

# 2019 National Delegate Conference

## UNISON FINAL AGENDA

**ACC Liverpool**

**18 Jun 2019 21 Jun 2019**

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### **Organising and Recruitment**

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Organisation and Development

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#### **1. DEVELOPING ORGANISING RESOURCES IN BRANCHES AND REGIONS**

Conference recognises the major organising challenges facing branches and regions. Austerity, the continuing fragmentation of public service delivery as well as the loss of experienced activists through cutbacks, amongst other things, have contributed towards making the job of a UNISON activist ever more difficult.

Conference believes that to meet these challenges, the union needs to promote improved cooperation between branches and between regions to ensure that UNISON is more visible to the members and non members.

Conference congratulates those branches and regions that have pioneered initiatives to foster closer working and to increase the visibility of the union through resource centres, shop fronts, organising centres and mobile units.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support branch and regional initiatives to develop resource centres, shop fronts, organising centres, mobile units and similar initiatives;
- 2) Work with branches and regions to promote and develop more of such initiatives;
- 3) Consult with branches and regions on setting clear targets for the development of these initiatives on the basis of what will work best in each locality;
- 4) Continue to ensure that support is provided from the centre for the development and ongoing work of these initiatives;
- 5) Share best practice from regions and branches.

***National Executive Council***

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#### **2. Growing the Union**

UNISON as the biggest trade union should be congratulated on achieving growth in 2018. The whole union recruitment campaign demonstrated what can be achieved when all parts of the union work together. The Northern Region believes the union should commit to this type of organising approach as a regular event. A core part of our strength as a trade union is our commitment to equality which is central to UNISON's aims and objectives. UNISON is clear that equality can never be an afterthought and we must always keep equality on all agendas by employing different organising strategies to counter the myth that equality is no longer an issue.

Conference also needs to recognise that outsourced members working in hospitals, schools and universities, women, Black, disabled, LGBT and migrant workers

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predominately experience prejudice and discrimination and inequality sometimes on a daily basis.

Continuous and effective organising of those members is crucial to identify and find solutions that collectively resolve problems.

Conference welcomes and congratulates the work of the UNISON National Strategic Organising Unit on organising and supporting outsourced workers facing inequality in the workplace.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that whole union recruitment and organising initiatives such as Grovember become regular events and that good practice is shared;
- 2) Continue to strengthen the Joint Branch Assessments demonstrating partnership with branch and union staff also ensuring that adequate resources are available for organising around equality;
- 3) Continue to strengthen and develop strategies for reaching out and supporting workers facing inequality;
- 4) Ensure that the National Organising Equality Strategy is imbedded in all aspects of Branch structures;
- 5) Explore the setting up of a UNISON Organising Academy to train and support new and existing activists.

### ***Northern Region***

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#### **2.1**

Insert new fourth paragraph before "Conference welcomes....".

"Furthermore, Conference notes that sectors of public services with future growth projections such as social care and under five's education are predominantly female with endemic worker exploitation, low pay and insecure employment."

At end add new point 6):

"6) Carry out research into future growth in public services employment including social care and under five's education; followed up by adoption and roll out of whole union organising strategies for those sectors."

### ***North West Region***

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#### **2.2**

Add new point 4):

"4) Proactively recruit and organise staff on private contracts with a view to getting union recognition and to campaign for improved pay and conditions."

Re-number remaining points accordingly.

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Camden

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### 3. Protection and membership for casualised workers

Conference notes:

- 1) That millions of working-age people in the UK work on zero-hours, fixed-term, casual, part-time contracts or 'work arrangements'. Others work through agencies, and many have been forcibly outsourced to wholly-owned subsidiary companies, with their rights diminished;
- 2) The casualisation of work is affecting our collective power, and it keeps many of us in dire poverty and insecurity;
- 3) That casual workers face difficulty in gaining union membership, and to have access to facilities time;
- 4) To deny access to casualised workers is to play into the hands of those who don't want unions to grow or for workers to be united;
- 5) Young people are especially affected by the erosion of working rights - many start their working life by holding insecure job roles. 2019 is the year of Young People in UNISON, and as such we need to make sure that no young worker who wants to join UNISON, is deterred from becoming a member;
- 6) We can learn from how other unions have managed to put casualisation on the national agenda (for instance, in Higher Education), showing how precarity and poverty can be fought against.

Conference resolves:

- a) By National Delegate Conference 2020, National Executive Council to create and present a recruitment strategy to actively attract casualised workers;
- b) National Executive Council to ensure membership and support are available to casualised workers;
- c) National Executive Council to create and distribute literature and posters that can be personalised by any branch, with the following information:
  - i) Why casualisation matters;
  - ii) How casualised workers can organise themselves;
  - iii) What their rights are;
  - iv) How to fight against casualisation and outsourcing;
  - v) How officers and reps can best support casualised workers;
- d) The training and learning team to offer training on casualisation as an organising and workplace issue;

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- e) To encourage UNISON branches in all sectors to elect anti-casualisation officers;
- f) To put casualisation on the national agenda by making it a priority in national bargaining talks.

*Birmingham University*

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### 3.1

At the end of action point a) after “workers” insert “who are eligible for UNISON membership;”

*National Executive Council*

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## 4. Using Digital Organising to Reach Members

We are living in a digital age. This is evident in all our workplaces where technology is increasingly playing a part in our daily lives at work and outside. To keep up with the rapid pace of change UNISON branches must develop, embracing the organising opportunities presented by digital technologies. If the union is to be a confident outward looking campaigning union at all levels we must equip activists and branches with the skills and technologies necessary for this task.

Therefore, we call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) To carry out a skills audit of branches to help determine the current skills base;
- 2) Use the information gathered from the surveys to commission appropriate training to enhance and develop skills necessary to operate effectively in the digital space;
- 3) Identify, publish and promote best practice example illustrating how and where the use of digital has helped build stronger more effective workplace organisation.

*Suffolk Area Health*

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## 5. Extending Recognition Agreements in Local Government

Conference notes that the Employment Relations Act 1999 established the right to statutory recognition by employers of trade unions for the purposes of collective bargaining on pay, hours and holiday.

The UK government has also ratified several key laws and conventions from European Law, for example, Article 28 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union giving all workers the fundamental right to negotiate and conclude collective agreements and to take collective action (including strike action) to defend their interests.

While many agreements are reached voluntarily each year, some of our members in local authorities are either not covered by such agreements or the agreements are outdated, leaving our members with only partial protection, especially if they are subsequently ‘out-sourced’ or transferred to another organisation.

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Conference believes that UNISON should seek to build and extend its influence to defend improve our pay, terms and conditions. And each level of the organisation should work together to achieve this, therefore we ask the National Executive Council to:

- a) Require regions and branches to annually map those organisations which do not have recognition agreements and those where agreements are inadequate;
- b) Require regions to agree annual targets to increase UNISON recognition;
- c) Provide training and relevant materials to branches and regions, to be used in preparation for building UNISON's density within those organisations and negotiate recognition agreements. Organising staff should be allocated to key sites and work with branches in sustained and in depth recruitment and retention campaigns;
- d) Assist regions and branches in reaching recognition agreements voluntarily and where this is not possible, to seek statutory recognition;
- e) Share 'case-studies' within our service groups in order to spread best practice and to publicise our success where agreements have been reached.

***Cambridge City and South***

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### **6. Health and Safety Representatives**

Conference recognises the vital role of its health and safety representatives both in terms of protecting our members' health and safety in the workplace, and improving the organising strength of this union.

UNISON's network of safety representatives, are the eyes and ears of the workplace, and their dedication and hard work is an inspiration to all those interested in promoting workers' rights, and safe and healthy work. UNISON's Safety Representative of the Year award recognises the impacts and successes in workplaces around the UK.

Despite their achievements, UNISON faces increasing challenges if it is to maintain this network. Large numbers of our safety representatives are leaving employment as they reach retirement. At the same time UNISON is struggling to recruit new younger safety representatives to replace those that have left.

Conference notes the success of the Grovember campaign which not only cemented UNISON's position as the UK's biggest trade union, but also showed it to be a growing union, increasingly establishing itself in sectors where previously it had no or little presence. This success has in itself posed new challenges. Many of these new members work in places where there are no safety representatives, and may also have little knowledge of their own rights, and what their employers are required to do to protect their safety. In addition as our membership increases UNISON's dwindling base of safety representatives face increasing demands on their time.

In the light of these challenges Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

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- 1) Launch a campaign to increase the number of safety representatives, focussing particularly on recruiting younger safety representatives, and ensuring that as many workplaces as possible have at least one safety representative;
- 2) Ask branches to review their network of safety representatives, and target:
  - a) Recruiting new younger representatives;
  - b) Ensuring that all members have access to the support and advice of these representatives, focussing on those areas where UNISON previously had little or no organising presence;
- 3) Review its Health and Safety guides, leaflets and literature identifying any gaps, and prioritising those issues outlined above.

### ***West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport***

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#### **7. Time for Change-A review of how UNISON is structured and funded**

Our structures need to be fit for purpose with resources placed where they are needed to reflect the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery. We need to boldly map out what type of union we need for the future, what our priorities should be and more crucially how we match our resources accordingly. Our future resource allocation must also reflect the major changes that the last 25 years have brought in terms of devolution of powers to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and the significant implications this has had for the delivery of public services in these regions and nations.

In order to thrive, we have to be fit for purpose with appropriate structures, improved organisation and sufficient resources placed where they are needed, not historically allocated.

All resourcing must reflect the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of public service delivery that continue to place a huge burden on branches striving to represent every member across multiple employers. The lack of facility time, limited access to non-core employers and members in isolated and fragmented workplaces continue to add to that pressure.

Any future resource allocation must also accommodate the new and growing demands placed on the national union for faster, speedier communications, more strategic large-scale litigation, more flexible, targeted training and more demanding and complex, sector based bargaining arrangements.

The financial formula devised in 1993 and revised in 2004 was established on single employer branches and streamlined bargaining arrangements both barely recognisable today. Fragmentation, outsourcing and devolution continue to reshape the world in which we operate, yet our financial allocations and current formula fail to reflect this. Branches having to deal with sometimes hundreds of private employers makes life very difficult for branch representatives and stewards who are the backbone of the union. The union also centrally faces additional demands, with increased costs across the board.

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Changing the way, we resource our branches has rightly been the topic of much debate in recent years. The debate however has failed to reach the heart of the problem, creating further tensions across branches. Tackling one area of under-funding at the expense of another will never provide the long-term financial solution we need for the viability of the whole union.

We seek our strength from our unity and the resources of our union belong to us all, to be shared fairly, guided by the trade union principles of solidarity and equity. As demands change those resources must be redirected to where they are needed for the benefit of all, and not to the detriment of some and directed to ensure that every member wherever they work can be represented.

The review must be inclusive, transparent and bold, examining our structures, operations and objectives with nothing ruled out, while reflecting the founding principles of UNISON:

- 1) Ensuring a strong member-led union which is accountable through democratic structures to members;
- 2) Recognising the role of member activists who represent the union to members, potential members and the community and who are the bedrock of the union;
- 3) Ensuring members are able not only to be represented, but that we seek to provide space and resources to facilitate members to be organised;
- 4) Aiming to ensure that UNISON should always be about increasing the power of members in the workplace facing their employer;
- 5) Recognising that devolution of political powers to the nations and administrative responsibilities to regions requires a union that can organise at these levels and develop policy appropriate to that devolved power. The past quarter of a century has shown that we are at best when we work together. For those who wish to strengthen and enhance our union and build on our achievements of the past 25 years there can be no more pressing issue.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to initiate a comprehensive strategic and functional review of the union's organisation, structures and resources at branch, regional and national level, including full consideration of the impact of devolution on these activities including a review of the Devolution Protocol.

The purpose of the review will be to ensure the most effective use of UNISON's resources to ensure all levels of our union are best placed to meet the challenges of the next 25 years.

The review group shall be inclusive and include 12 members of the National Executive Council and one representative from each region - including representatives from branches, service groups, self-organised groups, Young Members and Retired Members; but all members should be involved and asked their views.

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Conference agrees the need for a thorough review of all parts of the union after 25 years of operation and calls for regular reviews on a five yearly basis to ensure as a union we can effectively meet future challenges.

Report back to Conference in 2020 with a view to tabling proposals which if agreed by Conference can be implemented immediately together with any additional proposals which may take longer to take effect and could require rule changes to be considered by Conference in 2021.

Conference believes that nothing should be excluded from consideration from this review and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Invite submissions and views from all parts of the union;
- b) Produce a six-monthly update;
- c) Report back to Conference with proposals to renew our union structures to improve our operation, effectiveness and relevance in the future and with specific proposals which could include the level of branch resources which could take place with effect from 1 January 2021.

Areas which the review should consider will include the following issues but may also consider other areas which may arise in the course of the review:

- i) Is the current branch funding formula fit for purpose?
- ii) What additional branch resources and organising capacity can be put in place, where needed, by 1 January 2021?
- iii) Should the union to move towards geographical based branches where desired and appropriate rather than the no longer relevant (in most cases) approach of branches being based on single employers?
- iv) Are all current Conferences within the union cost effective in terms of frequency, length and relevance in delivering the best level of services to branches and members?
- v) Are there alternative means which could achieve the objectives of the union and maintain internal democracy and accountability?
- vi) Do our service groups structures, functions and conferences reflect the reality of the environment we work in going forward and are there options to better organise across the union?
- vii) Whether there should be a cap on branch reserves and if so, what the level should be?
- viii) Should branches receive less funding on a sliding level until they meet any agreed cap?



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- ix) Should there be a nationally agreed cap on the level of individual honorarium in Branches which can be applied and a cap on branch honoraria in percentage terms of branch funding in a formula taking account of the size of branches?
- x) Should branches be able to apply to jointly fund additional organising capacity in a scheme based on cost sharing from branch and national level?
- xi) Has the current overly bureaucratic model of self-organisation as an approach delivered the intended aims and objectives of the union and could the equalities agenda be more effectively progressed through alternative means?
- xii) How can communications be improved within the union in a cost-effective manner including access to a national directory of branches to assist good practice reflecting new working environments such as devolution, multi-regional /national employers / academy chains, employers where we do not have recognition agreements, etc?
- xiii) Are there ways to improve the management and effectiveness of national and regional resources and for them to be restructured and refocused to better deliver for members and branches and in the process identify resources to enable branch funding to be increased?
- xiv) Can improvements be made in the use of resources in terms of national and regional union premises through a reduction in renting properties where there may be cost effective alternatives to buy so we have assets rather than liabilities and could the union incentivise branches to consider doing the same where possible and appropriate?
- xv) How could we involve more representatives and members in decision making in the union and how could that objective influence our union structures and organisation.

### ***Northamptonshire County***

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#### **7.1**

In sub-paragraph iv):

Delete “cost” and substitute “inclusive and”;

Between “of” and “frequency” add “location,”; and,

Before “members” insert “relevant”.

### ***Islington***

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#### **7.2**

In sub-paragraph iv):

Delete "cost" and substitute "inclusive and";

Between "of" and "frequency" add "location".

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*City of Wolverhampton*

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Recruitment and Organising

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### **8. Recruitment and Retention of Members**

Conference notes with pride the increase in UNISON membership during 2018 and commends the effort made by branches and activists towards this significant achievement in the face of unrelenting Tory cuts to public services.

Throughout the decade of austerity UNISON has managed to mitigate membership losses and recruit new activists through its key Meeting the Organising Challenge (MTOC) strategy, this involved deploying resources at all levels towards organising and wherever possible converting administration resources into organising resources. Another key point of the Organising strategy has involved the fighting fund, which has allowed branches to access critical organising support to recruit new members, identify potential work place leaders and train and mentor new stewards.

We recognise that membership growth has only been sustained due to the union's campaign and organising agenda and investment in our MTOC strategies. Conference believes that UNISON must now work to ensure that the small but significant increase marks a watershed moment and the end of the years of decreases in member numbers.

Conference, however, notes with concern that future growth is still challenged by austerity which contrary to Theresa May's statements has not gone away and it is only by targeting resources towards recruitment and retention that we can continue to challenge austerity policies from the bottom up. Austerity has not only reduced UNISON's membership across all service groups but has crucially seen our activist base depleted through the redundancy/early retirement of many experienced stewards and branch officers. Government policy has therefore threatened the very existence of our union and continues to do so.

Conference therefore affirms that it is now vital to ensure adequate resources are allocated to ensure current levels of organising support are maintained in order to build on the successes of 2018, Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to ensure:

- 1) That recruitment and retention is a flagged as a key priority within local organising frameworks;
- 2) That branches and regions continue to work in partnership to identify areas in need of organising support;
- 3) That sufficient funds are made available to secure current levels of resources;
- 4) That branches, regional councils and committees continue to prioritise the recruitment, organising and retention of members as a key objective in their work plans and to discuss this as a standing item at their meetings;
- 5) That branches formulate a strategy, as part of any recruitment plan, to retain members who would otherwise leave the union.

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*Yorkshire and Humberside Region*

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### 8.1

Insert new fifth paragraph:

"Conference however notes that UNISON remains well positioned to increase membership density in our core areas and expand the union into strategic growth areas of public service employment including social care and early year's education."

Insert new point 6):

"6) That national organising strategy and regional and branch plans include organising activity in core areas and areas of growing public service employment."

*Halton*

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Education & Training

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## 9. ADDRESSING THE SKILLS CRISIS THROUGH UNISON LEARNING

The United Kingdom (UK) has the highest levels of over-qualification in the European Union (EU). At the same time has significant skills shortages in many sectors notably health and social care and education. UK employers do not have a coherent approach to addressing the current or future skills demand of the UK workforce; it is no coincidence, therefore, that UK productivity rate remains lower than many of our world competitors with correlating low living standards and low social mobility being the norm in many parts of the UK.

Developments in technology, globalisation and demographic changes have had and will continue to have a profound impact on the world of work. Across the UK public sector jobs have changed significantly. Preliminary findings from UNISON's Skills for the Future survey (based on 25,000 respondents so far) has shown that 46% of members have had new computer or automated equipment introduced in their workplace in the last 3 years, 66% identified a need for digital / computer training. The technological advances in public sector jobs will present many challenges but they will also present opportunities. Yet the UK lags behind many of our European and global counterparts.

Research from the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) shows that UK employers invest only half the EU average per employee for vocational training. In real terms investment in training and learning per employee fell by 13.6 per cent between 2007 and 2015. Of the members who did undertake learning in the past 12 months 52% said that they found training or education useful for keeping up to date with the skills required for their current job.

As the largest public sector union, UNISON has a role to play in shaping and influencing a national skills strategy that addresses these barriers with future Governments ensuring that public sector workers are provided with the skills and training they deserve to not only do their jobs well but to take up the opportunities of developing new skills to enhance their career opportunities.

UNISON also needs to do more to promote and embed a culture of learning throughout all structures of the union. A number of motions have been agreed by

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consecutive conferences, yet awareness amongst activists and members of UNISON's learning programmes remains patchy. Understandably the industrial agenda has dominated UNISON's activity over recent years with a whole union approach to defending jobs, conditions and services. The union's bargaining agenda needs to adopt a more robust approach to helping members acquire the skills and training they need for the future. There is clear evidence of our members of an appetite for learning with 80% of respondents to the UNISON Skills Survey agreeing that learning is important for their self-esteem and well being.

Learning at work agreements are at an unprecedented low number and the number of Union Learning Representatives (ULRs) has stayed static, with hundreds of branches reporting no ULRs or Life Long Learning reps. There is a similar lack of Branch Education Coordinators, a crucial role in supporting activists to access courses to develop skills and knowledge - only about 50% of branches have a Branch Education coordinator.

Learning activity supports the recruitment of new members and plays a role in retaining members. Learning in the workplace also plays a crucial role in supporting activists and members to develop confidence, skills and knowledge to be able to bargain, campaign and organise effectively to oppose the challenges and threats they face in the workplace.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for a national skills strategy as part of a New National Education Service.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council to encourage branches to:

- 1) Dedicate resources via the Organising Framework to promote and mainstream union learning as part of their bargaining agenda;
- 2) Proactively target recruitment of ULRs, lifelong learning coordinators and branch education coordinators;
- 3) Disseminate the results of the Skills Survey with the aim of engaging employers, branches and members in a dialogue about skills development for public service employees.

***National Executive Council***

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### 9.1

After fifth paragraph add:

“The continued rise in the levels of racism and the growth of fascist organisations across the UK demands a refreshed approach in the union that is a collaboration between the Strategic Organising Unit (SOU), Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) and the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) in blending learning and organising approaches with the leadership skills in the fight against racism and fascism by the whole union.

This is not a new approach to challenging racism and fascism but an underlining of the need to refresh one aspect of UNISON learning and development of activists to

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identify practical challenges and the organising options to meeting those challenges in a national weekend organising and development training school”.

Insert new bullet point 4):

"4) Promote and support the initiative for training and development of activists in a national weekend school in challenging racism and fascism”.

### *National Black Members' Committee*

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#### **10. Building Steward Networks**

Conference agrees that effective, strong and sustainable trade union organisation is dependent upon a network of well-trained motivated and energised workplace stewards representing members and acting as union ambassadors. It is no coincidence that workplaces with active stewards enjoy high union density, higher levels of participation and achieve more at the bargaining table.

The challenges faced with building effective steward networks are complex and undoubtedly influenced by the privatisation of public services which together with new models of corporate governance have combined to create a landscape of public service employers which is at best indifferent to trade union organisation and at worst hostile.

The environment contains a multiplicity of different employers, services fragmented, technology and automation drive new methods of work, workers are increasingly situated in smaller teams, or work alone, engagement with corporate structures is restricted, and the appreciation by ordinary workers of union organisation and workplace democracy limited.

Against this backdrop establishing the conditions necessary to build a network of workplace stewards is challenging and can only be achieved with a clear strategy, supported by a detailed plan and the organisational commitment to create the conditions necessary to support such activity.

Conference recognises that the best solution to the challenges faced by unions is a radical change in the legal framework supporting industrial relations. An opt-out system of trade union membership, a new settlement of sector wide collective bargaining, with new rights to paid time-off work for union duties and rights to access training are all necessary features of a new settlement. Conference agrees that this should be the unions objective and calls on the National Executive Council to continue campaigning for the necessary legislative changes to deliver an industrial relations framework conducive to the development of improved union organisation.

Conference notes this ambition but recognises that until a democratic socialist party is elected to office such progressive policies that would help rebalance power in the workplace are highly unlikely.

Conference understands that our union has an overriding responsibility to our members and must therefore organise within the legal, political and economic environment of our time using all of the available resources within the union and the wider movement.

