Conference therefore calls upon the NBMC to:

- 1) Publish an article in Black Action, raising awareness of UNESCO's work to erect a memorial that depicts the history of the slave trade and slavery.
- 2) Encourage branches to affiliate to UNESCO.

### ***Birmingham UNISON Branch***

#### **Efficient and Effective Union**

#### **31. Amendment to Standing Orders of National Black Members Conference**

Conference resolves to create a new standing order in the National Black Members Conference Standing Orders (Section 3 Motions & amendments):

3.4 Each motion shall contain no more than 500 words (except composites) and each amendment shall contain no more than 250 words

### ***Eastern Region***

## **2019 Black Members Conference**

### **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

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#### **Motions Ruled Out of Order**

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Action not specific to the Conference

#### **Motion The Cultural and Language Barriers in the Workplace**

Conference, many of our members experience communication and language barriers in the workplace. These members are some of our most vulnerable Black workers - migrant workers, low paid members, those working in the 'hidden workforce' but are integral and valuable for service delivery and provision.

The reality is that language and cultural barriers and misunderstandings can get in the way of effective communication. It can affect the ability of members to organise and challenge discrimination and exploitation in the workplace. It can affect trade union organising. It can also create problems with health and safety.

Conference, these experiences may not be highlighted by Black members and many are suffering in silence because their voices cannot be heard. This adds to the injustices they experience in the workplaces. The continued attacks on public services and funding do not help the situation. These members are also confronted with prejudice about their abilities and their rights to live and work in this country without exploitation.

Conference believes that the contribution made by these workers should be properly recognised and rewarded. Conference also believes that they need greater support in tackling language barriers and that English language training should be more widely available for migrants so that they know their rights and can participate and integrate more successfully in the workplace and wider society.

Conference also believes that if these vulnerable workers who face language and other communication barriers are not supported with appropriate measures and mechanism in place then they would be disadvantaged to deliver the service that is so vital to public services like the NHS,

Conference calls upon the National Black Members Committee to:

1. Work with regional contacts and NEC Black representatives to identify, contact and help organise Black members to provide them with greater support and help
2. Work with Service Group across the union and seek to bring awareness about these issues and develop bargaining policies and procedures to help deliver effective support and change
3. Support UNISON's work with tackling inequality and supporting vulnerable workers and the 'hidden workforce'.

***National Black Members' Committee***

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

### **Motion Development of Targeted recruitment strategy that engages black community groups by adopting a different style of working**

That UNISON develop a recruitment strategy that engages black community groups

- 1) Current strategy focuses on recruitment through workplaces and utilises the stewards to achieve it.
- 2) Historically black members are spread across multiple cities/workplaces and at times can be the only black person in a workplace.
- 3) Current UNISON membership benefits e.g. insurance plan, car insurance, home insurance, funeral, lottery, Thompsons etc., can be adopted to meet black member needs i.e. extended insurance policy for parent and immediate family abroad.
- 4) Although UNISON's current strategy is to use stewards in recruitment within high density unionised workplaces, a lot more needs to be done around Black members recruitment.

We call upon UNISON to:

- 1) Develop a targeted recruitment strategy for black members.
- 2) UNISON to reach out to black members groups within the community where black members congregate and where black members are likely to work in the public sector and also be in low paid jobs.

### **The Benefits to UNISON**

- 1) Increase in income from all the new subscriptions.
- 2) Specific targeted recruitment will bring about diversity and opportunities to those that would be otherwise marginalised in our community.
- 3) UNISON has influence in the political arena through Labour Link. Recruitment of migrant workers strengthens UNISON's position within the migrant population and black members.
- 4) Targeted recruitment will bring about diversity and fresh ideas and multiculturalism which can help in organising and recruitment and community cohesion.

### ***Durham***

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Beyond the remit of the Committee

### **Motion Immigration rules affecting children's education**

Refugees are those granted refugee status after an asylum application or through one of the government programmes to resettle refugees in the UK (such as the Gateway Protection Programme).