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Conference therefore agrees to call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop and prioritise a strategic plan to build on and enhance our existing network of workplace stewards;
- 2) Implement operational plans at each level of the union with clear measurable outcomes and accountabilities to achieve a step change in the number of stewards across the union;
- 3) To hold a root and branch review of the current training and development programme with a view to creating revised offer that will meet the needs of all activists at each stage of their journey from member to activist;
- 4) Develop on-line and blended (mix of online and traditional face-face learning) courses for activists in recognition that access to paid time-off to attend training is not always possible and represents a major barrier to participation;
- 5) To consult regional convenors, self-organised groups and service groups in the development of points 1 to 4 above;
- 6) To report to National Delegate Conference 2020 on the work undertaken and the outcomes secured as a result.

***Eastern Region***

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### **11. Members Participation on Activism**

Conferences notes the concerning ongoing decline in our activist base within the union and the increasing age profile of activists at all levels.

For UNISON to continue to recruit, retain and support members we must increase our day to day visibility and activity within workplaces across the breadth and depth of the United Kingdom across all sectors of our union whether public or private, where we have recognition and where we do not.

It is therefore imperative that each of us as current activists seek to find, encourage, coach and mentor the next generation of activists to support our current work and take UNISON forward.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of current activists got involved in UNISON having had support with their own case, it therefore follows that our best opportunity to recruit new activists is at the point a member has received support.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to with branches and regions to:

- 1) Publish updated guidance to activists and branches on identifying and encouraging potential activists;
- 2) Develop a communications strategy to focus on promoting success stories from new activists using social media, UNISON's website and printed magazines;

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- 3) To develop a coaching and mentoring toolkit for branch activists and regional staff.

### *North West Anglia Hospitals*

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#### **12. Better Training and Support for Branch Activists**

Conference notes that our activists are the backbone of our union. They are in the front line of all our battles with employers, our campaigns and they are the first people members turn to when they have a problem.

Over the past eight years the role of a UNISON activist has become much harder than it has ever been. We face job losses, service cuts and employers using harsh sickness and disciplinary process to get rid of workers cheaply.

It now more important than ever that we ensure all our activists continue to receive good quality training delivered at a time and in a way that meets their requirements.

Conference therefore requests the National Executive Council:

- 1) Investigates and develops online training resources;
- 2) Confirms that although online training provision will be developed, there will still be a commitment to face-to-face training;
- 3) Commits to defending the collective learning experience of continuing to support and promote cross union training through the TUC;
- 4) Works with regions to ensure they provide adequate support to activists if sufficient support is not available in branches;
- 5) Works wherever possible with self organised groups to ensure all activists' needs are full understood and supported;
- 6) Produce an update on progress made against Motion 4, as carried at the 2016 National Delegate Conference.

### *Worcestershire*

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#### **13. Peer support for stewards and active UNISON members**

A major survey by the mental health charity Mind in 2017 revealed that workplace wellbeing support is worse in the public sector than in the private sector. The charity surveyed over 12,000 employees across the public and private sectors and found a higher prevalence of mental health problems in the public sector, as well as a lack of support available when people do speak up. As a union who supports members working in public services primarily, the importance of supporting our members' wellbeing is well recognised. There is however less of a focus on how we can support those in active roles such as stewards and union representatives to look after their own wellbeing. There is a lack of research on prevalence of mental health difficulties within active union members, however we know that those in roles supporting others emotional wellbeing, are at higher risk of experiencing emotional distress themselves (Turgoose & Maddox, 2017). We propose a monthly drop in peer support wellbeing session to be rolled out at branch level to give stewards and

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active UNISON members an opportunity to come and talk about any pressure or stresses relating to their UNISON role. This would be a great opportunity for stewards and active members to develop in their roles and learn from each other, as well as promoting positive wellbeing.

Conference requests the National Executive Council consider a programme of training that could help identify stewards who are interested in facilitating this drop in and support them at a branch level to deliver a monthly wellbeing session and that this will be a confidential safe space to discuss anything that has impacted on our wellbeing.

### ***Northamptonshire Health Workers***

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#### **14. Supporting our young workers through training opportunities**

Due to the challenges our young workers are facing in society with housing, finance, employment and managing their own wellbeing we need to ensure that we are supporting them and giving young workers the opportunity to develop skills to manage these challenges. We recognise that UNISON has young members groups and representatives at a branch, regional and national level and they give the 63,000 young workers a voice. We propose alongside all the good work that is currently taking place, that as a branch we have regular monthly training sessions for our young workers which tackles some of the tough issues facing young people and empowering them with the skills and knowledge they need to navigate work and society. We would ask professionals within our community who are able to deliver sessions for our young workers that are relevant to them. The aim of these sessions would be both to help ensure our young workers are equipped with the best knowledge and skills to manage the specific challenges they face, as well as acting as an incentive for recruiting more young members into UNISON.

Conference requests the National Executive Council consider developing training/support that would enable young members to meeting to discuss what their current needs are and how they would like these sessions to be delivered. With technology being at the forefront of training over recent years, there may be other ways of delivering training which would be more suited to fit in with work life. It's important that our young members feel they have ownership of this training and this will be key in the development of these sessions. It is so important that we support our young workers and develop them as the current challenges they face are unique and with the national picture being so unclear we need to empower our young people to be the new leaders we so desperately need.

### ***Northamptonshire Health Workers***

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#### **15. Young Members Mentoring and Support**

As we know 2019 is the year of the young worker. It is important that as a union we ensure that recruitment of young members to the union is a priority. We also urgently need to support more young people to become active in the union. In the Northern region we have developed an Ambassador programme, and are also working with apprentices. We believe it is important for Conference to recognise the need to ensure that young members are able to make a structured and supported transition into long term and sustainable activity within the union.



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Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Young Members Forum and other appropriate parts of the union to develop a specific young member mentoring and development programme.

*EDF Energy (Doxford)*

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### **16. Young Members Mentoring and Support**

Conference recognises the need to ensure that young members are able to make a structured and supported transition into long term and sustainable activity within the union.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Young Members Forum and other appropriate parts of the union to develop a specific young member mentoring and development programme.

*Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health*

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### **17. Suicide awareness training for stewards**

With the appointment by the government of a minister who is tasked with reducing suicide rates nationally, the need for all stewards to be trained in suicide awareness has never been clearer. Suicide is everyone's business and touches families whatever their class, age, gender or family situation. Last year nationally 6,213 people completed suicide and the highest suicide rate was among males between the ages of 45-49, though there has been an increase in males between the ages of 25-34 in 2018 (Samaritans' Suicide Statistics Report, 2018). We need to make sure all our stewards are aware of not only risk groups but how to signpost anyone they come into contact that might be having suicidal thoughts or at risk from suicide. We can empower our stewards to be able to support their members in accessing the correct support in a timely manner. We know from research that 3 out of 5 people have experienced mental health issues due to work (Samaritans' Wellbeing in the City report, 2018), and work place stress is associated with significantly increased suicide risk (Schneider et al., 2011; Milner et al., 2017). As union representatives we will be dealing with many members who are experiencing pressure and stress caused by their working situation. Suicide is not inevitable, it is preventable. Early identification of suicidal thoughts and behaviour, and effective care for those at risk, are crucial in reducing the likelihood that an individual makes a suicide attempt or dies by suicide. We are not expecting our stewards to be experts, but we also know that they can be at the sharp end of members' distress and giving them the correct tools to work with is key for them to feel confident but also be able to support members effectively.

Conference requests the National Executive Council to consider a short programme of training in suicide awareness, to be implemented nationally to empower our stewards with knowledge and the skills to identify and signpost members appropriately and effectively.

Conference believes this training will support our stewards in signposting our members to seek the best advice which could be potentially life-saving. This will also enable our stewards when reviewing policies and procedures within their own working environments to enable them to access this against risk of suicide.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

*Northamptonshire Health Workers*

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### 17.1

In the first paragraph after “the need for all stewards to be trained in”

Replace “suicide” with “mental health”

In the first paragraph:

After “6,213 people” replace “completed” with “died by”

After “we can empower our stewards to be able to” replace “ support their” with “signpost”

After “is key for them to feel confident but also be able to” replace “support” with “signpost”

In the second paragraph replace the whole of the paragraph beginning “Conference requests” with:

“Conference requests the National Executive Council to consider a short programme of training in Mental Health awareness, to be implemented nationally so that activists have the knowledge and the skills to signpost members appropriately and effectively.”

*National Executive Council*

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Participation

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### 18. Young Member’s Facility Time

Facility time is a fundamental right of trade unionists in the workplace. It ensures we support our members at disciplinaries, and that policies of the organisation's our members work for are scrutinised and negotiated effectively.

UNISON already provides brilliant resources for our branches such as the 'Facility Time, Guidance for branches' document most recently revised in 2017. It highlights clearly the rights of representatives to time away from their workplace to complete union duties, however it also tells us that 59.6% of branches responding said that facility time had come under pressure since 2010.

In workplaces where the trade union is recognised, trade union workplace representatives have a statutory right to paid time off for the purpose of carrying out trade union duties. This right applies to workplace reps, health and safety reps, union learning reps and information and consultation reps. However there is no statutory time off for other union reps, including young members officers and equality reps, to undertake trade union activities.

Representing members remains a huge priority for our union but in an age where discrimination is on the rise, highlighted in many reports from across the trade union movement, organising members in the workplace to fight against discrimination and turn the tide has never been more important.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

We know that where our women's officers organise, women feel empowered, when black members have time and space to organise, we challenge racism, where our young workers fight, they receive quality training and progress.

Although young members and equalities reps do not have a statutory right to paid facility time for union activities, in many workplaces good union negotiating can achieve facility time beyond the statutory requirements. The UNISON guidance for branches states that it is important to get employers to agree to recognise equality representatives and afford them the adequate facility time to carry out their roles.

It is also important that young members, and Black, disabled, women and lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members, have access to those roles that currently attract statutory facility time. For example, more part time and job share branch roles could encourage part time women members and young members at the start of their careers to get involved.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Survey branches to identify where facility time agreements have been negotiated and to ascertain what percentage of branch negotiated facility time self-organised groups and young members officers are assigned;
- 2) Develop clear guidance, working with the National Young Members' Forum to advocate the negotiating of facility time for Young Members Officers, sending this to every branch upon completion;
- 3) Explore ways of ensuring facility time is distributed in ways that allow young members and Black, women and LGBT members to participate fully in the union;
- 4) Campaign for a statutory right to facility time for equality reps;
- 5) Work with the National Young Members' Forum to analyse the anticipated success of 2019, the year of young worker's and develop this organising programme further into 2020 and beyond.

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

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#### **19. Year of the Young Worker - Creating a Legacy For The Future**

Conference welcomes TUC Year of the Young Worker and congratulates all of the work being planned nationally, in regions and branches to promote recruitment of young worker's, improve participation of young worker representatives and highlight issues especially relevant to young workers.

It notes examples like those in Eastern region, where Eastern region Young Members Committee have designed and planned a programme of activities throughout the year, including "Uncomfortable YET" a region wide campaign to highlight harassment in the workplace and UNITY Festival to be held in Norfolk on the weekend of 30 August to promote trade unionism through music, the arts and politics.

Conference agrees there is an urgent need to bring more young workers into the trade union movement to help maintain and improve bargaining power and to ensure

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

the building of sustainable union organisation. Evidence by the TUC shows that if by age 26 workers have not joined a trade union then in all likelihood they will not do so.

Year of the Young workers provides the ideal opportunity to deliver an intensive young-worker focused programme of properly resourced recruitment, organising, and campaigning. A programme of events and campaigns involving the whole union not just Young Members and supported by the necessary organisation and financial resources.

Conference also recognises that Year of the Young Worker represents the start of a renewed longer-term commitment to developing young worker representation in UNISON. The undoubted progress being made will be lost unless we embed our commitments in future work plans thereby creating a legacy that will ensure we have a vibrant union now and in the future.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage all parts of the union to use Year of the Young Worker to plan and deliver a programme of activities in 2019 aimed at recruiting, developing and supporting greater participation of young workers;
- 2) Review the effectiveness of activities delivered across the union in support of the TUC's Year of the Young Worker;
- 3) Prepare and distribute a report detailing all such activities, drawing on lessons to be learned from the year, and use these to establish a future strategy to build on improving organisation of young workers;
- 4) Consider that organising young members should be a distinct and separate objective of the union in 2020, and review this each year.

***Eastern Region***

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### 19.1

After third paragraph add:

“Statistics also tells us through the TUC Race Committee Equality Survey that Black people are underrepresented across the workforce it is therefore imperative that all such research findings are harnessed by UNISON and considered in all service groups in addressing how they can continue creating a legacy for the future for young Black workers in the year of the Young worker in UNISON.

Young Black members who are overrepresented in the precarious workforce, for example zero hours, part-time and short-term contracts, are less likely to receive facility time for new representation or union work”.

In the fifth paragraph, delete full stop after "UNISON" and add:

“and recognises that young Black members are an important part to the legacy of UNISON in the year of Young Workers”.

***National Black Members' Committee***

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

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### **20. Challenging Race Discrimination, Inequality and unfair treatment of Black Members**

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 in the union, including lay officers and officials. Achieving equality is central to our union's aims and objectives.

Challenging race discrimination and winning equality needs to continue to be at the heart of our 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 Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with regions, service groups and self organised groups with shared core values to enforce a zero tolerance approach to racism within the structures of UNISON, by reviewing their constitutions including the devolved nations;
- 2) Explore with Labour Link and devolved governments how we can secure statutory time off for branch Black member officers to work on union business;
- 3) Work with regional and national committees and self organised groups to ensure all branch lay officers and officials receive equality training and refresher courses on Challenging Racism in the Workplace and UNISON's Race Discrimination Claims Protocol.

***National Black Members' Committee***

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#### **20.1**

In action point 1) after "service groups", add "the Retired Members' Organisation"

***City of Wolverhampton***

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Lay Structures

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### **21. Towards a more inclusive Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Self-organised group**

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference notes that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) self-organised group (SOG) has always sought to be fully representative of its diverse membership, in line with UNISON's rules.

It notes that the LGBT 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; for people with trans backgrounds and members whose gender identity does not fit into the gender binary i.e. non-binary members.

However, despite these inclusive definitions some members who the LGBT group consider to be part of the group are put off. The LGBT group hears repeatedly that when members attend its meetings, they feel welcomed and included, but before they attend they had been unsure. This is particularly the case for members who do not personally use the label LGBT about themselves, for example people who identify as queer or pansexual. It is clear that there must be many others who are put off and never get over that barrier.

As requested by 2017 LGBT conference, the National LGBT Committee has undertaken consultation on making our LGBT SOG fully inclusive. This followed a motion from the National Young Members Forum 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.

Over 75% of the consultation responses, and all the regional group responses, were in favour of the proposal to change the group's name to LGBT+, with comments such as "It's time for this change so that we are truly reflective of our membership and our potential members"; "this is an important next step in making our SOG more inclusive and to attract and maintain members to our union"; and "adding + is much more inclusive, and it avoids LGBT becoming a long and confusing alphabet".

The National LGBT Committee therefore submitted a motion to 2018 LGBT Conference proposing that the group agree that its name should be changed, and that a rule amendment should be submitted to 2019 National Delegate Conference to seek approval to change the name of the LGBT group to the LGBT+ group. LGBT Conference agreed this motion.

Putting the "+" in the group's name would not change its existing remit of being a SOG for all members who experience prejudice because of their gender identity or sexual orientation, but would demonstrate an inclusiveness beyond that conveyed by its current name so that people who the group considers to be members are not put off from participating.

The consultation also sought views on what the LGBT group should be doing to make the group fully inclusive and the responses are now being considered by the National LGBT Committee as part of its on-going work to improve its policies and practices.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference welcomes the continuing work of the National LGBT Committee towards making the LGBT SOG fully inclusive and representative of its diverse membership, and instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National LGBT Committee to issue briefings/guidance to raise awareness of the remit of the group;
- 2) Continue its work towards making UNISON's organisation, events, policies, systems and good practice advice inclusive of non-binary members;
- 3) Continue to work with the National LGBT Committee, service groups and other UNISON structures as appropriate to make sure that UNISON's bargaining agendas and equality work fully reflect issues of concern to LGBT+ members.

***National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee  
Imperial College***

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### **Negotiating and Bargaining**

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#### **Bargaining**

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### **22. SMASH THE GENDER PAY GAP**

Nearly 50 years since the Ford machinists went on strike at Dagenham, the UK still has one of the worst gender pay gaps in Europe. Women effectively work for free for two months a year. As the largest UK women's union, UNISON is uniquely placed to be the voice of women in public services on this issue.

Conference notes that Gender Pay Reporting came into force in April 2018 for UK organisations with 250 employees or more and although it is a relatively blunt tool it should be recognised as a new opportunity to engage with employers on a range of issues that we know affect the pay gap. Conference believes that smashing the gender pay gap must be at the heart of all collective bargaining if progress is to be made.

UNISON has over a million women members who make up nearly 80% of our union. It couldn't be more important for UNISON that we are in the forefront of highlighting the impact of the gender pay gap and to call on employers and governments to take urgent action to smash this gap.

Whilst the formal requirement to report on pay is a welcome step that UNISON long campaigned for, Conference is of the view that the data and actions required are far too limited in scope.

Conference believes that UNISON should continue to call on the Westminster government to improve the current requirements. We must seek to improve on, and broaden out the data gathered. The data is only meaningful as a springboard for action if a requirement is placed on employers to break down the pay gaps for separate pay systems. To take two public sector examples, NHS data should be published separately for staff on Agenda for Change terms as opposed to the doctors' and dentists' pay scales. Equally, police forces should show the gap for police officers separately to police staff.

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Conference also believes that pay gaps would benefit from publication for discrete job roles even when these share a common pay system. For example, in higher education, it is standard practice to analyse the gender pay gap for academics, manual staff, professional and support staff and technical staff separately as well as publishing the institutional pay gap. UNISON believes this is an example of good practice that should be incorporated into any proposed pay gap reporting requirements.

Conference considers that the current 250 employee reporting threshold should be lowered to 50 to enable better comparisons across the board. Contrary to initial government concerns, we do not believe this would be too onerous. In Scotland, the expectation is that organisations with more than 20 employees to report detailed data on gender pay. In Wales, the public sector equality duties involve detailed equality indicators for organisations with more than 150 employees.

UNISON should also campaign for more substantial commitment to enforcement and compliance. This is distinctly lacking in the current procedures and the only deterrent or punishment for non compliance appears to be a vague sense of shame.

Conference praises our local representatives who are working hard to promote and ensure equality proof pay spines in all workplaces. However, we also know that unequal pay is not the only factor affecting the gap.

Other issues that impact on women's ability to compete and succeed on a level playing field to men include:

- 1) Poor recruitment practices - including the language used at advert and interview;
- 2) Unconscious bias;
- 3) Conscious bias;
- 4) Confidence / aspiration gap between men and women;
- 5) Caring responsibilities;
- 6) Part time pay/promotion penalty.

Conference believes that all of these are areas where UNISON is well placed to campaign and negotiate for improved policies and practices, both locally and nationally and through lobbying governments to support and champion change.

Conference is aware that pay gaps are also recorded for other protected characteristics and is dismayed at the disability, black women and ethnicity pay gaps in the UK and notes both the recent Westminster government consultation on ethnicity pay reporting and the recent TUC report on the disability pay gap.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Develop a broad campaign to combat and smash the gender pay gap in which UNISON will be a significant voice and champion for smashing the gap;



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- b) Bring together and review current research on the persistent and underlying reasons that contribute to the pay gap to inform branch guidance;
- c) Work with service groups and self organised groups to produce negotiating guidelines to support Branches to negotiate local action plans to close the gender pay gap;
- d) Work with relevant partners to share best practice and co-ordinate campaign activity;
- e) Guard against any attempt to use outsourcing as a method of narrowing the gender pay gap and lend practical support to branches to support them to do the same;
- f) Lobby the Westminster government, along with devolved governments, to champion measures that support employers to work towards closing the gap, to improve and extend the reporting mechanisms and to bring in measures that support women better in the workplace;
- g) Campaign for tougher sanctions for non-compliance and non-reporting;
- h) Work through Labour Link, with the Labour Party, to help inform and shape their agenda on this issue for the next general election;
- i) Persuade Northern Ireland politicians to implement pay gap reporting quickly, once a government is re-established.

***National Executive Council***

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### **22.1**

Add after f):

"g) Call on the TUC to organise a national day of action for "Women's Pay Day", on or around International Women's Day 2020 and/or Equal Pay Day. An 18.4 per cent wage difference means women must wait more than two months of the calendar year before they start to earn the same as men or work for free after Equal Pay Day to year end."

Rename subsequent actions.

***Salford City***

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### **23. Menopause and the workplace**

Conference notes that around 3.5 million women aged fifty years and over are currently in employment in the UK.

Conference notes further that the employment rate for women in the UK has actually increased in the past few decades and women now represent nearly half of the UK labour force. This means that many more women are affected by symptoms of the menopause in the course of their daily activities, often to the detriment of their families, work and life in general. Menopause symptoms vary, with around 25% of woman suffering severe symptoms. It is no surprise that women going through the

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

menopause find work difficult due to poor concentration, tiredness, poor memory, depression, feeling low, reduced confidence and particularly hot flushes which are all contributory factors. These symptoms can have significant impact on attendance at work, which can then be misconstrued as a performance issue.

Conference is clear that employers have responsibility for the health and safety of all their employees, and there are clear business reasons for proactively managing an age diverse workforce.

Conference notes that UNISON has produced guidance for its safety reps on menopause and work. According to the research from TUC, workplaces are not designed for menopausal women in mind. Often managers are male or younger; and women find it difficult to disclose their menopausal issues to them. Many women opt to work part time or leave work altogether because flexible working hours are not available. Women would find it useful to have information regarding the menopause or advice regarding how to cope with work and their employer.

Temperature control in the workplace remains an important issue. The hottest issue is that managers don't recognise problems associated with the menopause, believing it to be a difficult subject. Managers need training on menopause related sick leave and flexible working time arrangements; they need to provide appropriate uniforms.

Conference congratulates South Lanarkshire Council UNISON branch for developing a menopause policy with their employers which is the first comprehensive policy of its kind in Scotland. It is vital that employers provide the support that women need within the workplace.

Conference believes we must use all our resources to challenge attitudes to the menopause, to ensure employers have procedures in place and to ensure that the workplace meets the needs of the menopausal woman.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with branches and regions to establish examples of good practice in the local areas;
- 2) Build on good practice to develop workshops to enable union reps to represent and negotiate suitable working conditions for women going through the menopause;
- 3) Work with Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) to produce training materials on menopause to branches and regions.

***National Women's Committee***

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### **23.1**

In second paragraph add new fourth sentence:

“One in a hundred women under the age of 40 experiences the menopause.”