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Some people who apply for asylum are not given refugee status but may be given other forms of leave: exceptional leave to remain (not granted since 2003), humanitarian protection and discretionary leave or limited leave to remain.

Most of these types of leave are time limited and must be renewed. After five, six or ten years they may also be changed to indefinite leave to remain (ILR). Immigration law suggest that, when anyone applies for leave to remain to be extended or changed to indefinite leave, they stay covered by their previous leave until they get a decision on the application, as long as they apply before their leave expires. This can take a long time which has been known to impact on children who fall under their parent's status.

Black children are being asked to step off their University course until their visas are renewed which sometimes takes a long time. Currently black children who have a limited leave to remain status are unable to access university education until they have obtained indefinite leave to remain or they have extended their visa. This also comes with a financial burden for these individuals as The basic ILR (Indefinite leave to remain in UK –permanent stay) fee of £1875 per applicant which is definitely exorbitant and puts majority of Black children and their families at a disadvantage, as they are unable to afford this high cost plus additional quality legal representation.

In addition to that, Black Children who do not hold ILR or a visa that has no restriction are unable to apply for student funding due to the restrictions on their visas such as no recourse to public funds which has meant that parents on low incomes have to foot the university bill but only to have another blow when their child is withdrawn from the course due to their limited status.

The current student finance criteria stipulates that, you can apply if all of the following apply:

- You're a UK national or have 'settled status' (no restrictions on how long you can stay)
- You normally live in England
- You've been living in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for 3 years before starting your course

Non-UK nationals must have settled status on the first day of the first academic year of the course - which could be 1 September, 1 January, 1 April or 1 July.

You may also be eligible if your residency status is one of the following:

- Refugee
- Humanitarian protection
- EEA migrant worker
- child of a Swiss national

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- Child of a Turkish worker
- A stateless person (including family members) and you're a new student starting on or after 1 August 2018

You may also be eligible if you're not a UK national and are either:

- From an EU country
- Under 18 and have lived in the UK for at least 7 years
- 18 or over and have lived in the UK for at least 20 years (or at least half of your life)

The reality is that disadvantages are still entrenched and discrimination remains rife. A report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission published in August showed that black graduates in Britain were paid an average 23.1% less than similarly qualified white workers. It revealed that since 2010 there had been a 49% increase in the number of ethnic minority 16- to 24-year-olds who were long-term unemployed, while in the same period there had been a fall of 2% in long-term unemployment among white people in the same age category. Black workers are also more than twice as likely to be in insecure forms of employment such as temporary contracts or working for an agency. This will remain the case unless we break the walls of disadvantage that today block the paths of young black Britons.

Conference condemns the Immigration policies that are aimed at affecting the lives of black children and the financial burden placed on families to meet these exorbitant immigrant fees just to educate their children.

Conference call on the National Black Members' Committee to:

- Raise these issues with the UK Home Office.
- Work with organisations, who have a record of best practice in supporting Black people on immigration issues.
- Education is everyone's right therefore NBNC needs challenge policy makers and immigration law when they do not adhere to this basic right.
- Call for the home office to allow children who hold limited leave to remain or any other status to still attend university while they wait for their decision.
- Challenge immigration fees and the impact these fees have on the lives of Black children.

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***Northern Region***

# **2019 Black Members Conference**

## **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

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Not competent

### **Motion Organising Against Racism**

Conference notes with deep concern the rise of the far right in the west. A resurgence in organised and violent racist, Islam phobic, anti-Semitic, misogynist and homophobic politics has profound consequences for all workers. Over the past year, the far right have felt emboldened to organise and connect with each other with negative consequences for all vulnerable communities and democratic standards everywhere.

Conference believes that tackling racism and xenophobia must continue to be an urgent priority for all unions. Recent polling by the TUC found that 37% of Black workers polled reported that they have been racially bullied, abused or discriminated against. This included verbal abuse; racist comments and jokes; bullying and harassment; physical violence; being singled out and treated differently; or discriminated against. Respondents said that they felt isolated and reluctant to complain - over 43% did not feel able to report their experience of discrimination to their employers and 38% did not report incidents of bullying and harassment.