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*National Executive Council*

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### **23.2**

After existing fourth paragraph, insert new paragraph:

“Conference recognises that the menopause also affects some trans men and non-binary people, and that menopause policies and procedures need to be fully inclusive to meet the needs of all members affected by the menopause”

In point 2) , delete “women” and insert “members”.

*Lambeth*

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### **23.3**

In the fifth paragraph remove “sick” between words “related” and “leave”.

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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### **23.4**

After the sixth paragraph add:

“Conference also congratulates the Velindre and Public Health Wales UNISON branch, whose pioneering work with Velindre University NHS Trust has directly led to a policy document, backed by the Board, that will make the employer both menopause aware and supportive to its staff. This policy will include specific training for all managers, workshops for all staff, access to alternative therapies and pelvic health experts and the utilisation of the Menopause Cafe to enable all staff to talk about their menopause experience.”

Add new point 4):

“4) Consider working with the Menopause Cafe charity as a way to actively promote discussion and awareness of menopause with employers across the UK”.

*Velindre and Public Health Wales*

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## **24. Menopause**

Conference recognises that the menopause has or will affect almost 80% of our members and that few workplaces offer support to women who suffer a variety of conditions associated with it. Whilst for some women symptoms of the menopause can be mild for others they can be severe and impact on their physical and mental health and their attendance and performance at work.

The menopause is therefore a workplace and health and safety issue that UNISON must ensure is taken seriously by employers. Conference notes the work done by the union in producing guidance on negotiating policies with employers that support women in the workplace as they experience the menopause.

Such policies should include access to information and advice on the menopause and training for managers and union reps on how to support women.

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Conference congratulates those branches who have negotiated workplace menopause policies and calls on the National Executive Council to work with the Women's Committee to promote greater awareness of UNISON's guidance on the Menopause.

*South Lanarkshire*

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### 24.1

In first paragraph add new sentence at end:

"Also, one in a hundred women under the age of 40 experiences the menopause."

*National Executive Council*

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### 25. Health at Work: Menopause and perimenopause

Although it is rarely discussed at work, the menopause and perimenopause are a natural stage of life that millions of women and trans men workers are either going through now or will experience in the future.

These can affect how a woman or trans man does their work and their relationship with their colleagues. Unfortunately, there is often very little understanding of the issues and very little support for women and trans men who are going through the menopause and perimenopause.

Many women and trans men may feel that they have to hide their symptoms and will be less likely to ask for the adjustments that may help them.

The menopause and perimenopause are an occupational health issue, and one that is growing in importance. Women and trans men now make up almost half the workforce and there are an estimated three and a half million women and trans men over the age of 50 currently in work.

That number will rise as the retirement age for women increases over the coming years.

Women and trans men who are experiencing the menopause and perimenopause also need to know that there is someone they can go to and discuss any difficulties they are having.

Women and trans men should experience no detriment because they may need time off during this period, and any sickness absence procedure should be flexible enough to cater for this.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to raise awareness of the potential impact of the menopause throughout the union's bargaining structures especially in terms of workplace health and safety and absence management policy and procedures.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to ensure that the menopause and its impact in the workplace is included in all relevant training courses.

*City of Edinburgh*

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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### 25.1

In the sentence beginning "Women and transmen should experience no detriment.." remove "sickness".

### *London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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### **26. Menopause - UNISON has got this covered**

Conference fully recognises that having over one million women members is unique in our trade union movement. The menopause will affect at some stage all of these women. This makes their working lives so much more difficult. There are a number of various symptoms ranging from poor concentration, disturbed sleep patterns, depression, hot flushes, reduced confidence and so many more. This workplace issue needs addressed.

Conference notes the work already done by our union with regard to Health and Safety in the workplace with the guidance 'The menopause and work, a guide for Unison safety reps'. The STUC launched a report last year on the impact of Menopause in the workplace. One of the conclusions was that of the 3,649 respondents 95% said they would welcome a model policy.

Conference let us lead the way on this issue. We have a duty to those members who are or will suffer from this condition. This can also be used as recruiting tool to show again that UNISON is at the forefront of campaigning for our members.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop a "Menopause - We Got This" Covered Charter to highlight and offer advice re good workplace practices to help during the menopause;
- 2) Fund the launch of this charter and encourage politicians at local and national level to highlight the issue of menopause.

### *Renfrewshire*

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### **27. Rebuilding Collective Bargaining**

Conference believes that collective bargaining coverage is crucial to the well-being of employees. Where pay and conditions are determined only by market mechanisms, employer discretion and legal minimums, employees invariably do not get a fair deal at work.

Conference notes with concern that due to privatisation and outsourcing, a growing number of workers who deliver public services are not covered by existing collective bargaining and pay review body structures. Conference notes that where staff have been TUPE transferred to external employers, the European Court of Justice's Alemo-Herron decision means that the new employer is not required to comply with dynamic changes to the transferred workers' terms and conditions.

Conference supports the agenda to roll out sectoral collective bargaining developed by the Institute of Employment Rights (IER) and adopted in the Labour Party's 2017 general election manifesto.

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Whilst acknowledging that setting the boundaries for sectors will be a thorny issue, and subject to appropriate consultation with unions and employers, the IER suggest that the priority should be to establish machinery in sectors in which it is in the public interest to protect vulnerable workers and ensure stability. The sectors it cites as fitting this category include: adult social care, childcare, delivery riders and drivers, hotels/catering, retail, agriculture, taxis/private hire and cleaning.

Conference notes that this approach is broadly in line with UNISON policy. Previous motions passed at National Delegate Conference commit the union to promoting sector level collective bargaining to cover workers in social care and school support roles, so as to maximise the scope of collective bargaining across fragmented, multi-employer public services. Conference has also supported putting national agreements into public procurement, a process also known as fair wage clauses.

Whilst Conference fully supports the ideas set out by Labour and the IER, it also notes that there is still work to do to assist in the further development of the sector bargaining proposals. The union does, for example, need to work through how sector bargaining should sit alongside existing national agreements and pay review body arrangements. It also needs to reflect and respect differences in the devolved nations and regions. In addition, UNISON needs to ensure that it is sector bargaining ready, with recruitment and organising strategies in place enabling us to maximise membership growth and workplace organisation.

In order to take this work forward Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with Service Group Liaison Committee to develop the union's policy on sector bargaining, in conjunction with devolved nations and regions;
- 2) Make plans for a recruitment and organising project to ensure that sector level bargaining in priority public services areas of social care and childcare is backed up with effective on the ground organisation;
- 3) Work with the TUC, STUC, Wales TUC and ICTU to help ensure an appropriately co-ordinated approach that delivers the revival of collective bargaining across the economy that working people so desperately need to see;
- 4) Consider the equality impact of the proposals, particularly their ability to close the gender pay gap;
- 5) Consult EPSU and learn from the struggle to defend collective bargaining from attacks across Europe;
- 6) Work with Labour Link to ensure that the UNISON's experience and viewpoint on the sectors in which we organise is properly reflected in Labour's next manifesto and subsequent Labour government policy.

***North West Region***

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### **27.1**

New first paragraph:

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"Conference notes that the most effective mechanism for ensuring that workers delivering public sector services in the private sector are paid decent terms and conditions is for those services to be brought back 'in house'."

Delete: "Conference believes that collective bargaining coverage is crucial to the well-being of employees."

Add "However" before "Where pay and conditions are determined only by market mechanisms, employer discretion and legal minimums, employees invariably do not get a fair deal at work...".

Add "and collective bargaining coverage is crucial".

Add new point 7):

"7) Continue to resist outsourcing and argue for services to be brought back in-house."

### ***Bolton Metropolitan***

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#### **28. Digital Ballots**

Conference notes the increasing use of digital balloting in consulting members in pay campaigns. This has led to an increase in members' participation in campaigns and has provide useful information to support and strengthen these campaigns. Two digital ballots were used in the recent Scottish local government pay campaign and each saw an increase in participation from previous exercises.

Conference notes UNISON's long standing policy that digital balloting should be allowed for industrial action ballots rather than the current postal balloting that Tory anti-trade union laws insist upon.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that the capability of the union to conduct digital ballots for branch, sector and national consultations is secure and enhanced;
- 2) Run further promotional campaigns to increase the number of members who have provided an email address to the union for this purpose;
- 3) Provide guidance to branches on how to increase the number of email addresses held on the membership system.

### ***South Lanarkshire***

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#### **28.1**

Add at the end:

"4) That the National Executive Council lobbies government to amend The Trade Union Act 2016 accordingly."

### ***Dorset***

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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### 29. Apprenticeships

Conference recognises that apprenticeships can be a useful tool that provides individuals with a real chance of gaining meaningful employment and addressing the skills gap in the workplace. The UK's skill shortage is costly, damaging to growth, and could worsen because the skills that we need are changing and this could be compounded as Brexit may also radically change the skills we have access to in the UK. Further, Conference is mindful that this year, 2019, is the year of Young People and youth unemployment in the UK is at an all time high.

In light of this, and the Brexit uncertainty, there is a growing concern of potential skill shortages in many areas in the UK economy being filled by apprenticeships as a form of cheap labour to replace more experienced staff or take up the jobs of more experienced staff who have left employment.

UNISON takes a positive view of apprenticeships but in the current economic climate, many employers are coming under pressure to find ways of cutting costs, and unscrupulous employers may be looking to exploit apprentices and to use them to replace establishment post on the cheap.

Conference we need monitor schemes within our workplaces, organise apprentices in our branches and continue to push to get employers to sign up to the UNISON Apprenticeship Charter's standards.

With the launch of the Apprenticeship Charter it is recognised that UNISON has been working to ensure that all apprenticeships are well funded, high quality apprenticeships which lead to a meaningful job. This however, is not enough we need to work to get employers to sign up to our Charter. If we do this then we can contribute towards ensuring that apprentices have the protection they need.

Currently there is gender imbalance in apprenticeships that mirrors the gender disproportion seen in the workplace generally and Black people continue to be under-represented in key sectors of the economy.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to develop a strategic approach on apprenticeships to ensure that they deliver positive outcomes for all;
- 2) Continue the campaign to get employers providing Public Services to sign up to the UNISON Apprenticeship Charter;
- 3) Campaign to ensure that candidates for apprenticeships are recruited from a wider range of under-represented or disadvantaged groups, such as those from Black and minority backgrounds and older workers;
- 4) Examine the barriers facing Black people looking to take up apprenticeships and work with employers on their recruitment strategies for apprenticeships.

*Yorkshire and Humberside Region*

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### 30. Removing Health and Carer Work Barriers for Older Workers



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Conference, as we know, the Equality Act 2010 protects people within specified protected characteristics groups, including disability. The Act additionally provides protection to people without disabilities from direct discrimination or harassment due to their association with a disabled person or someone believed to be disabled.

However, failing health for many is a gradual process as people age and the provisions of the Act may not apply. In 2017, a report by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) noted that in England and Wales 5.6% of the population suffered bad or very bad health and people aged 48 years and over were most affected. Certain conditions are more common with age, for example, high blood pressure, cancer, osteoarthritis, etc.

The Department for Work and Pensions' 2016/17 Family Resources Survey reported that 22% of people in the UK had one or more long-term health condition; an increase of 3% from 2013/14. 19% of the working age population and 45% of the pensionable aged population reported a disability.

Conference, the profile of our workforce is changing:

- 1) In 2017, the ONS projected that the working age population (16 – 64 years) will fall from 62.2% in 2016 to 60.3% by 2041. Net migration is projected to reduce by 30% to 165 million by 2041 and current government policy, including immigration and the UK's exit from the EU is undoubtedly influencing this trend;
- 2) A 2015 report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development noted that the number of people aged over 65 in employment rose by 437,000. This, coupled by a reducing working age population will create an older workforce.

Our pensionable age population is increasing and people are living longer:

- a) A 2017 ONS report noted that the UK's population is projected to grow by 5.5% over the next ten years to 69.2 million. Currently, the number of people aged 85 years and over is projected to double by 2041 to 3.2 million;
- b) In 2016/17, the Family Resources Survey reported that a third (33%) of informal care currently provided across the UK is for elderly parents and a fifth (19%) for partners. However, the Family Resources Survey observed 56% of men and 51% of women providing informal care are in employment;
- c) In 2018, an ONS report that explored the impacts of living longer acknowledged that women were more likely than males to provide informal care to elderly relatives and typically likely to be aged 50 years and over.

Conference, we are losing workers who wish to remain in work:

- i) In 2018, the ONS reported that there are 866,000 potential workers aged between 50 and 64 years who would like to work but are unable to; a third due to ill-health. Half of the people in this age group have at least one living parent. Workers of these ages are most likely to be juggling work and caring responsibilities and health and caring responsibilities for elderly relatives are two main barriers affecting workers remain in work;

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- ii) A 2015 report by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development noted that ill health and caring responsibilities were significant factors behind people leaving the workforce from their early 50's. The CIPD acknowledged that impacts of this on organisations will be most acute among those employers with higher proportions of older staff - typically in our public services.

Improvements to the quality of work and to employment practices for older workers are key to enable workers at this life-stage remain in work. This requires employers to invest efforts supporting careers and working lives, as well as a continuing focus on health and well-being.

Effective workplace policies and the effective use of equality legislation will be crucial to supporting our members remain in work and equipping our activists with the necessary knowledge, skills and tools is vital.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the relevant self-organised national committees:

- A) To increase awareness across UNISON of the implications of these demographic changes on the profile of our workforces'.
- B) To undertake a review of this issue and report back to Conference by 2020 with recommendations that consider:
  - I) How we can positively influence employers to value and actively seek to retain those workers by investing efforts to supporting the careers and working lives of those workers at this life-stage, providing direction to regions and branches;
  - II) How we can improve the quality of work and improve employment practices for older workers, and describe what such initiatives may look like;
  - III) Any training needs arising to enable our activists support members at this life-stage;
  - IV) Building a national organising strategy and campaign around this issue.
- C) To actively promote the sharing of practice, good and bad, across regions and branches to generate more creative solutions to support workers at this life-stage enabling them to remain in work if they wish;
- D) To encourage branches to be proactive. To anticipate the impacts of changing demographics and to use HR policy reviews as an opportunity to incorporate provisions that promote the retention of workers at this life-stage and to develop practices that support their ongoing careers and working lives despite diminishing health and caring responsibilities.

***South Lanarkshire***

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### **31. Supporting Members with Caring Responsibilities**

Conference recognises that a growing number of working people in the UK (five million) are now trying to balance paid employment and caring responsibilities.

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Many of these people are our UNISON members. Yet currently 600 people a day, leave their current employment in order to look after a older, disabled or ill person.

Conference welcomes the research commissioned by UNISON and subsequent reports to raise awareness, including the production of UNISONs bargaining guide on carers policies, which sets out good practice. It continues to recognise that members are sometimes being forced into providing caring support much of which is exacerbated by cuts to funding in both health and social care. Conference re-affirms its fullest support to such members.

Recognising the importance of this issue Conference asks:

- 1) That the National Executive Council works with service groups to prioritise negotiations of this issue at national and local levels;
- 2) That the National Executive Council works with service groups to survey branches to check on uptake;
- 3) That the issue be taken forward to the TUC for cross union support, including to reaffirm the call for statutory enhanced rights to be formally recognised by government.

*Surrey County*

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### **32. Supporting our members to balance caring and working**

Conference notes that, for some time our members, many of whom are in low paid work, have been struggling to combine caring responsibilities with working and that some are having to give up work altogether because they just can't make it work for them.

Conference recognises that despite so many improvements in flexible working practice, for many people balancing work and care can still feel almost impossible and for some it becomes actually impossible.

Conference is therefore pleased to note UNISON's recent research in this area with Coram Family and Childcare found, amongst other things that a flexible working pattern and emergency leave isn't always enough and that there are some elements of caring that would simply be inappropriate to delegate to others under any circumstances and with any amount of notice.

Conference also notes the link between the current gender pay gap and the importance of support for carers because we know that, despite many more men taking up caring responsibilities, caring is still predominantly covered by women and this feeds into the horribly persistent pay gap in the UK.

Conference is not surprised that the biggest difference was to have a supportive and flexible employer. However, the research also highlighted some specific changes that can improve life for our members with caring responsibilities. Including, recognising the value of having a Carers Policy, paid carers leave to manage important appointments as well as emergencies and access to a period of temporary unpaid leave.

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Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the service groups and the Bargaining Unit to update current bargaining materials for negotiating for carers to include the elements highlighted in the UNISON report;
- 2) Lobby central and devolved governments, via Labour Link to support employers, champion carers and to make the necessary legislative changes to carers leave recommended in the research.

*EDF Energy (Doxford)*

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### 33. Negotiating and Bargaining for Disabled Workers Rights

Conference notes that the Equality Act 2010 gives disabled workers the right to reasonable adjustments and the right not to be discriminated against. However, these rights are often only made real when UNISON disabled members and UNISON stewards raise these issues with employers through their local representation and bargaining.

For example, the Equality Act Code of Practice gives disability leave as an example of a reasonable adjustment and this has been backed up by the courts. However, in many workplaces there is no disability leave policy and disabled workers are forced to take leave that relates to their disability as ordinary sick leave which is then counted towards triggers for instigating formal sickness procedures.

Many employers do not take their duty to provide other reasonable adjustments seriously and as a result disabled workers either do not get the job in the first place or are forced out. Some employers also try to push disabled workers into taking ill health retirement rather than implementing the reasonable adjustments that could keep them in work.

Conference believes that compliance with equality legislation is the right thing to do, but there are also significant business benefits in having a diverse public service workforce that reflects the communities we serve.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Raise awareness of existing UNISON resources including the Disability Leave bargaining guide and model policy and 'Proving Disability and Reasonable Adjustments';
- 2) Work with Learning and Organising Services to audit existing steward training, with a view to ensuring that UNISON reps are confident in representing disabled members and in negotiating on disability equality;
- 3) Encourage branches and regions to develop robust disability equality bargaining objectives through the branch assessment process.

*National Disabled Members' Committee*

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### 34. CCTV Screening of Staff in Private Houses

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Conference notes the increasing tendency of service users and members of the public to make video records of contact with health and social care professionals.

This can range from bystanders videoing ambulance crews at work in the street, through people using a video recording of a hospital appointment as a way of making notes on the consultation, through to the use of internal CCTV or video monitoring of vulnerable patients in their own homes, including when staff are visiting and providing services.

The provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not extend to private properties and private individuals making video recordings, and that staff using a service user's home as a workplace do not have the protection they would have in a consulting room or hospital. This means that staff do not have the right to refuse to be filmed while they are working, and need not be asked for consent to this. Organisations and Trusts do not control what happens to the footage after the episode of care is over – it can be posted on social media, or even doctored for the family's own purposes.

Current guidance, whether from the Information Commissioner, the Care Quality Commission, or from UNISON is vague on this issue, in part due to the newness of the problem.

This type of recording can be open, with the family and service user being transparent about the fact that they are filming, or can be done without the knowledge of the staff concerned. There are also teams who work with the most vulnerable people, e.g. end of life and dementia care, in particular children with multiple health care needs and life limiting illnesses, who can spend a whole shift working with one patient, potentially being filmed for eight to ten hours. This has huge implications for the privacy and dignity of both staff and service users, especially as the people who are most likely to be filmed are the ones least likely to be able to give informed consent.

Conference is quite clear that there is no excuse for shoddy or abusive care, and understands the fears and concerns of the families of vulnerable people, however, the staff who care for them also have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. While video recording can possibly exonerate staff who are accused of poor practice, it is also true that relatives can misinterpret evidence if they do not have the specialist knowledge of health or personal care. Furthermore, there is no excuse for withdrawing care or services solely on the ground that staff object to being filmed, as our duty of care is to the person who needs care and assistance.

Conference calls upon UNISON to take the following action:

- 1) To request via National Executive Council for the current guidelines on monitoring and surveillance that are available on the UNISON website to be updated to reflect the changes in use of home security monitoring devices;
- 2) To campaign to promote awareness of the issue among staff in organisations who provide home-based care and services, explaining their rights and responsibilities, and to encourage local representatives to negotiate with

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management to produce guidance that respects the needs of all parties, including publicising alternative means of raising concerns about care;

- 3) Via Labour Link, to liaise with Members of Parliament to press for a review of the GDPR to examine the weaknesses of the law as it pertains to private filming.

### *Leeds and York Community Health*

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#### **34.1**

In the first sentence of the third paragraph delete “the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)” and replace with “UK data protection legislation”.

In point 3) delete “GDPR” and replace with “UK data protection legislation.”

### *National Executive Council*

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#### **35. Ethical Procurement: Not just for profit!**

Over the years many public run services, departments or functions have been outsourced to the private sector. For many workers outsourcing is the start of ongoing attacks on their terms and conditions as their employers start the inevitable race to the bottom. At best outsourcing can lead to is a two tiered workforce! Staff working in the private sector, providing council services can find themselves denied sick pay, working to zero hour contracts.

With the advent of organisations like the Living Wage Foundation and Fair Tax Mark promoting and incentivising businesses to pay decent wages and not avoid paying tax, the time has come to promote and incentivise outsourcing to be done in an ethical way.

Ethical procurement means that Local Authorities and commissioning bodies could specify criteria within tenders that guarantee outsourced staff terms and conditions that are the equivalent of public sector employed staff. Tenders could also encompass environment concerns or issues relevant to specific locations or regionals.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with branches, self organised groups and the young and the retired members forums to produce campaigning materials, negotiating guides and examples of best practice;
- 2) Develop a bargaining guide to assist branches to persuade their employers to agree to become ethically commissioners or tenders;
- 3) Work with fellow unions through the TUC to develop a strategy to raise these issues in a national campaign;
- 4) To work with Labour Link to promote ethical procurement and to ensure it is included in consideration for the Labour Party manifesto.

### *West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport*

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

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### **36. Campaign to Change HMRC Mileage Rates**

The Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) mileage rate for members who are company car users that provide the fuel for the vehicles to be subsequently reimbursed by their employer dependent on how many miles they have driven is not calculated to cover the true cost of driving.

HMRC use a calculation based on the cost of fuel which is supposed to reimburse the company car user for the mileage they have driven. However, the calculations used do not reflect everyday driving conditions. The majority of members appear to be subsidising their travel by up to 10%.

If an employer reimburses a driver at a rate which is more than the recommended HMRC rate, then the driver is liable for tax on the extra amount. As a result, many employers opt to simply reimburse at the HMRC Advisory rate.

Conference supports the following actions:

- 1) Survey all service groups to scope out the scale of the problem;
- 2) Run a campaign to highlight the injustice of this situation to the HMRC;
- 3) Ultimately campaign to secure a change to the HMRC Advisory mileage rate via a change to the calculations used.

***Environment Agency North West***

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#### **36.1**

Delete existing point 2) and replace with:

“2) Investigate whether doubts about HMRC methods for calculating mileage rates offer a strong basis to run a campaign to highlight the injustice of this situation to the HMRC;”

***National Executive Council***

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#### **36.2**

Add new point 4):

“4) Support green travel options for staff, where appropriate, and negotiated between unions and the employer.”

***National Executive Council***

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Health and Safety

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### **37. Call it out! Supporting young women to challenge workplace sexual harassment**

Conference notes that #MeToo has transformed the debate around sexual harassment, with cases being reported in the media more than ever before.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference believes UNISON needs to ensure that the voices of working women are highlighted in the #MeToo debate, and that young women know UNISON can support them in cases of sexual harassment.

Conference is concerned to note that the Young Women's Trust found in 2018 that 24% of young women would be reluctant to report sexual harassment at work for fear of losing their jobs. A further 15% of young women had been sexually harassed at work and not reported it. Only 8% of women who experienced sexual harassment said they had reported the incident. 17% are worried they would be offered fewer hours if they reported sexual harassment.

Worryingly, 32% of young women said they did not know how to report sexual harassment in their organisation.

Conference believes UNISON, as the union with over 1 million women, needs to lead the way with challenging sexual harassment, and empowering branches and young women members to do so. By developing innovative work in this area, UNISON can pioneer and champion unions as a place for support when sexual harassment occurs.

Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to:

- 1) Work with the National Women's Committee and the National Young Member's Forum to develop a 'Call It Out!' campaign, aimed at young women in UNISON; liaising with appropriate external organisations such as NUS;
- 2) Work with appropriate bodies within UNISON to conduct research about women in UNISON and the sexual harassment they experience, in order to develop toolkits for branches that are reflective of the different sectors we represent;
- 3) Work with Labour Link to raise with MPs the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace;
- 4) Make addressing sexual harassment a strategic priority with respect to the recruitment and organising of young women.

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

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#### **38. An End to Sexual Harassment at Work**

Conference acknowledges that sexual harassment in the workplace is not new. It can affect anyone. Generally perpetrators are those who are in a position of power or perceive they are.

Victims can feel powerless, ashamed, hopeless and scared. They often develop very low self esteem and this often leads them to avoiding the harasser, denying or downplaying the gravity of the situation, attempting to ignore, forget, or simply endure the behaviour.

Reporting levels of sexual harassment are believed to be shockingly low, yet it is a fact that a disproportionate number of victims are women and the majority of perpetrators are men.



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Conference welcomes and endorses the fantastic and empowering campaign #metoo and the resurgence of the #timesup campaign. These campaigns may have been born in the USA but the subject is unfortunately still all too real for women here too.

Sexual harassment and attacks against women are not limited to the directors couch or behind film cameras. It takes place in ordinary work places. For too long women have felt disempowered by powerful male decision makers, men who literally hold your job in their hands. The very real fear of being scape-goated, ostracised or sacked means that women simply suffer in silence; they feel they have no other choice.

A study by the TUC in 2016 found that 52% of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Among women and girls aged 16-24, the proportion reporting sexual harassment rose to 63%.

Around one in eight women reported unwanted sexual touching or attempts to kiss them at work, which the report's authors point out would be considered sexual assault under the law.

Almost a fifth said they had been harassed by their boss or someone else with authority over them.

But four in five women said they did not report the incidents to their employers, with many fearing that it would harm their relationships at work or that they would not be taken seriously.

65% of all public sector workers and approx 75% of UNISON members are women. As the trade union that rightly takes pride on its lead in all equality issues, we must take a stand on behalf of these members and ensure their voices heard too.

To do this we must ensure that all activists and branch officers are equipped to support women who wish to report sexual harassment at work. This includes ensuring public sector employers have a public zero tolerance on sexual harassment and adequate policies in place developed to protect those who make claims.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the appropriate committees to:

- 1) Publicly endorse and promote the #metoo and #timesup campaigns;
- 2) Work with the London, East and South East TUC (LESE) and other public sector trade unions to develop a trade union campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace;
- 3) Develop a toolkit for activists and branch officers that includes guidance on:
  - a) Negotiating a zero tolerance sexual harassment policy, with appropriate protections and safe reporting routes for victims with our public sector employers;

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- b) How branches should support members who report sexual harassment in the workplace;
- c) Appropriate external bodies, that branches can signpost victims to, for expert support and counselling outside of the workplace.

### *Greater London Region*

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#### **39. Improving Workers' Protection from Sexual Harassment at Work**

Conference notes that on 15 October 2017, actress Alyssa Milano tweeted the #MeToo hash-tag and relaunched what is known as the #MeToo movement, which was originally started in 2006 by Tarana Burke. Sexual harassment in the workplace is nothing new. Sexual harassment attacks take place in the street, workplaces, schools, colleges and universities, and not just in Hollywood. The recent #MeToo campaign has started a debate about unwanted sexual conduct and has enabled women and men to come forward. Conference acknowledges that anyone at any time can experience sexual harassment, but the statistics demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of victims are women.

Joint research carried out by the TUC and The Everyday Sexism Project found that 52% of women had experienced unwanted behaviour at work including groping, sexual advances and inappropriate jokes. Fourteen percent reported that harassment had taken place at a work related event such as a social gathering, and 1 in 20 women reported harassment had taken place when in another work location, such as at a conference. One in twenty women reported that harassment had also taken place by email or online. (Source: TUC report 'Just A Bit Of Banter?' 2016). The TUC research data implies that, of UNISON's one million women members, over 520,000 are likely to have experienced sexual harassment at work, and that of these over 418,000 will not have reported that fact to their employer (TUC polling found that 80% did not report it to their employer). Respondents cited various reasons for lack of reporting, for example, the perceptions of what is normal and acceptable behaviour which might influence decisions about whether to report harassment. Also, of those who had reported harassment to their employer, very few saw a positive outcome with nearly three quarters reporting that there was no change, and sixteen percent reporting that they were treated worse as a result.

A 2016 TUC study found that 7% of women who had experienced harassment reported that the perpetrator was a third-party person. In addition to this, a more recent survey by the TUC in December 2018 (Not Part of the Job) stated that there is evidence that suggests that harassment from third-parties is getting worse. All reports found that, in cases where the perpetrator of harassment or discrimination is not an employee, victims may be more reluctant to report the incident because there is a perception that it will not be dealt with in the same way as it would be if the perpetrator were another employee. In support of these findings, research carried out by the BBC showed that between five and eight per cent of instances of harassment were due to a client or customer and 16% of verbal sexual advances were perpetrated by a third party.

Prior to repeal in 2013, Section 40 of the Equality Act 2010 made provision for employers to be held liable in cases where the employer was aware of three incidences of harassment and had failed to take action to prevent reoccurrence. The

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coalition government removed this important protection as part of its 'red tape challenge', arguing that the protection existed elsewhere within the Act. In a twist predictable to many, the Court of Appeal in 2018 ruled that third-party harassment was not covered by alternative sections of the Equality Act 2010 (Unite the Union vs Nailard) and so it is essential that UNISON campaigns for Section 40 to now be reinstated.

UNISON rightly promotes the fact that we have over one million women members – the General Secretary said at National Women's Conference in 2018: "We are the women's union". UNISON has a long and proud record of challenging harassment at work but despite our efforts, sexual harassment remains an endemic problem within our workplaces. Conference notes the work that UNISON has undertaken on the issues of sexual harassment, particularly the joint research in 2018 with the London School of Economics and Political Science and the University of Surrey on the levels of sexual harassment in the police force. However, as 'the women's union', UNISON should be doing more to equip our activists to help support and protect our members with nationally updated toolkit, training, and negotiating guides.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the appropriate UNISON committees, including Labour Link, to:

- 1) Continue to publically support and promote the #MeToo and #TimesUp campaigns;
- 2) Campaign for the reintroduction of Section 40 of the Equality Act 2010 on 'third party protection';
- 3) Undertake a survey of UNISON members about their experience of sexual harassment and any barriers they faced with reporting their experiences.
- 4) Develop a toolkit for activists and branch officers that includes information and guidance on:
  - a) Negotiating a sexual harassment policy, including a template policy;
  - b) Advice for branches on how to support members who report sexual harassment in the workplace;
  - c) External agencies that branches can signpost victims to for expert support and counselling outside of the workplace.
- 5) Work with Learning and Organising Services to provide specific training for activists on sexual harassment in the workplace and how to develop workplace policies;
- 6) Work with the TUC and other public sector trade unions both in the UK and abroad to develop a global trade union campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace.

***Epsom and Ewell  
Milton Keynes Area***

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### **40. A Breakthrough in Tackling Stress and Bullying/Harrassment**

Conference understands the huge scale of harm being caused to members by work-related stress, including wrecked lives and relationships, debilitating mental and physical illness and sometimes, tragically, death. Such misery is often compounded by the insensitive treatment of victims by some employers who, far from acknowledging their own responsibility for causing excessive workplace stress, seek to punish the victims of their negligence.

Conference understands that work-related stress is a top concern of members. The 2018 TUC survey of safety reps confirmed that stress, bullying/harassment and overwork were the biggest three health and safety concerns.

Conference notes that stress is not an inevitability; it is a consequence of the way work is organised and the way people are managed. The solution lies in prevention, with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Management Standards approach to tackling stress, which refers to six primary causes:

- 1) Demands including workload;
- 2) The control people have in the way they do their work;
- 3) The support people get from line management and colleagues;
- 4) Relationships at work;
- 5) How well they understand what's expected of them;
- 6) How change is managed.

The approach involves an anonymous staff survey, and then focus group discussion of the results leading to action plans to address the issues identified. It recognises that the solutions best stem from the people affected.

The breakthrough is in full branch involvement in the process; joint working with the employer, significantly improving the effectiveness of the approach. Trust in the Branch means we can carry out a confidential survey, which includes people's names, jobs, teams, and locations. We can build a much more accurate picture, identifying hotspots, where things are really bad, and the specific causes behind them. Full branch involvement will also improve survey response rates, focus group discussions, action plans, monitoring of implementation, and staff and employer confidence in the whole process. Bullying and harassment will be addressed along with all the other causes of stress such as violence at work.

Conference understands this solution will be valuable wherever stress is a serious problem for members, wherever high sickness absence rates are a serious concern of the employer and wherever they are willing to work with us. Where employers have had doubts over the Management Standards approach, this is an opportunity to show that, by working with us, it is very effective.

Conference notes that experience from branches shows that this work:

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- a) Is a very real support to our members affected by stress;
- b) Helps prevent the harm that stress can cause;
- c) Helps develop partnership working with employers;
- d) Demonstrates the union effect;
- e) Represents a considerable opportunity for the recruitment of members and reps;
- f) Will help improve our public services

Conference understands that full branch involvement in tackling stress is a long-term commitment, and that branches will need the appropriate financial and physical resources to help develop the capability and capacity required. Developing capability will involve the provision of training resources and mentors, to help develop the skills, knowledge and confidence required. Developing capacity, the time required, will stem from discussions with the employer over the business case and the significant savings to be made from reduced sickness absence etc.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to wholeheartedly grasp the opportunity to develop and support this work, to provide the necessary training, materials, advice and assistance to help make this approach available to all branches.

Building on work done to date, Conference calls specifically on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop appropriate training resources and materials for branches;
- ii) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop and provide training for those involved with delivering training and assistance at regional level;
- iii) Ask regions to fully back this work, providing the training and advice for branches, electing or nominating a regional project lead, and facilitating the sharing of experience between branches;
- iv) Ask branches to consider leading on this development in their area, electing a branch project lead, and discussing it with employers;
- v) Work with service groups, regions and branches with a view to ensuring that employers at local and national level may develop a greater understanding of how tackling stress more effectively will reduce costs and improve productivity, as well as improving the health of workers;
- vi) Ensure that UNISON continues to lobby the government and HSE for clearer guidance and stronger enforcement action regarding the implementation of the Stress Management Standards;

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- vii) Campaign with the aim of establishing illness resulting from work-related stress as an industrial injury, acknowledging that stress is always 'process' rather than 'event';
- viii) Work with Labour Link to ensure these issues and policy aims are given full consideration by the Labour Party as it develops its manifesto for the next general election;
- ix) Give increased support to the Work Stress Network whose annual conference is an excellent opportunity for networking, learning and inspiration.

**Camden  
Gateshead  
Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health  
Peterborough City  
United Utilities  
Western Energy**

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### **41. Tackling stress and bullying / harrassment**

Conference understands the huge scale of harm being caused to members by work-related stress, including wrecked lives and relationships, debilitating mental and physical illness and sometimes, tragically, death. Such misery is often compounded by the insensitive treatment of victims by some employers who, far from acknowledging their own responsibility for causing excessive workplace stress, instead seek to punish the victims of their negligence.

Conference understands that work-related stress is a top concern of members. The 2018 TUC survey of safety reps confirmed that stress, bullying/harassment and overwork were the biggest three health and safety concerns.

Conference notes that stress is not an inevitability; it is a consequence of the way work is organised and the way people are managed. The solution lies in prevention. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) refers to six primary causes:

- 1) Demands including workload;
- 2) The control people have in the way they do their work;
- 3) The support people get from line management and colleagues;
- 4) Relationships at work;
- 5) How well they understand what's expected of them;
- 6) How change is managed.

One possible approach involves an anonymous staff survey, and then focus group discussion of the results leading to action plans to address the issues identified. It recognises that the solutions best stem from the people affected.

This approach involves and utilises full branch involvement in the process; joint working with the employer, significantly improving the effectiveness of the approach.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

We can build a much more accurate picture, identifying hotspots, where things are really bad, and the specific causes behind them. Full branch involvement will also improve any survey response rates, focus group discussions, action plans, monitoring of implementation, and staff and employer confidence in the whole process. Bullying and harassment will be addressed along with all the other causes of stress such as violence at work.

Conference understands this solution will be valuable wherever stress is a serious problem for members, wherever high sickness absence rates are a serious concern of the employer and wherever they are willing to work with us. Where employers have had doubts over the Management Standards approach, this is an opportunity to show that, by working with us, it is very effective.

Conference notes that experience from branches shows that this work:

- a) Is a very real support to our members affected by stress;
- b) Helps prevent the harm that stress can cause;
- c) Helps develop partnership working with employers;
- d) Demonstrates the union effect;
- e) Represents a considerable opportunity for the recruitment of members and reps;
- f) Will help improve our public services.

Conference understands that full branch involvement in tackling stress is a long-term commitment, and that Branches will need the appropriate financial and physical resources to help develop the capability and capacity required. Developing capability will involve the provision of training resources and mentors, to help develop the skills, knowledge and confidence required.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to grasp the opportunity to develop and support this work, to provide the necessary training, materials, advice and assistance to help make this approach available to all branches.

Building on work done to date, Conference calls specifically on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop appropriate training resources and materials for branches;
- ii) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop and provide training for those involved with delivering training and assistance at regional level;
- iii) Ask regions to fully back this work, providing the training and advice for Branches, electing or nominating a regional project lead, and facilitating the sharing of experience between Branches;
- iv) Ask branches to consider leading on this development in their area, electing a branch project lead, and discussing it with employers;

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- v) Work with service groups, regions and branches with a view to ensuring that employers at local and national level may develop a greater understanding of how tackling stress more effectively will reduce costs and improve productivity, as well as improving the health of workers;
- vi) Ensure that UNISON continues to lobby the government and Health and Safety Executive for clearer guidance and stronger enforcement action regarding the implementation of the Stress Management Standards;
- vii) Campaign with the aim of establishing illness resulting from work-related stress as an industrial injury, acknowledging that stress is always a 'process' rather than 'event'
- viii) Work with Labour Link to ensure these issues and policy aims are given full consideration by the Labour Party as it develops its manifesto for the next general election;
- ix) Give increased support to the UK Work Stress Network whose annual conference is an excellent opportunity for networking, learning and inspiration.

***Cardiff University***

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### **42. A Breakthrough in tackling stress and bullying/harrassment**

Conference understands the huge scale of harm being caused to members by work-related stress, including wrecked lives and relationships, debilitating mental and physical illness and sometimes, tragically, death. Such misery is often compounded by the insensitive treatment of victims by some employers who, far from acknowledging their own responsibility for causing excessive workplace stress, seek to punish the victims of their negligence.

Conference understands that work-related stress is a top concern of members. The 2018 TUC survey of safety reps confirmed that stress, bullying/harrassment and overwork were the biggest three health and safety concerns.

Conference notes that stress is not an inevitability; it is a consequence of the way work is organised and the way people are managed. The solution lies in prevention, with the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards approach to tackling stress, which refers to six primary causes:

- 1) Demands including workload;
- 2) The control people have in the way they do their work;
- 3) The support people get from line management and colleagues;
- 4) Relationships at work;
- 5) How well they understand what's expected of them;
- 6) How change is managed.



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

The approach involves an anonymous staff survey, and then focus group discussion of the results leading to action plans to address the issues identified. It recognises that the solutions best stem from the people affected.

The breakthrough is in full branch involvement in the process; joint working with the employer, significantly improving the effectiveness of the approach. Trust in the branch means we can carry out a confidential survey, which includes people's names, jobs, teams, and locations. We can build a much more accurate picture, identifying hotspots, where things are really bad, and the specific causes behind them. Full branch involvement will also improve survey response rates, focus group discussions, action plans, monitoring of implementation, and staff and employer confidence in the whole process. Bullying and harassment will be addressed along with all the other causes of stress such as violence at work.

Conference understands this solution will be valuable wherever stress is a serious problem for members, wherever high sickness absence rates are a serious concern of the employer and wherever they are willing to work with us. Where employers have had doubts over the Management Standards approach, this is an opportunity to show that, by working with us, it is very effective.

Conference notes that experience from branches shows that this work:

- a) Is a very real support to our members affected by stress;
- b) Helps prevent the harm that stress can cause;
- c) Helps develop partnership working with employers;
- d) Demonstrates the union effect;
- e) Represents a considerable opportunity for the recruitment of members and reps;
- f) Will help improve our public services

Conference understands that full branch involvement in tackling stress is a long-term commitment, empowering stewards to act as quickly as possible and branches with the appropriate financial and physical resources to help develop the capability and capacity required. Developing capability will involve the provision of training resources and mentors, to help develop the skills, knowledge and confidence required. Developing capacity, the time required, will stem from discussions with the employer over the business case and the significant savings to be made from reduced sickness absence etc.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to wholeheartedly grasp the opportunity to develop and support this work, to provide the necessary training, materials, advice and assistance to help make this approach available to all branches.

Building on work done to date, Conference calls specifically on the National Executive Council to:

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- i) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop appropriate training resources and materials for branches;
- ii) Identify appropriate financial and physical resources to develop and provide training for those involved with delivering training and assistance at regional level;
- iii) Ask regions to fully back this work, providing the training and advice for branches, electing or nominating a regional project lead, and facilitating the sharing of experience between Branches;
- iv) Ask branches to consider leading on this development in their area, electing a branch project lead, and discussing it with employers;
- v) Work with service groups, regions and branches with a view to ensuring that employers at local and national level may develop a greater understanding of how tackling stress more effectively will reduce costs and improve productivity, as well as improving the health of workers;
- vi) Ensure that UNISON continues to lobby the government and Health and Safety Executive for clearer guidance and stronger enforcement action regarding the implementation of the Stress Management Standards;
- vii) Campaign with the aim of establishing illness resulting from work-related stress as an industrial injury, acknowledging that stress is always a 'process' rather than 'event';
- viii) Work with Labour Link to ensure these issues and policy aims are given full consideration by the Labour Party as it develops its manifesto for the next general election;
- ix) Give increased support to the UK Work Stress Network whose annual conference is an excellent opportunity for networking, learning and inspiration.

### ***West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport***

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#### **43. Violence and Aggression**

Conference re-affirms its belief that violence and aggression against workers, whether physical, verbal or psychological, is not part of the job. Conference notes, and congratulates all those involved in the work across the union in the past year, in highlighting this as one of UNISON's key campaigning issues.

It notes that UNISON has long campaigned for stronger legislation to protect its' members from violent assaults. It therefore welcomes the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act 2018 which provided stronger tariffs specifically for all NHS Staff (who are involved in face to face interaction with the public), Emergency Workers, and Police Staff.

However it notes that all those UNISON members involved in face-to-face interactions with the public are at risk of violent assault, and therefore require the same legal protections as those covered by the above Act.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes the work of UNISON's Community Voluntary Sector in drafting, and getting employers to sign up to, UNISON's Violence at Work Charter. This provides clear standards that employers are expected to meet, and provides a model for all UNISON branches to consider in their discussions with employers.

Conference also notes that UNISON has led the way in producing guidance for Safety Reps and members explaining why violence at work should not be considered part of the job.

Yet despite all this good work violent assaults on UNISON members continues to rise. The government continues to starve the Health and Safety Executive and other inspection agencies of the resources needed to carry out robust proactive inspections in this area. Conference notes that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has recognised violence at work as a priority for inspections in the prison service, but not in other public services, despite the clear evidence of rising levels of assault in all sectors.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to promote UNISON Guidance, Charters and other resources through social media, bulletins to activists and members, and other media;
- 2) Build on the success of the Assaults on Emergency Workers (Offences) Act in the campaign for greater legal protection, and robust tariffs, regarding assaults against all public services staff;
- 3) Lobby the government and HSE to prioritise inspections regarding violence against all staff as a priority for proactive inspections, and greater resources to be diverted to all proactive health and safety enforcement activity;
- 4) Liaise with Labour Link to ensure that these measures are included in considerations for the Labour Party Manifesto at the next general election.

**Camden**  
**Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health**  
**United Utilities**  
**UNSAIN Ambiwylans Cymru - UNISON Welsh Ambulance**  
**West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport**  
**Western Energy**

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### 43.1

In the second paragraph after "public" insert: "including those members working in the private sector".

**Four Seasons Huntercombe West Midlands**

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### 44. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs)

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are, after stress, the leading cause of workplace injuries and time off work. In addition the existing structures and systems to prevent these injuries are being further undermined by the:

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Growth of zero-hours contracts;
- 2) Casualisation of the workforce;
- 3) Privatisation and fragmentation of public services;
- 4) Cuts in local authority and health and safety executive inspectors.

In many cases members are unaware of their basic rights, including what employers should be doing to prevent these injuries happening. In addition, in some of these workplaces members find it difficult to access the advice of UNISON safety reps or other activists.

Conference notes the excellent guides and leaflets UNISON produced last year on MSDs. However more needs to be done to promote this work and ensure that members get the support and advice they need.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- a) Conduct further research into the causes of these injuries and where they are happening;
- b) Lobby for greater resources to be devoted to health and safety enforcement particularly in those workplaces where workers are most vulnerable;
- c) Continue to promote UNISON's existing guidance and literature;
- d) Call on branches to prioritise the recruitment of safety reps particularly in those areas where members are most vulnerable.