Conference believes that, by developing and promoting a "hostile environment" the Home Office legitimises and encourages this racism and weakens the ability of public sector organisations to stand against racism and deliver equality. This is evidenced in many ways, but the absurd and brutal treatment of the Windrush community is a profound illustration of the fact that no Black worker can assume they are safe from attack regardless of their length of residence or citizenship. The risk of deportation extends well beyond the ongoing attack on refugees and asylum seekers. EU workers, for example, face a very uncertain and anxious future.

Conference believes that institutional racism in Government, the rise of the far right and increasing workplace attacks are all connected. They form constituent parts of a general rise in racism and must be confronted by the organised power of workers.

Conference commends affiliated unions and their members for all the many campaigns and interventions made to challenge discrimination, protect migrant workers and defeat racism. But the reality is that we must do more.

Conference notes and welcomes the National Black Workers Committee's commitment to take a strategic and focused approach to the shared objectives of affiliates. Conference also notes and welcomes the National Black Workers Committee's recognition that, above all, it is organised power of workers in trade unions that enables our members to defeat racism and protect vulnerable workers. Conference therefore calls for a focused, concerted and strategic response centred on the organised power of workers.

Conference calls on the National Black Workers Committee to link with lay and paid organisers to unite the growing organising power of the union and deploy that resource in defence of Black workers against all forms of racism and against the "hostile environment" of the Home Office.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Conference recognises that the specifics of a targeted organising campaign should be a matter for the National Black Workers Committee with one caveat. This should not be a press campaign to highlight the problem. Conference calls for a workplace focused organising campaign using all the effective organising skills identified and developed by the union. Only the organised power of Black workers, migrant workers and the wider union can truly deliver the security and equality our members demand.

### ***Scotland Region***

#### **Motion Black Under-Representation at Chief Officer Level Within Local Government**

Conference notes it is acknowledged that very few Black people are employed at Chief Officer level, in fact only 3.5% of Black people are at the top of UK's leading organisations compared to 12.9% in the general population.

An article by Ian Thomas, Chief Executive of Lewisham LBC, published in the Municipal Journal on 21 August 2018, states that: "According to the 2011 census, BAME citizens make up 13% of the population in England and Wales. Given that there are 375 local authorities from a crude and very simplistic perspective, around 49 Chief Officer's should be of BAME origin." The actual figure does not exceed 10 (3%) so why are we still where we are?

According to recruitment experts, Green Park, of 1,000 senior BME workers 82% said there is still institutional prejudice against minorities at work. Over 20% have personally experienced it in the last 3 years. This prejudice is believed to be unconscious bias, an unintended consequence of appointment panels that are severely lacking in diversity.

Whilst this fact has been recognized by Central, Regional and Local Government, the building blocks have not yet been put in place to address the alarming issue of under-representation in senior leadership. This is of serious concern, for if the leadership of public sector bodies does not accurately represent the people of those communities, how will they be best placed to deliver key services to local people.

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- a) Campaign to increase Black representation at Chief Officer level, particularly within Local Government.
- b) To work with Green Park and Equality and Human Rights Commission, and other relevant groups to look at appropriate strategies to address the issue of Black under-representation at Chief Officer level.

### ***Birmingham UNISON Branch***

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

### **Motion Support UN Anti-Racism Day Demonstration**

Support UN Anti-Racism Day Demonstration

Conference notes:

- 1) The disturbing rise of racist and fascist activity across Europe and the confidence given to the far right globally by the Trump presidency.
- 2) The coalescing of racist and fascist groupings from the Democratic Football Lads Alliance through to UKIP and the fascists around the 'Free Tommy Robinson campaign'.
- 3) The violent 15000 strong far right 'free speech' rally on 9 June in central London, the assault on trade unionists following the Stand Up To Racism/Unite Against Fascism counter demo against Robinson's supporters on 14 July and the fascist attack on the TUC's official bookshop Bookmarks.
- 4) The call by Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell for a mass movement against the racist and fascist right in the spirit of the Anti-Nazi League.
- 5) That Boris Johnson's Islamophobic comments have also added to the confidence of far right.