***North Derbyshire Healthcare  
North Yorkshire  
West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport***

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### **45. Health and Safety Reps**

Conference recognises the vital role of its Health and Safety Reps both in terms of protecting our members' health and safety in the workplace, and improving the organising strength of this union.

UNISON's network of Safety Reps, the biggest and best in the trade union movement, is fundamental to any UNISON campaigns to improve the health and safety of its members. They are the eyes and ears of the workplace, and their dedication and hard work is an inspiration to all those interested in promoting workers' rights, and safe and healthy work. UNISON's Safety rep of the Year award recognises the impacts and successes in workplaces around the UK.

Despite their achievements, UNISON faces increasing challenges if it is to maintain this network. Large numbers of our Safety Reps are leaving employment as they reach retirement. At the same time UNISON is struggling to recruit new younger Safety Reps to replace those that have left.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes the success of the Grovember campaign which not only cemented UNISON's position as the UK's biggest trade union, but also showed it to be a growing union, increasingly establishing itself in sectors where previously it had no or little presence. This success has in itself posed new challenges. Many of these new members work in places where there are no Safety Reps, and may also have little knowledge of their own rights, and what their employers are required to do to protect their safety. In addition as our membership increases UNISON's dwindling base of Safety Reps face increasing demands on their time.

In the light of these challenges Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Launch a campaign to increase the number of safety reps, focussing particularly on recruiting younger Safety Reps, and ensuring that as many workplaces as possible have at least one safety rep;
- 2) Ask branches to review their network of Safety Reps, and target:
  - a) Recruiting new younger reps;
  - b) Ensuring that all members have access to the support and advice of these reps, focussing on those areas where UNISON previously had little or no organising presence;
- 3) Review its health and safety guides, leaflets and literature identifying any gaps, and prioritising those issues outlined above.

***North Derbyshire Healthcare  
North Yorkshire***

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Pensions

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### **46. Collective Defined Contribution Pension Scheme – Improving UNISON members pensions**

Conference congratulates the Communication Workers Union and Royal Mail on their groundbreaking agreement to pursue the creation of a collective defined contribution (CDC) pension scheme.

As well as being a model of constructive industrial relations, it opens the door for CDC to move from abstract idea to practical reality. This could transform the UK pension's landscape outside of the public sector.

Conference notes that since the introduction of auto-enrolment the number of workers saving for their retirement in defined contribution schemes are now greater those in a defined benefit scheme.

As of 2016 only 1.3 million workers were actively contributing to their Defined Benefit (DB) scheme down from 3.7 million in 2005.

Defined contribution pension schemes outside the public sector had 7.7 million active members in 2017.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

However there are increasing numbers of employers in the public sector bypassing the LGPS or the NHS schemes by transferring operations to arms length companies.

DC schemes do not deliver a pension; they are small investment pots for each member. All of the asset management fees and transactions are extracted from their investment pot. All the risk of the market value of assets falling is with the member.

Data published in April 2017 revealed that the average UK investment pot was £50,000. That pot of assets and cash is all members will have to survive on along with their state pension.

CDC pensions, which are prominent features of highly successful pensions systems in Denmark and the Netherlands, offer advantages in the middle ground between DC and DB.

These schemes offer a regular retirement income but in the form of a target benefit rather than a guarantee. Changes in the funding position of the scheme are addressed by adjusting the benefit rather than calling on extra contributions from the employer.

CDC may well appeal to employers who want to offer good pensions to their workforce where they have previously closed their DB scheme. The prospect of a regular and relatively reliable income in retirement will be welcomed by UNISON members who are now in a DC scheme.

As CDC schemes provide the opportunity for industry wide collective pension schemes conference therefore agrees to:

- 1) Continue to fight for a good quality Defined Benefit pension system and resist attempts by employers to close DB schemes;
- 2) Authorise consultation with members, branches, forums and service groups throughout the Energy, Water, Private Contractors and the Community and Voluntary sector so that they may place CDC on our bargaining agenda.

*Housing Association  
Northumbrian Water  
United Utilities*

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### **Campaigning**

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Campaigns

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#### **47. AUSTERITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

Conference believes that a decade of Tory austerity has starved our communities of essential services, eroded the resilience of the public sector and removed vital safety nets. It has also made communities less safe and left vulnerable people without the help they need. Public services are a lifeline for the most disadvantaged communities and it is these communities that austerity has hit the hardest.

Conference notes that the House of Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs found that the police are being used “as the sole emergency service for mental

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

health crises” in many areas because other public services are being hit by austerity. Conference believes that this is just the tip of the iceberg, with the NHS, the police and the criminal justice system left to pick up the pieces due to damaging cuts and austerity to mental health services, drug and alcohol services, youth services, housing and social services.

Far too many people with mental health conditions and/or drug and alcohol related behaviours end up in police custody, in probation or in prison when this simply exacerbates their problems.

Conference believes that deep cuts to police services have led to the erosion of neighbourhood policing and the important role of the police community support officer (PCSO), which is key to building trust with communities and for policing by consent.

Whilst PCSO numbers have been cut by 40% since 2010, the rest of the police staff workforce has fallen by 20% and police officers by 14% in the same time period.

This has led to a perfect storm where reduced police numbers struggle to contain the rise in serious and violent crime and keep communities safe.

In Scotland, the merger and centralisation of policing has seen jobs and services affected. Cuts to community wardens in local government have made parks and public places feel less safe and secure too.

Conference is alarmed that at a time when police forces are under pressure and the prison system is facing systemic problems, the government chose to split and part-privatise an award winning Probation Service in England and Wales.

According to Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation, the service is no longer providing effective levels of supervision, or community protection, and offenders are no longer being provided with rehabilitation.

To compound these problems, the UK’s housing crisis is worsening their plight. One of the major determinants of whether someone leaving prison will re-offend is whether they have housing to live in on their release.

All the evidence is that funding for housing for ex-offenders is woefully inadequate and the system of provision is broken.

Conference notes important recent research from UNISON that reveals the full extent of the damage done by austerity to youth services, with £400 million slashed from youth service budgets since 2010.

It has meant the loss of more than 4,500 youth work jobs and over 760 youth centres since 2012. The destruction has continued apace – since 2016, at least 160 youth centres have closed and nearly 900 youth worker jobs have been cut.

There have also been cuts to family social workers and youth offending teams. Conference asserts that we will never know the true cost of this act of vandalism on the future of young people.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Missed life chances and opportunities for disadvantaged young people will not appear on any Tory balance sheet.

Conference is deeply concerned that the cuts to refuges, shelters and charities are placing victims of domestic violence at risk of homelessness and further abuse from the perpetrator.

The funding crisis in social housing sector is making the situation for this highly vulnerable group even worse. A survey covering England and Wales last year by Women's Aid showed that women and children were being forced into homelessness in order to escape violence.

Shockingly, the survey found 11.7% of women who responded were forced to sleep rough during their search for a refuge, including pregnant women and some had their children with them.

Almost half of women (46%) were forced to sofa-surf, some women sofa-surfed with their children. The survey found that one in ten gave up the search for a shelter and went back to the abuser.

A range of local charities such as Citizens Advice Bureaux and Victim Support have seen local authority grants cut for services that help victims of crime.

Knife crime, in many areas, is on the rise and communities fear for the safety of their young people when they are away from home.

Conference asserts that a punitive criminal justice approach to crime and violence will be both ineffective and dangerous.

UNISON needs to sound the alarm when police force budgets are cut and neighbourhood policing is damaged, when probation and rehabilitation services are for sale, when vital services supporting those with mental health, drug and alcohol problems are slashed and when victims of crime are unsupported and young people's life chances are determined by their class and ethnic background.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to highlight the risks to public safety of cuts and austerity;
- 2) Promote the holistic role played by local public services in protecting and supporting communities;
- 3) Continue to highlight the link between police cuts and the rise in serious and violent crime;
- 4) Highlight and learn from positive approaches across the four countries of the UK;
- 5) Campaign for a social justice approach to criminal justice;
- 6) Further support our 'Let's Fix Probation' campaign to raise awareness of the damaging split and part privatisation of probation services and the need for probation to return to local provision and local accountability;



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- 7) Campaign to restore funding to youth services;
- 8) Continue campaigning for improved funding for mental health and an end to public health cuts, particularly in vital areas such as drug and alcohol services;
- 9) Campaign for sufficient refuge spaces to be provided nationally to ensure specialist support for survivors, including support for Black women, and for those with mental health, disability, substance misuse or language needs, and those with children.

### ***National Executive Council***

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#### **47.1**

After existing paragraph ending “and social services.”, insert new paragraph:

“Conference also notes the 2016 NatCen report into the impact of austerity on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) workers and services users which was commissioned by the National LGBT committee, supported by the Campaign Fund. The report highlighted the impact of cuts on mental health services targeted at LGBT people, such as cuts to LGBT- specific counselling services which have resulted in increased waiting times and some longer term therapies being cut completely.”

After sentence ending “the future of young people.”, add new sentence:

“The NatCen report also highlights that many LGBT specific youth services have disappeared due to cuts to council funding , with remaining services sustained by volunteers rather than professional staff. This leaves young LGBT people vulnerable and reduces their life chances.”

After paragraph ending “victims of crime”, insert new paragraph:

“Austerity cuts have also seen specialist domestic abuse services for LGBT survivors cut.”

In action point 7) after “services” add:

“, including specialised LGBT youth services.”

In action point 8):

After “mental health” add “, including specialised LGBT mental health services”

Delete “services.” and insert “misuse services, and sexual and reproductive health services.”

In action point 9), after “Black” add:

“and LGBT”

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

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#### **47.2**

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Add to the end of the sentence "There have been cuts to family social workers and youth offending teams":

"and support for children and young people's learning and development at every critical stage from Early Years on. Areas like behavioural support, mentoring and special needs have been particularly hard hit. This has been a significant contributory factor to the increase in the number of young people excluded from mainstream schools.

All the research shows that life chances, especially of those from disadvantaged or challenging backgrounds, including the likelihood of being involved in violent crime, are in large measure shaped by these investments in early development. A decade of austerity has reversed previous progress."

Add at end of motion 10):

"10) Campaign to highlight the impact on cuts to support for children and young people's learning and development on life outcomes, including the likelihood of being involved in violent crime, and for the reversal of those cuts."

### *Tower Hamlets*

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#### **48. Gun and Knife Crime – Time to Stop the Senseless Killings**

The number of deaths as a result of gun and knife crime in London, and inner cities across the country, continues to make the news with the number of innocent lives lost seemingly increasing on a daily basis.

The right wing press claim that the situation is a result of 'lawless Britain' but the truth is much more straightforward – since the Tories came to power in 2010 their austerity agenda has seen billions of pounds slashed from public services leaving youth services, social services and policing, to name a few, cut to the bone leaving young people with nowhere to go, spending time on the streets and vulnerable to gangs.

For every 100,000 people in the capital, there were 137 knife offences in 2017-18, with separate figures, from the mayor's office, showing that young Black teenage boys and men were disproportionately affected, as both victims and perpetrators.

UNISON members are at the forefront of dealing with the impact of these crimes with our ambulance and NHS workers helping those that have been shot or stabbed, social services etc providing support in the aftermath to affected families with decreasing resources.

You cannot tackle these crimes without dealing with the root causes of social deprivation; inadequate and failing education; unemployment; lack of affordable, decent housing, low wages, inadequate skills and training and poverty even for those that are in work.

Conference notes that the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has adopted a range of measures to tackle gun and knife crime including creating the Violent Crime Task Force, the London Needs you Alive campaign aimed at young Londoners: providing

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

youth workers in major trauma centres but as it is UNISON members that delivers these strategies and deal with the terrible aftermath of these violent crimes; we need a seat at the table.

Whilst gun and knife crime is not solely a young people's issue, a significant number of those that lost their lives or were injured last year were young. In the year to October 2017, 59 per cent of gun crime offenders were aged 25 or younger. Young people also made up around a third of gun crime victims. In the first half of 2018 one in five of those cautioned or convicted for carrying a knife was under 18.

As UNISON and the trade union movement celebrate 2019 as the year of the young worker it is time to stop just talking about the issue and we, as Conference, agree it is time to stop the senseless killings and take collective action.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the Mayor of London, and other elected mayors, appropriate local authorities, elected councillors and politicians within the regional government and health structures to share information, strategies and best practice on how to tackle gun and knife crime;
- 2) Develop a campaign highlighting the root causes behind 'lawless Britain';
- 3) Continue to campaign against cuts in funding for public services;
- 4) Work with the National Young Members Forum on a campaign that recruits young members and activists and works with the Mayor's office and other bodies on this key issue.

### *Greater London Region*

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#### **49. Fighting for an Accessible Welfare System**

Conference notes that eligibility and assessment processes for welfare benefits and public services are rapidly moving to online platforms. For example, applications for Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Access to Work, and Universal Credit almost invariably need to be made online. Conversely, Personal Independence Payments (PIP) can only be applied for using a paper form, with no online option available.

Some disabled people use assistive technology to access and complete everyday tasks. This can include screen and text readers, speech input software and alternatives to standard keyboards.

For many, the online process has simplified the task of filling in a paper application form, but for those who rely on assistive technology they can find that their local software is incompatible with the online form.

However, disabled people who do not rely on assistive technology can also find the forms daunting, and the questions intrusive.

Conference further notes that Black disabled people are often particularly impacted by digital exclusion. Low paid Black disabled workers and those on zero hours contracts or doing manual or shift work may not have the financial resources to

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

invest in digital technology at home and may not have access at work either. With libraries facing cuts, often the only option is a costly internet cafe which may be unaffordable.

Although government has claimed there has been assistance available to complete Universal Credit online applications through the 'Universal Support' contracts it has entered into with local authorities, housing associations, citizens advice and some local charities, in reality this can amount to little more than explaining to applicants that they need to complete an online form and assisting them to do so, when maintaining a Universal Credit claim is dependent on a constant set of online interactions through their Universal Credit 'journal'. Conference notes that the government has now awarded the contract for 'Universal Support' to Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, which do not have a presence in every local authority area and that the strategic role of local authorities in ensuring that advice is available locally and the valuable skills, knowledge and experience of specialist local voluntary sector organisations has been ignored.

Moreover, it is not yet clear whether this change is simply cosmetic.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Lobby the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to invest in further ongoing and comprehensive support, in addition to the arrangements with Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland, including recognition and support for of the strategic role that local authorities have and funding for voluntary and community organisations who assist disabled people in making and maintaining Universal Credit online claims;
- 2) Lobby the DWP to provide paper forms and other methods of managing Universal Credit claims as a reasonable adjustment;
- 3) Campaign for all benefit application forms to be accessible, and available both online and as hard copy documents, and for British Sign Language interpretations of forms to be available.

### *National Disabled Members' Committee*

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#### **50. End poverty in the world's fifth richest economy**

Conference condemns the rise of poverty across the UK, especially child poverty. UNISON has warned in the past that Tory government austerity policies would hit the poorest hardest whilst the richest few amass greater and greater wealth. This has come to pass, with cuts to public services - which have a far greater impact on the poorest in our society, and draconian cuts to benefits for low income and disabled families.

All the while, the richest have seen their wealth grow. Research by the Equalities Trust shows that the 1,000 richest people in the UK in 2018 had total wealth of £724 billion, which is an increase of £274bn in the past five years and an increase of £66 billion in the past year alone. This is comfortably more wealth than that held by the poorest 40% of household.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

The mantra that “work pays” rings very hollow when we realise that two thirds of children who live below the breadline come from families with one or both parent in work. The rise of insecure employment, zero hours contracts and bogus self-employment has left more and more people struggling to make ends meet and dependent on food banks in the world’s fifth richest economy. The roll out of Universal Credit has added to the misery for millions of claimants, left for weeks without income and struggling to make ends meet on what they do receive.

A recent report the by the UN Special Rapporteur, Sir Philip Alston reached the conclusion that UNISON has been saying for many years – namely that poverty is a political choice; that austerity could easily have spared the poor, if the political will had existed to do so. The last budget could have transformed the situation of millions of people living in poverty, but the political choice was made to fund tax cuts for the wealthy instead.

Conference deplores those political choices that have vastly increased inequality in this country. Conference condemns the UK government’s strategy of demonising the poorest in our society and setting vulnerable people against each other to mask the fact that the real divide is between the very richest in our society and the rest of us.

We are very concerned that things will only get worse after Brexit and the poor will pay the price.

Conference calls on branches to:

- 1) Renew our efforts to highlight the plight of those living in poverty and dependent on food banks in this affluent part of the world and lobby politicians, especially where branches have Tory MPs, to address this disgrace created by their government;
- 2) Engage our members in campaigning for decent pay and proper funding for public services by lobbying councillors, MSPs and MPs locally;
- 3) Name and shame any local politician who votes for policies designed to benefit the rich and hit the poorest hardest.

We further call on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Renew efforts to highlight the plight of those living in poverty and to campaign for fair progressive taxation that takes from those who can afford it, to fund public services and decent benefits for the poorest and most vulnerable;
- b) Campaign for an end to Universal Credit in favour of a fairer more equitable system that offers decent social security to all those who need it;
- c) Continue to fight for decent pay for all our members and to campaign against insecure employment and zero hours contracts.

***Aberdeenshire***

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### **51. INTERGENERATIONAL COMMISSION REPORT**

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference rejects the proposals contained in the Resolution Foundation think tank's report of the intergenerational Commission, chaired by Lord David Willetts (nicknamed Two Brains), titled "A New Generational Contract".

Conference further rejects the myth of generational unfairness on which the report is founded, and which masks the fact that the real unfairness is based on wealth and class. Wealthy pensioners compared to poor pensioners; privileged young people compared to those young people struggling on minimum wage.

The Intergenerational Commission is a group set up by the Resolution Foundation which claims to be an independent think tank working to improve the living standards of those in Britain on a low to middle income. It does not define the upper limit of that range. Both the Foundation and the Commission are chaired by Lord David Willetts. The Commission published a report in April 2018 giving its views on maintaining what it calls the intergenerational contract which it claims has been eroded in recent years because "Millennials" (those born between 1981 and 2000) have not seen their disposable income increase over that of the previous generation (generation X born 1966 to 1980) at a similar age.

The report claims that the UK's ageing population means that public spending on health, care and social security will reach £24bn by 2030 and £63bn by 2040. It focuses heavily on measures to protect younger workers from funding these costs mainly by taking measures to transfer wealth from those who are retired or nearing retirement and also by taking wealth from retired and older people to fund health and social care.

The report's ten key policy recommendations are as follows:

- 1) Increase public funding for social care by more than £2 billion from reformed taxation of property. There should also be an increase in property-based contributions towards care costs, but with strict limits so that no-one pays more than a quarter of their wealth towards their own care;
- 2) Introduce a £2.3 billion "NHS levy" via national insurance on the earnings of those above state pension age and limited national insurance on occupational pension income;
- 3) Boost employment security via: the right to a regular contract for those doing regular hours on a zero-hours contract; extended statutory rights for the self-employed; and minimum notice periods for shifts;
- 4) Introduce a £1 billion "Better Jobs Deal" that offers practical support and funding for younger workers most affected by the financial crisis to take up opportunities to move jobs or train to progress; and £1.5 billion to tackle persistent underfunding of technical education routes. Both should be funded by 1p of the forthcoming corporation tax cut;
- 5) Make indeterminate tenancies the sole form of private rental contract, with light-touch rent stabilisation limiting rent increases to inflation for three-year periods and disputes settled by a new housing tribunal;

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- 6) Replace council tax with a progressive property tax with surcharges on second and empty properties; halve stamp duty rates to encourage moving; and offer a time-limited capital gains tax cut to incentivise owners of additional properties to sell to first-time buyers;
- 7) Pilot community land auctions so local authorities can bring more land forward for house building, underpinned by stronger compulsory purchase powers; and introduce a £1.7 billion building precept allowing local authorities to raise funds for house building in their area;
- 8) Require firms contracting for self-employed labour to make pension contributions; lower the earnings threshold above which employees get auto-enrolled; and provide greater incentives to save among low-and-middle-earners by flattening the rate of pensions tax relief and exempting employee pension contributions from National Insurance;
- 9) Develop a legislative framework for new “collective defined contribution” pensions that better share risk; and reform pension freedoms to include the default option of a guaranteed income product purchased at the age of 80;
- 10) Abolish inheritance tax and replace it with a life-time receipts tax that is levied on recipients with fewer exemptions; a lower tax-free allowance and lower tax-rates. Use the extra revenues to introduce a £10,000 “citizen’s inheritance” – a restricted-use asset endowment to all young adults to support skills, entrepreneurship, housing and pension saving.

There are also proposals to scrap the triple lock and to bring forward by seven years the proposal to raise the qualifying age for State Retirement Pension to 68.

These proposals if implemented would immediately result in a drop in living standards for those retired or nearing retirement which they would be unable to counter. As the Commission is not a Government sponsored body it is not clear what the political response might be. Nevertheless it is concerning that the Commission is targeting the “easy” options rather than the “fat cats” in the private and public sectors being given over-excessive rewards in terms of salaries, bonuses, share options and the like which are out of line with the earnings of the rank and file.

None of these proposals does anything to improve the situation for poorer younger people, but are simply an excuse to squeeze more money out of the older generation. Older people have more than paid over many years for anything they get via National Insurance Contributions, taxes and their own contributions to occupational pensions, as well as the value of the work that they have performed for the benefit of the economy and the community.

Conference notes these proposals with concern and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Liaise with UNISON’s National Retired Members’ Committee;
- b) Work with UNISON’s Young Members’ Organisation and relevant service groups to develop alternative proposals with which to approach UNISON Labour Link,

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

the National Pensioners Convention, Age UK, Age UK Scotland, the Scottish Pensioners Forum and any other relevant bodies and to use any opportunity and all means possible to reject the narrative that old people are robbing their grandchildren's future;

- c) Oppose any Government action to implement the proposals in the Commission's report outlined above;
- d) Resist any attempt to extract any more money from the older generation.

### *National Retired Members Organisation*

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#### **51.1**

Divide the third paragraph in two after "Lord David Willetts"

Add a new fourth paragraph (after "Lord David Willetts"):

"Conference notes that the General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) was one of the commissioners. The commissioners directed the commission's analytical priorities and the policy recommendations in its report. The General Secretary was one of the speakers at the launch of the report. The TUC's head of economic and social affairs served on the commission's technical panel."

Add a new paragraph after "and the community":

"Conference regrets that the TUC has appeared to be associated with these proposals and has, by and large, not taken opportunities to correct this impression."

Add a new action point:

"c) Urge the TUC to make quite clear it does not support further rises to state pension age, scrapping the triple lock on basic state pension rises, levying national insurance on the earnings of workers over state pension age, levying national insurance on occupational pensions, or means-testing social care;"

Rename remaining action points accordingly.

In existing action point c) delete "outlined above" and substitute "with an adverse effect on retired workers".

### *City of Wolverhampton*

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#### **51.2**

In bullet point c) delete "outlined above" and insert "with an adverse effect on retired people."

### *National Executive Council*

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#### **52. Loneliness kills**

Conference believes that the statistics produced by Age UK on the increased likelihood of death caused by loneliness is evidence that loneliness is not just a societal problem, but also a major health problem.



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference welcomes the debate at Retired Members Conference 2018 on older people and loneliness, which asked the National Executive Council to liaise with agencies including the Jo Cox Foundation, Age UK and others to help raise awareness of loneliness and its impact on older people.

Conference notes that the government announced its strategy for tackling loneliness in October 2018, a strategy which recognises that not only older people are affected by loneliness, but that it can affect anyone of any age and background.

Conference recognises that while it may be expected that those who are lonely should play their part in seeking opportunities to build friendships and relationships, too often this is not possible because of factors that can include:

- 1) Lack of education/skills in instigating and maintaining relationships;
- 2) Low disposable income;
- 3) Transportation that is inadequate, inaccessible, or too expensive;
- 4) Lack of safe social meeting spaces that are accessible, appropriate and affordable;
- 5) Ill-health and/or disability;
- 6) Lone-working or other isolating work arrangements.

Conference also recognises that public services have a significant role to play in addressing the issue of loneliness, and yet funding cuts and decisions on priority spending mean the necessary resources are not being properly-funded, being cut altogether, or simply were not there in the first place.

Conference further recognises that UNISON has a role to play in continuing to campaign in defence of public services, jobs, pay and conditions, and pensions, but that the issue of loneliness should be an aspect of the evidence and concerns that informs its campaigning and bargaining agendas.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Seek evidence about the impact of loneliness, from the relevant agencies and voluntary organisations to support the union's campaigning work;
- b) Provide information gathered in a. to service groups and request that they consider how the issue of loneliness might be reflected in their bargaining agendas;
- c) Ask branches to promote local befriending and similar services;
- d) Promote concerns about the issue to members, including details of the work of national services and examples of community activities and good neighbour schemes, etc.

***Enfield***

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

*North Yorkshire*

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### **53. Supporting the workforce that are carers**

Conference notes that women are 3 times more likely than men to look after children and carry the burden of looking after our disabled and elderly relatives.

On average, women over 50 spent one minute and 15 seconds "actively caring" for someone each day, the ONS found.

Every day another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year.

58% of carers are women and 42% are men.

Over 1 million people care for more than one person. 2037, it's anticipated that the number of carers will increase to 9 million.

Carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer.

Most women that are carers are often in low paid work and cannot afford to leave.

They find that they are becoming unwell, going through sickness capabilities in the workplace, because employers have not put the measures in place to enable staff that are carers to have a flexible working contact. Over 3 million people juggle care with work, however the significant demands of caring mean that 1 in 5 carers are forced to give up work altogether. Which can lead to debt, homelessness and ill health.

People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled.

72% of carers responding to Carers UK's State of Caring Survey said they had suffered mental ill health as a result of caring.

61% said they had suffered physical ill health as a result of caring.

Over 1.3 million people provide over 50 hours of care per week.

The population is getting older carers are getting older and having to work longer.

A women worker is likely to leave her employment due the inflexibility of the employer or forced to expect poor flexibility of her employment.

More and more family members are becoming carers for their loved ones. Where is the support for carers?

Local government are having to make more cuts in reducing respite care, day centre services for disabled and terminal ill people. To having hardly any service or no service.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

We need to be looking after our carers if our careers are not looked after or supported how they will look after the elderly, disabled and vulnerable who so desperately need our support.

- 1) Call on the National Executive Council to lobby government for better funding and facilities to provide the support that carers require;
- 2) Call on the National Executive Council to campaign for better work place policies for staff that are carers;
- 3) Encourage all employers to promote a carers passport for all workers that are carers;
- 4) Encourage work places to become a member of Employers For Carers and getting an accreditation.

***North West Anglia Hospitals***

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### **54. Television Licences for Over 75's**

Conference notes that, since November 2000, those over 75 have been entitled to a free television licence and, in its 2017 election manifesto, the Conservative Party said this concession will continue, if they were elected, for the whole of their term of office. Until 2017/8 it was wholly funded by the government, is now partly so but will become entirely a matter for the BBC from June 2020 and, between 20th November 2018 and 12th February 2019, the BBC conducted a consultation on options.

Conference recognises that universal, accessible, flat-rate benefits like this are popular, they have very high levels of take-up and they have made a particularly important contribution to reducing poverty among women pensioners in view of:

- 1) The persistent gender pensions gap, now estimated to amount, on average, to £42 a week;
- 2) Pensioner poverty remaining higher and now growing faster among single pensioners, 70% of whom are women; single women getting Pension Credit outnumber single men more than two to one;
- 3) Lack of support may make form-filling to apply for means-tested benefits daunting; half of over 75s live alone and three quarters of them are women.

Conference further notes that the BBC's consultation appeared not to give all possible options equal weight, rather it appeared to favour:

- a) Abolishing the concession or reducing it by half;
- b) Increasing the age qualification to 77 or 80; and/or,
- c) Linking the concession to Pension Credit with an age threshold either remaining at 75 or reduced to state pension age.

Conference notes with particular concern that:

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- i) These options would all leave some of the lowest-income pensioners up to £3 a week worse off; and,
- ii) None of them propose any legacy arrangement to protect pensioners currently holding a free licence.

Conference considers that, now the consultation has closed, UNISON and its allies should continue to campaign for the scheme to remain available to everybody over 75, be made permanent and return to being funded from taxes rather than by younger licence payers or by cutting BBC services.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- A) Work with the Retired Members' National Committee and the National Women's Committee with a view to UNISON helping defend this universal benefit in both the short and long term, including raising with Labour Link the need for a renewed commitment from the Labour Party in its manifesto for the next general election;
- B) Raise urgently with the Trades Union Congress the need to continue campaigning on this question in line with the resolution of the 2016 congress and raise it, as appropriate, with the Scottish Trades Union Congress and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

*City of Wolverhampton*

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## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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- ii) None of them propose any legacy arrangement to protect pensioners currently holding a free licence; and,

Conference considers that, now the consultation has now closed, UNISON and its allies should continue to campaign for the scheme to remain available to everybody over 75, be made permanent and return to being funded from taxes rather than by younger licence payers or by cutting BBC services.

Conference instructs the National Executive Committee to:

- A) Work with the Retired Members' National Committee and other relevant UNISON bodies with a view to UNISON helping defend this universal benefit in both the short and long term, including raising with Labour Link the need for a renewed commitment from the Labour Party in its manifesto for the next general election; and,
- B) Raise urgently with the Trades Union Congress the need to continue campaigning on this question in line with the resolution of the 2016 Trade Union Congress: raise it as appropriate with the Scottish Trade Union Congress and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

*Islington*

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### **56. Tories Out! - General election now! Brexit- No Trust in the Tories at Westminster or Brussels**

With all the uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the current negotiations and parliamentary games in relation to Brexit the only certainty is that the trade union movement cannot rely on the Tories and big business to defend workers interests either at home or in Brussels.

It would be a big mistake for the trade unions to simply believe that this is solely a matter for parliament to resolve and reduce the role of the unions to passive onlookers.

As such it is vital that the trade union and labour movement urgently seek to mobilise the maximum unity to ensure that the interests of working class people are met and are defended out of this chaos.

Under the Tories there are fourteen million people in Britain living in poverty, soaring food bank use, austerity, cuts, pay freezes, universal credit and NHS operations cancelled.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Jeremy Corbyn was right to say that workers facing low pay, debt, poor housing who voted leave have the same desires as those who voted remain, they face low pay, debt and poor housing and want an end to austerity and the Tory government.

Conference believes that trade union leaders should meet immediately through an emergency TUC general council with Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell to call for and organise mass, emergency protest action to force a general election to kick out the Tory government and bring down their rotten regime of austerity and racism.

Conference calls for:

- 1) General election now! Jeremy Corbyn and the trade unions must meet urgently to call for mass action;
- 2) No support for the Tory deal - it's been struck in the interests of big business and the super-rich. Whether we voted leave or remain we must protect the interests of working class people by fighting against austerity;
- 3) Re-open negotiations on the basis of opposition to all neo-liberal European Union single market and customs union rules - like those on state aid, 'market liberalisation', or the posted workers' directives - that go against the interests of the working class;
- 4) Corbyn should take as a starting point in EU negotiations the need to protect the interests of working class people;
- 5) For public ownership of the key sectors of the economy including rail, gas, electricity, water, Royal Mail;
- 6) Bring back in house those public services privatised under previous Tory and New Labour governments;
- 7) For repeal of all the anti-union laws;
- 8) Oppose the mainstream racism which provides fertile ground for the fascists and the far right and support March 16 UN anti racism demo;
- 9) Defend EU migrants rights;
- 10) Freedom of movement for all, shut down immigration detention centres and give migrant and refugees indefinite leave to remain;
- 11) End the hostile environment;
- 12) Scrap universal credit;
- 13) For a new collaboration of the peoples of Europe on a socialist basis - based on working class solidarity across borders.

**Southwark**

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Insert new point 4) and renumber:

"4) Any deal negotiated should be put to a confirming referendum with remaining a full member of the EU on existing terms as the alternative option.

If a new deal is not agreed and the UK faces the prospect of crashing out of the EU with no deal under the Article 50 process, the government should revoke Article 50 notification and work to promote progressive change within the EU."

*Nottingham City*

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### **57. Tories Out! - General election Now!**

Conference notes that Theresa May's Tory government is on the brink of collapse. With each day passing there are more and more resignations, coups, plots and potential leadership challenges.

The trade union and labour movement must intervene now to ensure that the interests of working class people are met and defended out of this chaos.

Conference believes that the trade union leaders should meet immediately by calling an emergency TUC General Council with Corbyn and McDonnell, to call and organise mass, emergency protest action to fight to kick out the Tory government and force a general election.

Conference calls for:

- 1) General election now! Jeremy Corbyn and the trade unions must meet urgently to call mass action, including organising an emergency national demonstration, to kick out the Tories;
- 2) No support for the Tory deal - it's been struck in the interests of big business and the super-rich;
- 3) Re-open negotiations on the basis of opposition to all EU single market and customs union rules - like those on state aid, 'market liberalisation', or the posted workers' directives - that go against the interests of the working class;
- 4) Kick out the Blairite saboteurs. Some on the Labour right are considering saving the Tory government by backing May's Brexit deal in a parliamentary vote. Corbyn should make it clear now that any Labour MP who votes to save the government will have the Labour whip withdrawn. This would allow for selection contests in the relevant constituencies so that Labour members and trade unions could choose a candidate prepared to stand up for working-class people to contest the next election;
- 5) A socialist alternative to the EU. Corbyn should take as a starting point in EU negotiations the need to protect the interests of working class people. This means seeking to build a European-wide campaign of socialists and workers' organisations to use the talks to tear up the current pro-big business rules of the EU bosses' club;

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 6) Nationalise the banks and major monopolies under democratic working class control and management. This could prevent attempts by the capitalist class to use economic sabotage to attempt to force Corbyn to retreat from implementing his programme. It can pave the way for a socialist plan of production in order to meet the needs of all;
- 7) A new collaboration of the peoples of Europe on a socialist basis - based on working class solidarity across borders.

*Hackney*

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### **57.1**

Insert new point 4) and renumber subsequent paragraphs.

"4) Any deal negotiated should be put to a confirming referendum with remaining a full member of the EU on existing terms as the alternative option.

If a new deal is not agreed and the UK faces the prospect of crashing out of the EU with no deal under the Article 50 process, the government should revoke Article 50 notification and work to promote progressive change within the EU."

*Nottingham City*

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### **58. Strengthening Maternity Rights**

Conference notes with deep concern research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) that too many women continue to experience pregnancy and maternity discrimination in UK workplaces. According to the EHRC research, of the 3,034 employers surveyed:

- 1) 70% said women should declare up front about pregnancy during recruitment;
- 2) 25% said it was reasonable during recruitment to ask women about their plans to have children;
- 3) 28% said that protection from redundancy during ordinary maternity leave was unreasonable;
- 4) 27% felt pregnancy put an unreasonable cost burden on the workplace;
- 5) 17% felt pregnant women and mothers were less interested in career progression and promotion than other employees.

Given that employers felt able to disclose such discriminatory and unlawful opinions, it is unsurprising that the EHRC's survey of 3254 mothers found that:

- a) 77% said they had a negative or possibly discriminatory experience during pregnancy, maternity leave and/or on return from maternity leave.
- b) 11% felt forced to leave their job;
- c) 20% said they experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy or flexible working from their employer/colleagues;



## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- d) 10% were discouraged from attending antenatal appointments
- e) 51% of mothers who had their flexible working request approved said they felt it resulted in negative consequences

Conference further notes and welcomes the work of the recent Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy consultation. This was informed by the key issues raised in the Women and Equalities Select Committee 2016 report and recently on the Taylor review of modern working practices.

Conference believes that tackling pregnancy and maternity discrimination is vital in challenging fundamental inequalities in our labour market. That this review does not go far enough in protecting and enhancing the rights of pregnant women and new mothers.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- i) Continue to highlight the rights of women whilst pregnant and on their return to work;
- ii) Campaign to maintain and improve anti-discrimination laws, maternity and parental leave and pay, health and safety rights which are currently derived from European Union directives if and when the UK leaves the European Union;
- iii) Campaign to ensure that pregnant women and new mothers working in the insecure economy have meaningful access to basic employment rights including attending ante-natal appointments, health and safety at work and paid sick leave;
- iv) Campaign to extend existing protections against unfair redundancy to cover notification of pregnancy through to six months after return to work;
- v) Continue to work and campaign with Maternity Action to protect maternity rights at work and extend support to vulnerable and destitute women in our communities;
- vi) Enhanced rights to take effect at the point that the woman is placed at risk of redundancy.

***Cambridgeshire County***

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### **59. Democracy**

Conference notes that the introduction of the Trade Union Act has created a great deal of uncertainty around the future of our political fund. This threatens to reduce radically the resource that the union can use to ensure that the voice of its members is heard loud and clear on the political stage.

But Conference also notes that the act is not an isolated incident. It takes place alongside a range of other measures aimed at silencing legitimate criticisms of government policy directed not just at UNISON but at other civil society organisations too.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- 1) The Lobbying Act, introduced in 2014, restricts the amount of campaigning that UNISON and other organisations, such as Friends of the Earth, Amnesty International, Age UK, Save the Children and Women's Aid, can undertake in the period leading up to a General Election;
- 2) The Westminster Government is increasingly resorting to gagging clauses in public contracts with charities, preventing them from speaking out against government policy. Most recently this has involved government use of contract clauses directly preventing charities from criticising the Work and Pensions Secretary over Universal Credit;
- 3) Plans are being developed that require those attending a polling station to show ID. Early pilots conducted during the local elections in England in 2018 suggest that this is putting off vulnerable and disadvantaged groups from voting.

Conference expresses its deep concern about each of these developments and the deeper trend that they represent when put together. Put in its starkest terms the government are undermining democracy. By seeking to diminish the voices of trade unions, campaign groups and charities in the national political conversation, the Tory government is creating serious imbalance in which the perspective of the strong is the only one that people hear.

Conference believes that unions and civil society groups need to stand up for democracy and to these ends calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Step up its campaign to secure a repeal of the Trade Union Act;
- b) Develop a plan for transition to a new political fund settlement for a post Trade Union Act world;
- c) Work with other civil society organisations, including campaign groups and charities, to develop a campaign targeted at repealing the Lobbying Act;
- d) Work together with allies to develop a community based campaign highlighting the importance of democracy.

***Northern Region***

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### **60. Free Our Unions**

UNISON believes;

- 1) That the anti-trade union laws – from the 2016 Trade Union Act to the numerous laws introduced by the Tories in the 1980s and 90s; mean trade unions are fighting the mounting challenges of low pay, precariousness and lack of rights with our arms tied behind our backs;
- 2) That we need a big push to get these laws repealed and replaced with strong legal rights for workers and unions, including a strong right to strike;
- 3) That the unanimous vote for such a policy at last year's Labour Party conference was an excellent step, but Labour is yet to start talking about or campaigning actively for it.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

UNISON notes and welcomes the statement on this being circulated by a range of union organisations including UNISON branches and other trade unions.

UNISON resolves:

- a) To sign the statement and stay in touch with the other signatories to coordinate any campaign;
- b) To circulate it as widely as possible to Labour link, regions and branches;
- c) To request that Labour Link consider supporting this and lobbying for it within the Labour Party.

Statement: We need the right to organise and strike – free our unions.

We need abolition of the anti-trade union laws, which hamstring workers organising and taking action, and their replacement with strong legal workers' rights. Otherwise we are fighting the challenges of low pay, insecurity and lack of rights with our hands tied behind our backs.

We applaud the 2017 Labour Party Conference's unanimous call for repeal of not just the 2016 Trade Union Act, but also the "anti-union laws introduced in the 1980s and 90s" by the Tories and maintained after 1997; and for a "strong legal charter of workers' rights". "For unions to be effective workers need an effective right to strike". This builds on the unanimous 2015 decision that the next Labour government should "legislate for strong rights to unionise, win recognition and collective bargaining, strike, picket and take solidarity action".

We will campaign for:

- i) Complete and speedy repeal of all anti-union laws;
- ii) Strong legal rights for workers to join, recruit to and be represented by a union; strike/take industrial action by a process, at a time and for demands of their own choosing, including in solidarity with any other workers and for broader social and political goals; and picket freely;
- iii) The right to reinstatement for workers found to have been sacked unfairly. A complete ban on dismissal for industrial action, however long it lasts. Full rights from day one of a job;
- iv) Strong rights for unions to access workplaces, win recognition, and establish collective bargaining, including sector-wide bargaining;
- v) Unions' right to decide their own policies and activities, determine their own structures and rules, and spend their funds as they choose, free from state and employer interference, in line with ILO Conventions and the European Convention on Human Rights.

***Newcastle City***

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### **61. FREE OUR UNIONS - REPEAL THE ANTI-UNION LAWS**

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference believes that repeal of the anti-trade union laws and their replacement with strong legal rights for workers and unions, including a strong right to strike, is a decisive question for our movement.

These laws scupper or undermine more and more struggles; in high profile national cases - eg the PCS pay ballot - but also in numerous smaller disputes. They make the kind of workplace-level organising and campaigning without which trade unionism will not revive difficult. As anti-union laws have become consolidated and new layers been added, the labour movement at various levels has become tightly hemmed in.

Moreover, facing the challenges which could beset a radical Labour government with workers' hands still tied behind our backs would be dangerous. Our ability to organise and take action will be decisive to the delivery of serious changes, and to going forward from there to transform society.

We believe that without the ability to take industrial action freely, other reforms such as expanded collective bargaining may be difficult to achieve and in any case will not necessarily deliver the shift in power workers need.

Conference therefore resolve that UNISON will campaign clearly, vocally and pro-actively for:

- 1) Complete and speedy repeal of all anti-union laws;
- 2) Strong legal rights for workers to join, recruit to and be represented by a union; strike/take industrial action by a process, at a time and for demands of their own choosing, including in solidarity with any other workers and for broader social and political goals; and picket freely;
- 3) The right to reinstatement for workers found to have been sacked unfairly. A complete ban on dismissal for industrial action, however long it lasts. Full rights from day one of a job;
- 4) Strong rights for unions to access workplaces, win recognition, and establish collective bargaining, including sector-wide bargaining;
- 5) Unions' right to decide their own policies and activities, determine their own structures and rules, and spend their funds as they choose, free from state and employer interference.

*Lambeth*

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### **62. UNISON De-recognition**

Conference condemns the deplorable action of one of the largest voluntary sector providers of social care in Scotland, Cornerstone Community Care, to de-recognise UNISON for standing up for our members over pay.

In a ballot, members rejected the pay offer of 1 per cent and the payment of the living wage for sleepovers backdated to October and the living wage of £8.75 per hour. This offer in no way reflects the rate of current inflation and does not reflect

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current Scottish government pay policy of 3 per cent. 92 per cent of our members rejected the offer.

UNISON had been negotiating with Cornerstone around pay and the rollout of “Local Cornerstone”; a new method of care and support based on the Buurtzorg model of care developed in the Netherlands. This model removes direct line management and allows groups of workers to self organise.

Cornerstone refused to negotiate and UNISON sought ACAS conciliation with a date being set for 29 November 2018 to find resolution. Cornerstone sent a letter on 28 November to the Scottish Secretary derecognising UNISON with immediate effect and withdrawing from the voluntary recognition agreement that had been in place for 24 years; ignoring the six month notice period within the agreement.

Since that point, Cornerstone has begun a campaign of discrediting UNISON and our activists, sending out misinformation to our members and their staff and adopting all the tactics of a UNION busting organisation. UNISON has written to all councillors and local authorities where Cornerstone provides services. Motions have been taken to the Scottish Parliament and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), condemning the deplorable actions of Cornerstone and urging them to attend ACAS to find a resolution on pay and the relationship.

Our members are still awaiting a pay rise and are currently being paid below Scottish government policy on sleepovers. Our stewards continue to recruit and we will be looking at pursuing statutory recognition.

If one organisation in Scotland gets away with this behaviour, it will not be long before others follow suit.

We must all stick together and fight these tactics. We must fight and we must win.

Conference commits to:

- 1) Continue to support our brilliant stewards in the work that they are doing standing up for the workers of Cornerstone;
- 2) Engage with all branches, activists and workers, in areas where Cornerstone has a presence to support the stewards and members and encourage all workers to join UNISON;
- 3) Offer all the support possible to force Cornerstone to sit down at ACAS and resolve this matter;
- 4) Name and shame all those employers/agencies that are supporting these deplorable union busting tactics;
- 5) To skill all stewards, activists and staff to enable them to fight the union busting tactics of this employer and others that may wish to follow suit;
- 6) To offer messages of support and offer assistance should any further action be needed over the coming year.

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We further call on UNISON to:

- a) Take this issue and behaviour to politicians throughout all nations and regions to send the message that: if you want to deliver social care, then respect for an effective staff voice and trade union recognition and negotiation should be given;
- b) Call on all social care providers to respect the right of workers to organise and to be part of a trade union. To offer recognition and the associated benefits that recognition can produce;
- c) Condemn the actions of those employers that de-recognise and fail to allow their workers an effective trade union voice;
- d) We need less of their spin and more of our win.

***Aberdeenshire***

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### **63. DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM**

Free market capitalism is responsible for world-wide programmes of privatisation, attacks on workers' jobs, wages and conditions, increasing poverty especially in the less developed countries, environmental destruction, wars without end for whole sections of the world and a massive increase in profits for the few trans-national companies which dominate the world economy.