This Conference believes:

- 1) That internationally we face the biggest threat from the far right since the 1930s.
- 2) That we need a mass movement in Britain to halt the growth of the racist and fascist right.

This Conference instructs NBMCC to:

- 1) To seek the widest level of support from Black Members and the wider union to the Stand Up To Racism Trade Union Conference and National UN Anti-Racism Day Demonstration in Feb/ March 2019 – building opposition to fascism and racism.
- 2) Through appropriate Unison channels offer support, publicise and make funds available for transport to the Stand Up To Racism Trade Union Conference and National UN Anti-Racism Day Demonstration in Feb/ March 2019.
- 3) Invite Stand up to Racism speaker to address Unison Black Members Conferences & Events

***Salford City Unison***

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

### **Motion Free Palestine- Motion for Black Members Conference 2018**

Notes the following statement issued in August 18:

As Black Workers, we reaffirm our fundamental right to the freedom of expression, and publicly to express our anxieties about the suppression of information on the history and lived experience of our communities.

Many of us arrived in the UK as migrants and as refugees, seeking safety from war and repression, and the effects of racism, persecution and colonialism both past and present. As a result, we know their oppressive impact on our communities, and can identify where many of the current experiences of injustices we face in Britain today are also based on racism and colonialism.

These problems are having a destructive impact on public discussions about race and immigration. It is therefore our responsibility – and also our right- to relay our direct experiences of human rights abuses suffered here and abroad, as well as their structural and historical causes, to address them. This democratic obligation is recognised in Article 10 of the Human Rights Act, to “receive and impart information”, and provides the basis for a democracy to function. As the Institute for Race Relations recently confirmed, our communities: “have a right to be heard, to make...information public, while others have the right to hear them, and the arguments based on these facts”.

We are deeply worried about current attempts to silence a public discussion of what happened in Palestine and to the Palestinians in 1948, when the majority of its people were forcibly expelled. These facts are well established and accessible, are part of the British historical record, as well as the direct experience of the Palestinian people themselves. The Palestinian community in the UK has raised the disturbing absence of key information about these past and current injustices, and highlighted the racism it exposes then and now.

Public discussion of these facts, and a description of these injustices, would be prohibited under the IHRA’s guidelines, and therefore withholds vital knowledge from the public. This silencing has already begun. Today we can freely describe the racist policies experienced in the era of British and European colonialism in our countries of origin (indeed it is taught in British schools), but the colonial history of the Palestinians is continually erased. This is a dangerous breach of our own rights, and of the wider British public: we must all hear the full story of the Palestinians in order to make sense of the current discussions about racism and Israel.

We also know of the efforts by organisations – including UK-based fundamentalist groups aligned with the far-right in the US – to deny Palestinians’ basic humanity by suppressing their entire history and current plight. At the same time, hard-line conservative groups in the US, such as the Middle East Forum, are providing funding and support to anti-Muslim extremist Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (aka Tommy Robinson), deliberately increasing hatred, fear, and confusion. These coordinated efforts by right-wing extremists are being actively encouraged by President Trump’s racism and fear-mongering, which is now aimed at dismantling UNRWA, the UN agency that protects Palestinian refugees.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Over this past year, several terrible events have demonstrated the dangers of silencing migrant and BAME communities. The fatal fire at Grenfell Tower and the shameful Windrush scandal have shown the active legacies of British colonialism, where racism forms an integral part of British policies, and renders our communities invisible. This denies our dignity and humanity, and our right to fair treatment under the rule of law: the bedrock of British society.

Instructs NBMCC to:

Through appropriate Unison channels remind our Officers, politicians and public bodies of their responsibilities to uphold the principles of the Human Rights Act for every British citizen and resident in the UK equally, especially the direct victims of colonialism, racism, and discrimination. As Black Workers we stand as one, united against all attempts to suppress our voices and our calls for justice, freedom and equality.