Never more than now are the failings of capitalism exposed. It is so exposed that even the bosses recognise the crisis. The response of the bosses to give away to the failing system billions of pounds of workers' money is unacceptable. Bailing out bankers and the super-rich 1% with our money to protect their system is not the way forward for trade unionists and working class people.

This conference believes that there is an economic alternative to free market capitalism based on the common and democratic public ownership of the major elements of the economy, namely democratic socialism.

Conference calls for:

- 1) The nationalisation of all the banks on the basis of democratic public ownership, i.e. run by representatives of banking workers and trade unions, the wider working class, as well as the government. Take them completely out of the hands of the fat cats who made the mess! Compensation should be paid only on the basis of proven need;
- 2) The nationalised banks to offer cheap loans and mortgages for housing and for the planned development of industry, services and social housing;
- 3) The opening of the books of the major companies that dominate the economy; let popular committees of workers, trade unionists and consumer groups see where the profits have gone and what their financial situation really is and for no job losses;
- 4) The ending of fuel poverty by nationalising the oil and gas companies;

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- 5) A trade union struggle to increase the national minimum wage to £10 per hour without exemptions for young people, in line with TUC policy. The introduction of a sliding scale of wages with automatic increases to cover inflation;
- 6) The ending of privatisation and for a massive programme of investment to improve public services and to defend public sector jobs and pay.

Accordingly, Conference calls on the leadership of UNISON to use all means at its disposal to publicise and popularise these issues amongst the membership and the working class generally.

*City of Glasgow*

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### **64. Make this the age of the publicly owned train**

Conference last year saw Britain's railways thrown into chaos by radical changes to timetables and routes. Even today, over twelve months on and after various iterations of emergency timetables, parts of the rail network are still blighted by haphazard or illogical schedules.

This farcical situation is indicative of a system run not for the benefit of the travelling public, the country or the environment. It is a system designed purely for the advantage of shareholders and the City.

As fares rise year on year and the quality of service declines, members of the public see the private rail for the money making rip-off that it really is, so there has never been a better time to start a national campaign for a publicly managed and owned national railway.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Engage with the Labour Party through Labour Link, Campaign for Better Transport and other bodies to promote and develop workable practical plans for a properly accountable publicly owned and managed railway network;
- 2) Encourage and work with other unions, through the TUC, to run a vigorous and coordinated campaign, promoting the desirability of a public owned and managed railway;
- 3) Engage with and confront politicians at all levels, nationally and regionally, calling on them to speak out in favour of a transport system run for the benefit of the passengers and the country as a whole, rather than shareholders.

*West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport*

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### **65. HS2 the 'rail road to nowhere'**

Conference notes that the changes to the rail timetable in April 2018, the largest since the dogma led Tory privatisation of the industry in 1997, saw up to 200 services a day cancelled in by Northern Rail, with a similar cancellation figure suffered by passengers of Southern.

Whilst assurances were made, the minister in charge, Chris "Failing" Grayling, claimed it was not his responsibility. Nearly 12 months later disruption is still evident,

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promises of new trains have yet to materialise. Passengers in Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle and other Northern cities put up daily with antiquated overcrowded rolling stock.

Now we learn that the much vaunted HS2 and HS3 (rebranded Northern Powerhouse rail), may be scrapped.

The cost of this vanity project is estimated to have escalated from £30bn to £60bn and recent estimates may even be close to £100bn.

Even before a spade has been put in the ground the impact is being felt by Northern Communities with housing along the proposed routes blighted.

Thousands of pounds spent on consultation and the chair of HS2 limited is pocketing £650k pa.

Yet the North South divide continues. The over running, over budgeted Crossrail has been given a further £350 million, and expenditure on rail is twice as much in the south than in the north; for every £1 spent on transport in Newcastle £87 is spent in London.

This cannot continue.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link to support the next Labour government to bring rail services back into public ownership;
- 2) Use the resources of the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive and its contacts with "Campaign for Better Transport" and "We Own It" to campaign for an affordable sustainable public transport mix that benefits the many not the few.

### ***West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport***

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#### **66. Blood Donation Campaign**

My best friend for over 25 years died after a blood transfusion last year in London, he had sickle cell and his death could have been prevented. This is what motivates us to raise awareness and organise this campaign.

Sickle cell disease is a blood condition that most commonly affects people of African heritage, as evidenced in 90 per cent of British patients although it can also be found in those from Caribbean, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean backgrounds.

Sickle-shaped cells do not carry oxygen efficiently around the body and the disease can be extremely painful and cause life-threatening infections. It can lead to stroke or loss of vision. Blood transfusions help to reduce and prevent these symptoms. The treatment of this condition is much more successful using blood that is very closely matched to the patients.

It is estimated that between 13,000-15,000 people in the UK have sickle cell disease.



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Some blood groups are more prevalent amongst people of African and Caribbean descent including the rare blood subtype Ro. This blood type is needed for treating sickle cell disease, if a person has the sickle cell trait they can still become a blood donor. Only around 2 per cent of donors have this rare sub-type so meeting the demand can be difficult.

While people from all communities and backgrounds do give blood, fewer than 5 per cent of people donating blood in 2018 were from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This is despite these communities representing around 14 per cent of the population. 40,000 more black donors of all blood groups are needed to meet the growing demand for better matching and we need to try and readdress this balance.

We believe that promoting awareness and reaching out to Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, asking for more blood donors would reduce the number of tragically avoidable deaths. Just one avoidable death is too many lets work together to make a difference save lives and keep families together, to stop loved ones being taken from us too soon.

We call upon Conference to mandate UNISON to fund and develop a campaign to raise awareness within Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and to, consequently, increase the number of donors and suitable supply.

***Bournemouth***

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### **66.1**

In sixth paragraph delete “black” and replace with “Black”.

In the sixth, seventh and ninth paragraphs delete “Black, Asian and minority ethnic” and replace with “Black”.

***National Executive Council***

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### **67. Say No to Trump Visiting Britain**

Conference notes with concern that Donald Trump will be returning to London in December 2019 for the NATO summit.

Conference believes that Trump represents all the values that our union opposes. He has sought to ban migrants from Muslim countries from entering the USA and encouraged systematic deportation of migrant workers, many of whom have lived and worked in the US for most of their lives. He is on record as describing the violent racist right, including the Ku Klux Klan as “fine people” and formerly included an open fascist, Steve Bannon, in his government. He has a record of sexual harassment of women of which he has bragged publicly. He has pushed through massive tax cuts for the wealthy, leading to cuts in the already minimal welfare provision for the poorest in the USA and the public services on which they depend.

Conference notes Trump has continued to threaten to build a wall between North America and Mexico which has led to the longest federal shutdown in US history. This has affected almost a million federal workers, mainly lower paid who are not receiving wages and in some cases having to continue working. This is particularly felt by Black Americans as they make up a disproportionate share of the lower paid

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

federal workers. Millions of Americans who live in federally subsidised housing have run the risk of eviction, and court hearings for thousands of people claiming asylum and resisting deportation have been cancelled because of the shutdown.

Conference believes that his reactionary views are not just a matter for US citizens. In the Middle East Trump has poured oil on the flames of conflict by moving the US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem in a calculated provocation to the Palestinian people. Under his leadership, the US has instigated a trade war with the EU and China and pulled out of the Paris accord on climate change. As the leader of the most powerful nation on earth his open espousal of racism and sexism legitimises these views across the world.

Conference notes the huge protests in 2018 when Trump last visited the UK that prevented him from spending the visit in London and followed him across Britain. These were well-supported by UNISON nationally, regionally and locally and brought together hundreds of thousands of people who oppose his racist, sexist views.

Conference also notes that over £14.2 million were spent on policing Trump's visit. This was an outrageous cost at a time of austerity.

Conference notes that an alliance, Together Against Trump, called demonstrations across Britain during Trump's visit. This included the Stop Trump Coalition whose signatories of its launch statement included Dave Prentis.

Conference calls on branches and regions to work with the Stop Trump Coalition and other organisations that are in line with the aims and objectives of UNISON and encourage members to attend protests against a return visit of Donald Trump.

***Camden***

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### **68. Nelson Mandela: Inspiring Future Generations**

Conference notes that 2020 will be the 30 year anniversary of the release of Nelson Mandela from captivity.

Conference believes that Mandela's life, sacrifice and values are inspirational to us today in our struggle for justice and equality.

Conference notes with pride the role of trade unionists in the Anti-Apartheid movement and that Nelson Mandela is an honorary UNISON president.

Conference applauds the UNISON Black Members' creation of an annual Nelson Mandela Award in 2015. The award recognises outstanding representation of black members within the union and more widely in society.

Conference notes that the Liverpool-based 'Mandela 8' organisation is creating a Nelson Mandela Memorial in Prince's Park in Toxteth. The memorial will include features that symbolise aspects of Mandela's life, and will include an educational facility. The aim of the project is to keep the memory of Mandela alive and to inspire and encourage the next generation.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Support the Mandela 8 Project in Liverpool and to make a donation of £5,000;
- 2) Support other projects and events that aim to celebrate the life and values of Nelson Mandela.

*Liverpool City*

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### **69. Combating the rise of volunteerism in public services**

Conference notes the rise in the use and acceptance of volunteers in public services at a time when much of government policy mitigates against volunteers including:

- 1) Pension inequality which means women have to work for longer;
- 2) In-work conditionality which means part time workers who may have volunteered are not able to do so;
- 3) Cuts to social care mean more people have caring responsibilities and do not have free time to volunteer;
- 4) Cuts in real wages mean people have to work longer hours and are less able to volunteer;
- 5) Cuts to public transport make volunteers less able to take up voluntary work in rural areas;
- 6) The increase in the pension age means people are having to work longer reducing the availability of older people for volunteering.

Nevertheless, volunteers have been promoted as the solution to the cuts in public services and we see the rise in their use and acceptance in the NHS, Police and local authorities, particularly in libraries.

UNISON accepts that there is a limited place within public services for volunteers to complement statutory services. However, the provision of consistent, high quality public services cannot rely on volunteers and the increasing acceptance of this trend must be challenged. Public services should be delivered by competent, trained, fairly paid professionals.

Conference requires the National Executive Council to:

- a) Publish service group specific guidance on how to challenge commissioners and providers of public services using volunteers to replace public service employers;
- b) Produce a campaign toolkit for branches to challenge the basis for using volunteers to replace employees in public services;
- c) Continue to campaign against austerity and the relentless cuts to public funding which has resulted in the shift of focus from employees to volunteers;
- d) Highlight the benefit of democratic public services which are subject to local accountability and scrutiny.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

UNISON Essex

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### 69.1

Insert new action point c) as follows:

“c) Promote initiatives such as the charter agreed between the Health Service Group and Helpforce which provides reassurance about the role/s of volunteers in relation to the staff of the NHS in England;”

Re-title remaining action points as d) and e).

### *National Retired Members Organisation*

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Public Services

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## 70. TACKLING THE CRISIS IN SOCIAL CARE

Conference notes with alarm the ongoing crisis in social care.

Conference believes that the sector faces a perfect storm in which the impact of years of chronic underfunding has been worsened by increasing demand and the knock-on impact of cuts to other key public services.

Conference notes that this has produced a situation in which the needs of many of society's most vulnerable people are not being met and in which care workers are almost universally underpaid, largely undervalued and often exposed to exploitation.

As a result, Conference notes with alarm that nearly ninety people die each day waiting for social care, with the government's former pensions minister Baroness Altmann moved to comment that “every bit of our social care system is broken”.

Conference believes that inadequate access to social care affects people right across society – whether those in direct need of care, those friends and family members providing unpaid care, or those working elsewhere in public services who are left to pick up the pieces when people are left without the support they need.

Furthermore, Conference asserts that were it not for the ongoing commitment and hard work of the social care workforce the sector would have imploded completely – but no more can the government expect to prop up a creaking system on the backs of UNISON members.

Conference recognises that there are differences in approach across the four countries of the UK. For example, Northern Ireland has had integrated health and social care since the 1970s; Scotland has had free personal care since 2002; and Wales recently moved to curb the use of zero hours contracts by ensuring that homecare workers are offered a choice of contract after three months of employment.

However, Conference notes that underfunding of social care is causing serious damage in every part of the UK. Children's social care, in particular, is under extreme pressure and UNISON disabled members are often service users who rely on social care services for assistance to stay in work and have a family life.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Proper funding and major reform are long overdue, so Conference is appalled that the government has repeatedly delayed the publication of its Green Paper on care and support in England.

Social care has for too long been regarded as a poor cousin of the NHS and Conference wants to see a concerted push to begin to raise its profile and standing within society. Social care services complement the NHS and prevent both acute admissions and enable recovery at home.

As such, Conference believes that various piecemeal attempts made to prop up the current failing system will not cater adequately for the needs of our growing and ageing population.

Instead Conference wants to see a longer term, more ambitious vision of where social care should be in ten years' time, with serious financial commitments to back this up, and a strict timetable for achieving change – as a way of shielding such plans from being blown off course by short term political or economic considerations.

Conference notes that a number of think tanks and Parliamentary committees have now come out in favour of making universal access to personal care free at the point of delivery.

Whilst recognising that it would not be achieved overnight, Conference believes that ultimately the goal should be to bring social care up to equivalent levels of equity and access as those associated with the NHS.

Conference accepts that this would be expensive, but believes that the ongoing failure to invest properly in social care by successive governments is purely a matter of political choice.

Conference notes, for instance, that even with the continuation of austerity policies for most of the public sector, the chancellor still managed to find £2.7 billion for tax cuts in his 2018 Budget – a policy that will predominantly benefit the better off.

Similarly, Conference notes recent work by the Resolution Foundation which found that government could raise as much as £7 billion a year by 2022 by making a series of relatively moderate adjustments to wealth taxes and subsidies, such as entrepreneurs' relief and inheritance tax.

Conference is encouraged that organisations from across the spectrum – including the Local Government Association, health think tanks, and Parliamentary Select Committees – have all reached the conclusion that some form of taxation reform will be needed to deliver the resources that are so urgently required in the social care sector.

Conference also believes, however, that providing extra money is only part of the solution; there must also be accompanying changes to the way in which care is delivered.

Conference notes that the existing social care market remains completely dysfunctional: there is a hugely fragmented provider landscape in which some areas have hundreds of providers operating, many of which exit the market each year.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference remains concerned that the vast majority of social care is no longer provided by the public sector, but recognises that this means thousands of UNISON members working in social care are now employed by private contractors or providers from the community and voluntary sector.

Conference continues to believe that services such as social care are best provided by the public sector, while noting that there is also a need at many local authorities to rebuild the capacity of councils to deliver care themselves if contracts are to return in-house without endangering service users.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign with allies inside and outside Parliament for the following:

- 1) Social care to finally receive the proper funding it deserves as part of a longer term plan to ensure its equivalence to the NHS in terms of access to services and its status within society;
- 2) For such funding to be raised by collective rather than individual means;
- 3) For any spending boost to be accompanied by meaningful reform of service delivery to improve the system in the interests of its staff and the service users they care for;
- 4) Social care to remain an organising and recruitment priority for UNISON, complementing the union's high-profile campaigns against injustice, privatisation and underfunding;
- 5) To support care workers having a greater voice in the workplace and as part of the wider public debate;
- 6) A universal social care system, based on public provision, paid for by general taxation and free at the point of need.

***National Executive Council***

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### **70.1**

Add new paragraph after paragraph ending "creaking system on the backs of UNISON members.":

"Conference this has been supported by the Social Care Inquiry carried out by the Fair Work Convention in Scotland that evidenced a culture of zero-hours, unpredictable working hours and unstable earnings. The inquiry makes recommendations about how to realise fair work for social care workers by setting out what policy makers, commissioners and leaders in Scotland's social care sector can and should do."

***Scotland Region***

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### **70.2**

After paragraph ending "...have a family life." insert a new paragraph as follows:

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“With an ageing population many older people including UNISON retired members are dependent on social care to enable them to have dignity in later life. Properly funded social care would also make it possible for people to remain in their homes.”

### *National Retired Members Organisation*

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#### **70.3**

After paragraph which ends "many of which exit the market each year", insert new paragraph:

"Conference believes that social care workers must be recognised as highly skilled professionals, entitled to decent pay and working conditions, proper support and supervision, high quality training and clear pathways for career progression."

### *Salford City*

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#### **70.4**

At the end of the paragraph ending with “.....UNISON members working in social care are now employed by private contractors or providers from the community and voluntary sector.” add:

“predominantly these members suffer from low pay, poor terms and conditions, limited pensions and aggressive management behaviours”.

Insert a new action 5):

“5) Encourage targeted activity at selected high profile employers for campaigning activity in order to highlight the plight of our members working in the sector. Activity to include coordinated action up to and including lawful industrial action where branches are able to lodge legal trade disputes on members terms and conditions.”

Renumber remaining paragraphs accordingly.

### *Mid Yorkshire Health*

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#### **70.5**

Insert new paragraph after “...endangering service users”:

"Conference notes the success of the Care Workers for Change campaign in the North West region, a large scale organising project which involved the active support and participation of branches. The campaign encountered consistent hostility from employers and developed a multidimensional approach combining workplace organising with political lobbying and community engagement. The campaign has achieved high levels of membership growth with 4,500 new members and 200 new care worker activists who are working to build their union in their workplaces. The campaign has won real material benefits for care workers through bringing pressure on councils to require that their commissioned providers allow access to trade union organisers and that they pay at least the real living wage."

Insert new action point 5):

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"5) Build on the successes and the lessons of the Care Workers for Change campaign in developing an effective strategy to organise care workers."

Renumber subsequent bullet points.

**Sefton**

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### 70.6

Insert new points:

"4) Social care workers to be recognised as highly skilled professionals entitled to decent pay and working conditions, proper support and supervision, high quality training and clear pathways for career progression;

5)Where a private sector provider is facing bankruptcy or liquidation, local authorities should be supported by central government to take over the running of homes in their area to ensure continuity both of provision and of employment for the staff in these homes;"

Renumber subsequent points.

**Portsmouth City  
Tower Hamlets**

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### 70.7

Add at the end:

"Conference also recognises that to achieve the above demands will require the replacement of this Tory Government with a Corbyn led Labour Government pledged to fund and provide for people's needs."

**Hackney**

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## 71. Cuts in Social Care

Conference continues to be appalled by the ongoing cuts being made to vital social care services.

Congress notes that, although social care has been relatively protected compared to other council services, care spending per adult resident has fallen substantially since 2009-10.

And this situation has been compounded by the fact that demand for social care continues to increase as the population ages and cuts to other services, such as housing and welfare, take their toll.

Conference is alarmed at the impact these cuts are having on UNISON members responsible for delivering services in such circumstances, but also on the elderly and vulnerable who are in receipt of care.

Conference notes that there are now 8,000 fewer care beds than there were three years ago and that a record 1.4 million older people do not receive the level of care they need.



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference believes that it is only down to the dedication and commitment of our social care workforce that the sector has not completely collapsed.

Given the ongoing state of crisis in the sector, Conference is dismayed that the government repeatedly delayed the publication of its Green Paper on care and support.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the Labour Party, campaign groups, charities and others to continue highlighting the plight of workers and service users within the social care sector;
- 2) Highlight the desperate need to raise the status of social care within society;
- 3) Repeat calls for the government to provide a substantial long-term funding boost to social care, particularly as part of the 2019 spending review.

### ***East Midlands Region***

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#### **71.1**

Add a new paragraph after paragraph ending "...not completely collapsed" as follows:

"Conference notes the double jeopardy of social care cuts on the women who make up 80% of the social care workforce and who are both managing impossible workloads and filling gaps in provision when care for children and increasingly, elderly relatives breaks down as a consequence of relentless cuts. Society still expects women to be the prime carer."

Add to action point 1) after "social care sector":

"and particularly women."

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

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#### **72. Housing Out Of Reach For Public Service Workers!**

Conference recognises that high housing costs and affordability are among the biggest issues facing the workforce in the South East and nationally, affecting where members can live, what they can access and what they can afford.

According to the National Housing Federation, there was a shortfall of over 85,000 homes in the South East between 2012 and 2016, the highest in the country after London. The average home is over £360,000, 12 times the average salary; and the average monthly rent is £994. Data reported by The Guardian found that 40% of houses sold under the Right to Buy are now in the private rented sector, tens of millions of pounds are being paid by local authorities to rent former council homes to house homeless families, and some councils have bought back their former homes at more than six times the amount they sold them for.

A report by the Office for National Statistics confirms that the South East has the worst affordability rating for median house prices compared to median earnings outside of London. A UNISON study also shows that saving money for a down

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

payment on a property would take over 52 years in some parts of the South East, making it virtually impossible for a huge number of UNISON members to buy their own home.

Conference notes that the worsening affordability crisis is a result of failed housing policies and cuts to the “affordable housing budget”, which have led to a drastic decline in the number of new social rent homes built nationally. The shortage of genuinely affordable homes means that thousands of people are on social housing waiting lists.

Thousands more are forced to live in overcrowded or unsuitable homes where they are exposed to health and safety hazards. For the people caught in the trap of ever increasing housing costs and stagnating wages, the stress put on all areas of life are all too real; the human misery of this expressed all too vividly by the scandal of homelessness doubling under the Tories since 2010.

Many towns and cities are out of reach for public service workers due to the rising costs of housing compared to wages. In the Private Rented Sector, where rents are unregulated and tenancies are insecure, research by Shelter shows that rents rose by 16% between 2011 and 2017 in England, compared to average wages which rose by only 10% over that period. The situation is worse in some areas, including Elmbridge, Surrey, where rents have risen by 21% while wages are down by 15%; and in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, rents are 19% higher while wages have dropped by 9%.

Conference is concerned that the high costs of housing, coupled with real term cuts to public service pay, tax credit and Universal Credit changes are blighting the lives of our members. This is putting a further financial strain on our members, household budgets and eroding their living standards. More workers are spending a significant proportion of their income to meet housing costs, leaving less money for other household essentials and exposing them to hardship, poverty and even homelessness. Many workers face lengthy commutes to work, high costs of travelling and pressure on their „work life balance? because they simply cannot access social housing or afford a decent home near their place of work.

Conference is concerned that despite the government's pledge to “fix the broken housing market”, it has failed to comprehend the ways in which social housing could be used to tackle the housing crisis. The government's housing policy remains focused on helping the privileged to buy their own home through schemes such as the Right to Buy and Help to Buy, and encouraging the development of costly and so called “affordable rent homes” priced at 80 per cent of market rates. It is not doing enough to help those on modest incomes access decent and secure housing.