Through appropriate Unison channels add our support to a list of organisations from Black & Migrant Groups who initiated the above statement. Furthermore urge ministers to demand an end to the blockade of Gaza and the occupation of Palestine, suspend the arms trade with Israel, support essential public services, including healthcare, water and electricity for the people of Gaza, re-stating our support for the boycott, disinvestment and sanction campaign.

***Salford City Unison***

### **Motion Combating Structural Racism in UK Society, Institutions and Workplaces**

National Black Members Conference 2019 notes:

1. the 29% rise in hate crimes between 2016-17,
2. the racist tone of current Brexit propaganda, and
3. the Government's ineffective response to the Windrush scandal.

Conference notes the presence of structural racism within UK society and that this is largely untouched by current anti-discrimination legislation because such legislation merely addresses certain non-acceptable behaviours, rather than the non-conscious mindset created by the reality of white privilege. This mindset leads to inadvertent actions in all sectors of society and within employers that negatively impact black people and leads to the need to redefine racism as 'being in the position to negatively affect other people's life chances', as Reni Eddo-Lodge explains in her book 'Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race', rather than simply personal prejudice.

Conference calls on National Black Members Conference to work with the NEC and the UNISON Learning and Organising Services to address the despair, frustration and anger of our Black members and the wider society, resulting from structural racism to take a lead in sensitising others, particularly those holding power, to both

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

the issue of structural racism flowing from white privilege and what is required to address it by:

1. the creation of a Black Members Task Force to draw on the experience of UNISON members to create an education programme that will enable all those within UNISON as well as employers to understand the damaging impact of structural racism and the attitudes, policies and processes that need to be in place to counter it.
2. a requirement that all UNISON staff and activists attend the new education programme
3. ensuring the education programme is offered to employers as an opportunity for UNISON to educate their employees and recruit.

### ***South West Region***

#### **Motion Better Communication for Black members**

Conference calls in the National Black Members Committee and the national young members forum to develop a communications strategy to promote better and more effective communications and engagement between the NBMC and young members.

National Young Members

### ***National Young Members' Forum***

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Not sufficiently clear

#### **Motion Defending free movement of people and immigrant rights**

Conference notes:

1. The rights of immigrants has become decisive to the direction of our society.
2. Unison's 2018 NDC rightly adopted a motion on Brexit from the NEC that committed the union to defending the free movement of people to live, work, study and join their families in Britain;
3. The Brexit referendum was dominated heavily by racist scapegoating of immigrants and refugees, and increased the level of racist attacks and abuse;
4. Elsewhere in Europe, in response to increasing open violence of anti-immigrant nationalism, migrants are unionising, striking and leading mass demonstrations; their repeated demands centre on the free movement of people, ending racism, opening the ports and borders, and regularisation for migrant workers and families.
5. The Labour Party, while supporting continued membership of the EU Customs Union and seeking to preserve the free movement of goods, services and capital with the EU, has committed to ending the free movement of people.

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Conference further notes:

1. The Windrush scandal has highlighted the inhumanity and racism of the Government's Hostile Environment policy toward immigrants, and the racist basis of Britain's immigration legislation. The discriminatory 'patriality' principle of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts consciously put in place to protect white people whilst rights for British commonwealth citizens in general were destroyed;
2. Exposure has opened up an opportunity to challenge the historic injustice afresh, and to unite our communities from commonwealth, former colonies and the rest of the world, whether we are newly settling or long-established in Britain;
3. The Government's Windrush Scheme excludes those descendants and close family members of the Windrush generation who came to the UK after 1 January 1973, and the Movement for Justice has established a Widen Windrush campaign to reverse this injustice and is submitting a series of cases to challenge the racial discrimination. The campaign was launched at a meeting in the House of Commons on 17th July, hosted by Janet Daby MP and supported by David Lammy MP, Eleanor Smith MP and Baroness Hamwee;

Conference believes that:

1. The opportunity and duty before us is two-fold: putting a stop to the ongoing injustice of previous immigration laws which continue to blight the lives of Windrush generations and their families; and to stop the new injustice taking place with Brexit of ending free movement of people. We must take strong action;
2. The Government's Brexit plans, its divisions and the prospect of a 'no deal' Brexit threaten greater poverty and increased racism and xenophobia that will especially affect Black and immigrant workers, families and communities;
3. The Labour Party's opposition to the free movement of people is a dangerous and unnecessary concession to anti-immigrant bigotry that undermines workers' rights and human rights.

Conference calls on the National Black Members' Committee to:

1. Support and publicise the Widen Windrush campaign and encourage Black members' and Black members' groups to take up this issue in branches and regions, and in the wider community; to invite speakers, and bring the legal cases to attention so any member affected can also come forward and potentially join the legal challenge;
2. Launch a campaign in Unison to defend the free movement of people, on the basis of the motion passed at the NDC in 2018;
3. Work with Labour Link to seek a reversal of the Labour Party's opposition to the free movement of people, and to call on the Labour Party to use every opportunity to defeat the Government, as this would force a general election and stop Brexit.

# **2019 Black Members Conference**

## **UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

**SOAS UNISON (M)**

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Requiring a rule change

### **Motion Advancing the unions work on race equality**

Conference notes with alarm the results of the visual exercise conducted by the NBMC chair during a rule change debate at National Delegate Conference 2018 in Brighton, the aim was to establish the number of Black members by identified gender, once those who identified as Black women sat down as requested , conference saw a stark and extremely low representation of Black men (standing) at conference.

Whilst this conference recognises the many advances there have been for Black members in UNISON, for example training courses on race equality, how to deal with institutionalised racism, the creation of the Race Discrimination Claims Protocol, which allows access to a legal opinion from Thompsons where discussion has identified a racist element to a grievance, the Challenging Racism in the Workplace toolkit which has been created and is regularly updated, a tool which provides a clear mechanism to identify and act upon racism, suggesting ways on how to challenge racism formally and informally within the workplace.

Nevertheless, feedback from members as to their daily experiences of racism at work, whether they experience taunts, “bad looks”, lack of advancement, development, promotion, unfair treatment such as lack of access to training to the more insidious practices like isolation, intimidation, bullying or harassment it would seem as though little has changed for Black members at work following the Race Relations Amendment Act 1968 and beyond.

Motions to local government conference 2018 have requested information as to the experience of Black members including the numbers who are employed and the various levels at which they are employed in their organisations, further detailing their involvement at branch regional and national level. In this respect an intended review of the union which evidenced its work around Black member's issues was to be welcomed, in the absence of the completion of this work, Black members must push to have their concerns advanced to the highest levels of the union's decision making in order to see race equality taken seriously and incorporated into the core business of the unions work, for their concerns to be considered by branches and regions in their strategies on negotiation and collective bargaining around pay and workplace terms and conditions.

The General Secretary Dave Prentis states that at the heart of the unions work is equality, seeing the responsibility to challenge inequality discrimination prejudice and racism as everyone's responsibility, he continues in this saying that core to its knowledge and better understanding of the issues for women, Black, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered (LGBT), and disabled members are its self-organisation structures which “help UNISON understand equality and meet its equality aims” (UNISON, 2018).

## **2019 Black Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Although it was not a strictly conducted or measured sample which was tested at National Delegates Conference 2018, we know that in 2017-19 NEC elections only one Black male was registered on the NEC , this cannot be representative of our union members. We therefore ask that this union expand the number of Black members seats by one, in order to assist contribution to debates, a wider sphere of influence in terms of the voting process in support of Black members, at the same time clarifying and reaffirming the importance of the role of the reserved seat NEC member in support of their elected constituency.

In the spirit of the NWC rule amendment which fell, and in support of the intentions of the national women's, LGBT, non-binary and disabled members committee, the additional NEC seat should be listed as a general seat enabling all members of the union who identify as Black to apply but also allowing a male.

Conference calls on the NBMC to seek that the NEC

Explore the provision of an additional NEC seat for Black members, to be listed as a general seat as part of its reserved seat structure for Black members on the NEC

***National Black Members' Committee***

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Received past the deadline

**The Cultural Diversity of the United Kingdom should accommodate the teaching of its entire people**

**Enfield**