The Right to Buy and barriers to new council house building have resulted in reduced democratic accountability with the housing sector. This stealth privatisation needs to be reversed as a matter of urgency and Conference believes a massive council house building programme is essential to achieve this. Recent measures to provide housing associations with longer-term strategic partnership funding from 2022, to build more “affordable homes”, including social housing, and the scrapping of the Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap, which prevented councils from

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borrowing to invest in new homes, are steps in the right direction. However, they are not sufficient to address

the depth and scale of the crisis unless the Right to Buy is suspended, as in Scotland and Wales, and ultimately ended as soon as practicable, and councils are supported with significant grant funding to build more homes for people on modest incomes.

With household growth projected to be higher in the South East, London and parts of the midlands over the next decade and government funded social house building at an all time low, there is an urgent need for innovative, bold and radical measures to resolve the deepening housing crisis.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to make the case for decent, secure, safe and affordable housing, particularly those provided directly by councils and housing associations, to ensure that there are sufficient homes for workers on modest incomes;
- 2) Highlight the cost of housing in pay campaigns to ensure that our members have additional income to pay for their housing costs and campaign for £10 an hour minimum wage;
- 3) Produce a housing manifesto document setting out UNISON's policies on dealing with the housing crisis and use this to galvanise support for UNISON's campaign for improvements in housing policy.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to lobby the Westminster Government and devolved administrations where appropriate to:

- a) Give councils and housing associations significant grant funding and increased financial flexibilities to enable them to build more homes at scale;
- b) Establish a new definition of “affordable housing” linked to people's income not market prices, and scrap the so called “affordable rent homes”, which makes some social homes inaccessible to the low paid;
- c) Reform the land market to make it cheaper and easier for local authorities to build new homes;
- d) Set up a “Homebuilding Capacity Fund” to help councils to build capacity to deliver “a new generation of council homes”, to ensure that they have the resources to recreate architectural, design and engineering teams and modern direct labour organisations to boost house-building;
- e) Introduce stronger measures to regulate the private rented sector, including indefinite tenancies, a system of rent caps to limit rent increases, and increased rights and protections for private renters to improve standards and affordability in private renting, as Scotland has done;
- f) End the Right to Buy scheme as soon as practicable.

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*South East Region  
Isle of Wight*

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## 72.1

After paragraph ending "... or afford a decent home near their place of work", insert a new paragraph as follows:

"Conference also notes the impact of the decline in social housing on members affected by domestic violence. Research shows that in times of austerity and uncertainty, domestic violence is more prevalent. Anyone tied to their abuser due to the lack of social / affordable housing is not able to break the cycle of abuse easily. Far too often victims give up not only their homes but also their jobs to escape violence. Worse still, some remain in the abusive situation and put their lives at risk. It should be possible for victims of abuse who work in the public sector to be accommodated in neighbouring Council areas, both in respect of housing and their job even if this is on a temporary basis until longer term solutions can be found. However, the housing crisis means this is not possible."

*National Women's Committee*

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## 72.2

At the end of motion add the following sentence:

"Further we believe that the above are only possible, provided that an incoming Labour government makes a commitment to build 500,000 Council homes a year in conjunction, with other measures in the Labour parties Green Paper as part of a ten year housing plan, to resolve the crisis in housing once and for all."

*Hackney*

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## 73. Housing Crisis

Conference notes that the housing crisis is blighting the lives of our members as they struggle to find somewhere affordable to live.

Since 2010 funding cuts and failed housing policies have meant that not enough social and truly affordable homes have been built. As a result, private rents and house prices in many parts of the country have risen dramatically, often to levels which make housing completely unaffordable to our members. This has happened at the same time as welfare reform, which has reduced the support that working age claimants can receive with their housing costs. With rents outpacing wages in many parts of the country, public service workers are spending more than a third of their income on rent. As a consequence, low paid workers struggle to save for a house deposit, pay rent or other living costs. Many face financial hardship, poverty and even homelessness.

Conference notes that in spite of the government's pledge "to fix the broken housing market", housing policy remains focused on promoting home-ownership and expensive types of housing, including so called "affordable homes" which are beyond the reach of the low paid. The government needs to take urgent action to address the housing crisis to ensure that the low paid have access to homes they can afford.

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Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to make the case for decent, secure, safe and affordable housing, particularly those provided directly by councils and housing associations, to ensure that there are sufficient homes for workers on modest incomes;
- 2) Highlight the cost of housing in pay campaigns to ensure that our members have additional income to pay for their housing costs and campaign for £10 an hour minimum wage;
- 3) Campaign for a significant increase in grant funding to enable councils and housing associations to build social homes at scale;
- 4) Call on the government to establish a new definition of “affordable housing” linked to people’s income not market prices, and scrap the so called “affordable rent” homes;
- 5) Call on the government to introduce stronger measures to regulate the Private Rented Sector, including indefinite tenancies, a system of rent caps to limit rent increases, and increased rights and protections for private renters to improve standards and affordability in private renting, as Scotland has done.

*Cymru/Wales Region*

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### **73.1**

Add new point 2):

"2) Work with Defend Council Housing, Homes For All and Axe The Housing Act to campaign for increased building of council homes."

And renumber remaining points accordingly.

*Camden*

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### **73.2**

At the end of the motion add the following sentence:

"Further we believe that the above are only possible, provided that an incoming Labour Government makes a commitment to build 500,000 Council homes a year in conjunction, with other measures in the Labour parties Green Paper as part of a 10 year housing plan, to resolve the crisis in housing once and for all."

*Hackney*

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## **74. Reform of Private Rental Sector (PRS)**

Conference notes:

- 1) That the number of households in London who rent from private landlords is up from 15% in 2000 to 27% in 2017 and that Shelter forecast that nationally this growth will continue;

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- 2) The lack of security for private tenants causes unnecessary homelessness and makes it very difficult for private tenants to lead settled lives;
- 3) High rents in this sector cause hardship for tenants and leads to the taxpayer subsidizing private landlords via housing benefit;
- 4) Shelter believe that the reasons behind Conservatives losing seats in Canterbury and Kensington is due to the number of private tenants voting against them (the “rent quake”);
- 5) In the devolved nations “No fault” evictions and “Right to buy” have been abolished or restricted.

Conferences therefore calls upon the National Executive Council:

- a) To hold a national wide campaign day in 2019 for proposals to improve the private rented sector;
- b) To produce campaign materials for branches on the private rented sector;
- c) To campaign and support calls for an end to no fault evictions and rent controls for the private rented sector;
- d) To produce guidance for all branches on how the Letting Fees bill currently in Parliament should be enforced by local councils;
- e) To ask Labour Link to support manifesto commitment for the reform of the private rented sector;
- f) Campaign for all local authorities to be able to suspend right to buy in their locality due to housing need;
- g) Campaign for all local authorities to be able to introduce licensing of all private sector landlords.

### ***Housing Associations***

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#### **75. The Fire Service After Grenfell**

Conference is concerned that with the approach of the second anniversary of the tragic Grenfell Tower fire, vital lessons may still be not learned. What began as a domestic fire that should be been easily contained turned into the worst fire in London since the Blitz.

More than fifty tower-block owners were still refusing to remove dangerous Grenfell-style cladding in January 2019, the Prime Minister has admitted, seven months after the government vowed to act. Official figures show that inflammable cladding had been removed from only thirty out of two hundred and sixty buildings. Thousands of council and private buildings across the country do not have sprinklers, despite the Fire Service saying that they are essential.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference believes that prevention of another Grenfell Tower fire means a reversal of cuts to the fire service an end to the neo-liberal belief that fire safety measures are just “red tape”.

Conference is concerned at the high level of jobs losses amongst Fire and Rescue Staff, include Fire Safety workers, since 2008 many of whom were UNISON members. As well as the impact on public safety this has lead to excessive work loads and stress on remaining staff.

Conference supports the following measures:

- 1) Full funding for the Fire Service nationally, including increases in the number of fire safety inspecting officers and support staff;
- 2) Proper professional training for fire safety inspecting officers and fire fighters and for an end to the provision of fire service training at a profit;
- 3) A reversal of cuts to local authority building control departments;
- 4) An end the outsourcing of building control responsibilities to private “approved inspectors”;
- 5) Extending of current fire safety legislation to cover all parts of high rise residential buildings and not just the common parts;
- 6) Provision of sufficient resources to make it possible for local authorities to ensure that new buildings are actually constructed and alterations made in line with council and fire authority recommendations;
- 7) Legislation to make the installation of sprinklers in all existing and newly built high rise residential buildings and schools compulsory;
- 8) Closure of loopholes which allow technical safety elements to be designed without the involvement of competent fire safety professionals;
- 9) Legislation and adequate funding to ensure the removal of all of inflammable cladding from high rise residential buildings and prevent its installation in the future.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with Labour Link to raise these proposals within the Labour Party and suggest that they are included in the manifesto for the next General Election.

***London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority***

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### **75.1**

Delete point 7) and replace with the following:

"7) To follow Fire Brigades Union recommendations and encourage (on the basis of a nationally consistent approach to risk assessment) the wider installation of sprinklers, in all existing and newly built high rise residential buildings, schools,

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warehouses, industrial buildings, specialist housing and other residential accommodation where considered appropriate;"

Then in the final paragraph between the words "Labour Link" and "to raise" insert the following:

“, and in consultation with the Fire Brigades Union,”

***National Executive Council***

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### **76. PFI**

Conference welcomes UNISON's sustained opposition to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) for more than two decades.

There is no doubt that PFI is an expensive mistake that is draining public sector organisations of funding which should be used to provide services and employ the workers that deliver them on decent terms and conditions of employment. The 2011 PFI agreement forced on Mid Essex Hospital Trust delivered an initial capital investment of £148 million but a total of £756 million will be eventually be "repaid" by 2043.

Conference believes that the National Audit Office (NAO) report into PFI and PF2 is a damning indictment of a policy introduced in 1992 by the conservative government but continued under the following Labour Government. The findings of the NAO include:

- 1) That after 20 years of PFI "There is still a lack of data available on the benefits of private finance procurement";
- 2) There is no evidence that PFI delivers operational efficiency: "Our work on PFI hospitals found no evidence of operational efficiency – the costs of services in the samples we analysed were similar";
- 3) PFI adds extra costs; "Private financed procurement results in additional costs compared to publicly finance procurement, the most being the higher cost of finance."

Conference resolves that the National Executive Council will:

- a) Continue to publically campaign, oppose and expose the existing and continued privatisation of public services and PFI highlighting the deficiencies of the contracts and the negative impact on public interest;
- b) Work within the Labour Party policy making structures and seek to ensure that the next Labour manifesto will include:
  - i) A moratorium on future PFI;
  - ii) A commitment to renegotiate existing PFI contracts where possible;
  - iii) A proposal for a windfall tax on PFI companies.



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- c) Work with the TUC, STUC, WTUC, political parties and civil society organisations to create a modern model for public sector delivery of public services including the construction of new buildings when necessary.

***Mid Essex Hospitals***

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### **76.1**

Insert before "Conference resolves" the following:

"Conference welcomes Labour's commitment to:

- A) Sign no new PFI deals and to bring existing contracts in house;
- B) To develop public sector models for funding infrastructure, saving the public money and improving services and working conditions."

***National Executive Council***

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### **76.2**

After "Conference resolves that the National Executive Council will:" insert new b):

"b) Work with the TUC and other individuals and organisations to develop the detailed proposals necessary to deliver the commitment made by Labour on PFI and across the public sector to rapidly bring services that have been privatised back in house, ensuring that the relevant sector wide collective bargaining agreements covering pay terms and conditions and pensions are applied across the relevant sector" and replace existing b) with:

"c) Work within the Labour Party policy making structures and seek to ensure that the next Labour manifesto will include:

- i) Proposals that deliver Labour's existing commitments;
- ii) Proposals that make in house services the default option for public service provision;
- iii) Proposals that bring services that are currently privatised in-house within the first year;
- iv) Proposals that ensure that the relevant sector wide collective bargaining agreements referred to in 2) above are applied across that sector at the earliest opportunity".

Rename existing c) to d).

***National Executive Council***

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### **76.3**

Replace action point i) "A moratorium on future PFI" with:

- i) "An end to the signing of any future PFI contracts"

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In action point ii) replace “renegotiate” with “nationalise”

Amend paragraph iii) to read:

“A proposal for a windfall tax on all PFI companies including extra taxes/duties for those based offshore for tax avoidance purposes.”

*Mid Yorkshire Health*

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Economy

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### **77. PROGRESSIVE TAXES TO END AUSTERITY**

Conference notes that brutal austerity has continued to blight public services. Despite claims from Prime Minister Theresa May in her 2018 Conservative Party Conference speech that “support for public services will go up”, all public services have been pushed to – and in many cases beyond – breaking point.

Conference notes that during almost a decade of austerity, the Conservative government have paired savage cuts to the public sector with tax cuts for some of the wealthiest in society.

UNISON research shows that the 19,000 taxpayers earning more than one million pounds per year have between them gained £11.1 billion since the top rate of income tax was slashed by the Conservative government.

Conferences notes that the Resolution Foundation estimates demographic changes alone are set to increase the size of the current UK public sector by £36 billion a year by 2030, and £84 billion by 2040.

Conference notes that the latest official HMRC ‘tax gap’ estimate of £33 billion not collected does not take account of the taxes that are avoided by multinational companies such as Starbucks, Amazon and Google through overseas transfer pricing and other financial engineering. According to the Tax Justice Network, this tax avoidance could amount to £120 billion a year.

Conference further notes Tax Justice Network research estimating corporate profits equivalent to 0.9% of world GDP were shifted in 2012 and that between \$21-\$32 trillion of assets are stashed in offshore tax havens.

Conference believes that austerity must end immediately and spending cuts must be reversed, but this will not happen under a government which prioritises tax cuts over restoring public service spending to safe levels. Conference notes the Scottish Governments ability to vary Income Tax which is now being used to a limited extent.

Conference believes that an alternative economic agenda is needed, not just to defend public services but to help identify and build the public services of the future.

Conference believes that any alternative economic agenda must prioritise increasing the funding available to public services through a significant increase in tax revenues.

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Conference believes that working people – especially public service workers – have been hit hardest by austerity, and should not be forced to bear the bulk of these necessary tax rises. Tax rises should be focused on those individuals and companies with the greatest income and the greatest wealth.

Conference believes that UNISON must be leading the debate on progressive taxation, decent pay, quality jobs and sustainable growth as an alternative to the rampant free-market ideology of the current Westminster government.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for a shift to more progressive taxation as the means of funding quality public services and properly placing the burden for doing so on those who can most afford it;
- 2) Ensure that UNISON's public facing campaigning for decent levels of investment in public services explains how this can be paid for from progressive taxation;
- 3) Reaffirm UNISON's commitment to increases in Corporation Tax and the top rate of income tax and the introduction of a "Robin Hood Tax" on trades of stock and shares;
- 4) Support research and campaigns on potential new sources of funding for public services – especially taxes on wealth and unearned income;
- 5) Continue to make the case that higher progressive taxation is necessary and positive as it funds better public services in a fair and transparent way for the benefit of everyone;
- 6) Support the end of the caps on local government council tax and to provide local government with fair funding for decent services and the freedom to raise extra revenue through a variety of sources when required;
- 7) Support the work of organisations such as the Tax Justice Network, Publish What You Pay, and the Fair Tax Mark that seek to promote corporate transparency, social responsibility and end tax avoidance by multinational companies and wealthy individuals;
- 8) Promote changes to the Public Contract regulations that would add the use of tax havens by company corporate structures or the failure to comply with (extended) country by country financial reporting as grounds for mandatory exclusion from invitations to tender.

***National Executive Council***

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### **77.1**

After paragraph ending with "the rampant free market ideology of the current Westminster government" add a new paragraph:

"Conference believes that nationalisation or renationalisation should be a major consideration in every sector of our public services. Recognising there is no absolute legal requirement for compensation to be paid at market value when services are

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nationalised we welcome the statement made by the Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell that “Parliament will determine the value of every industry and sector that we nationalise and bring back into the public sector.” In the meantime the threat of nationalisation should be used to ensure tax is paid on every public contract”

Add to “Conference calls on the National Executive Council” a new action point 9):

“9) Support and campaign for the nationalisation of the Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV’s) overseeing public contracts such as PFI deals in the NHS as a method of controlling public money being diverted offshore for tax evasion purposes.”

*Mid Yorkshire Health*

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### **77.2**

In tenth paragraph, delete “the bulk of”

*London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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### **78. Robin Hood Tax**

Conference notes the Robin Hood Tax campaign, founded in 2010, which proposes taxing transactions or trades on a range of financial products such as shares. It is also known as a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) in Europe, where it is also popular.

Conference notes the government’s on going austerity programme which has starved public services of the necessary funding.

Conference believes that a Robin Hood Tax could help fund public services and contribute to the end of austerity.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to support campaigns for a Robin Hood/Financial Transaction Tax;
- 2) Campaign through the TUC and Labour Link for the introduction of a UK Robin Hood/Financial Transaction Tax;
- 3) Support international and EU efforts to regulate the financial sector in order to bring about a worldwide financial transaction tax system to benefit public services and international development.

*Cymru/Wales Region*

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### **79. Nationalise the Big Drug Companies**

Conference is alarmed that among all the other Brexit-related headlines, the latest crisis announced has been a projected shortage of generic, out-of-patent medicines.

The NHS was reportedly paying higher prices to suppliers of 80 products in December 2018 to shore up its supplies. According to Oxford University researchers, last month the total cost of these generic drugs was £37 million instead of the 'normal' £11.4 million.

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But this isn't the first time in recent years there has been an increase in drug prices coinciding with projected shortages. In November 2017, 91 medicines were on the price concessions list (allowing companies to increase what they charge for them).

In reality, there are a number of factors that can lead to such shortages. These include increasing global demand and issues with the supply of raw materials. But linked with this are problems stemming from the nature of capitalist, profit-driven markets.

To boost profits, many companies cease to manufacture generic products in favour of more expensive and profitable patented brands. What's more, as the Healthcare Distribution Association has suggested, companies can stockpile medicines in a speculative fashion to make money as further shortages develop.

This rigging of the market in the interests of private profit, with scant regard for the healthcare needs of the population, is the dominant feature of the pharmaceutical industry.

According to a recent study, two thirds of patient groups appraising pharmaceuticals for regulatory body National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) receive funding from the very companies they are meant to be judging.

The government's own website to attract Big Pharma investment in the UK boasts an Effective Tax Rate of between 11% and 13%. 30% of all drugs used worldwide were developed in Britain.

### Pharma giants

The UK's pharmaceutical industry is dominated by two giants, GlaxoSmithKline and AstraZeneca. These are the fifth and sixth largest drugs companies globally, both with profits over £2 billion in 2017.

Conference calls for:

- 1) These two giant companies to be nationalised under democratic workers' control and management, so instead of subsidising their profits with tax breaks and guaranteeing large payments from the NHS. This would allow production to be directly linked with what is needed in the Health Service;
- 2) Drug production to be democratically planned by workers in the sector, the NHS and patient groups, and with the involvement of wider society;
- 3) These measures to be taken as part of the need for the socialist transformation of society, which could inspire workers around the world, who are struggling for decent health care and against the capitalist system.

In this way research data would no longer be hidden for commercial confidentiality, but instead shared. In this way we could begin to tackle global health problems in a coordinated fashion - to the benefit of all.

***Hackney***

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International

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### **80. CURBING CORPORATE POWER**

Conference notes that the revenues of the three largest corporations in the world, including Wal-mart, were higher than the gross domestic product of 110 countries, 55% of all nation states and that 66 individual people own as much wealth as 3.6 billion people.

Whilst trade and investment agreements give corporations extraordinary rights that enable them to operate and accumulate gigantic profits across the globe, no binding international obligations that regulate their own conduct exists. This enables them to act recklessly and with impunity.

The resulting scale and impact of corporate operations across the world is causing untold harm to millions of people and the environment every day with no chance for justice: from land-grabbing and displacements to the contamination of water and soil, to the severe exploitation of workers' and the loss of lives of human rights defenders protecting their fundamental human rights, livelihoods, freedoms and territories.

This is why UNISON wants full Parliamentary scrutiny oversight and approval for free trade agreements after Brexit. But not only this, Conference believes that the time for an international mechanism to regulate corporate power is long overdue.

Corporations must be made to identify environmental and human rights risks linked to business activities and take preventative action; international legal cooperation against corporations must be enabled; citizens need support to access justice for cases concerning irresponsible cross border operations; and the legal relationship between international courts that protect the rights of investors and governments that protect the human rights of their citizens needs to be clear.

Conference further notes that four years ago a United Nations General Assembly motion started a process to negotiate a Binding Treaty on Transnational Corporations with respect to Human Rights. Past efforts to create similar treaties have failed. Yet, despite the attempts of the EU (and especially the UK), USA and Australia to 'kill' the Treaty process, it has survived and the first draft text will be negotiated in October 2019.

Conference welcomes UNISON and Public Services International campaign efforts with civil society to keep the Treaty alive.

Conference believes that the Treaty represents a once in a life time chance to secure binding international rules that start to turn the balance of power, at last, in the favour of people over corporate profit.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with Public Services International to monitor the progress of the Treaty;
- 2) Campaign with UK civil society to raise public awareness of and action in support of the treaty;

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- 3) Build support for the Treaty within Parliament and pressure the UK Government to change its position;
- 4) Support the UNISON Regional Councils in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to win backing for the treaty within the devolved administrations;
- 5) Advocate for the United Nations negotiations to make progress.

### ***National Executive Council***

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#### **81. BRAZIL**

Conference notes that the far-rightwing candidate Jair Bolsonaro was elected President of Brazil in October 2018 following earlier congressional elections which saw his Social Liberal Party make major gains to become the second largest party in Congress. He took office on 1 January 2019.

Bolsonaro's win came two years after the congressional coup that impeached the leftwing President Dilma Rousseff and led to the imprisonment of former President and former leader of the largest Brazilian trade union, the CUT, Lula da Silva.

The unelected government installed by the coup launched a major attack on public services and the social and labour movements. Spending on public services, including wages, was frozen for twenty years. The congressional coup and the radical austerity imposed by the unelected government helped pave the way for the election of a far-right, anti-system candidate like Bolsonaro.

Conference further notes Bolsonaro's long-standing support for the military dictatorship in Brazil that only ended in 1985 and his well documented racist, misogynist and homophobic views. He was elected on a manifesto promising wide scale privatisation, restrictions on the right to strike and other anti-trade union legislation. He has also threatened to cut environmental protection for the Amazon and handed over responsibility for the rights of Indigenous inhabitants of the Amazon to the Ministry of Agriculture on his first day in office. Within his first week in office he had abolished the Ministry of Culture, stripped LGBT rights from the responsibility of the Ministry of Human Rights and withdrawn Brazil from the United Nations' global compact on migration. 8,000 Cuba doctors working in Brazil, mainly in the poorest parts of the country, have had to leave the country.

Conference believes that the election of President Bolsonaro poses a direct threat to the social and economic advances made under 16 years of Workers' Party government in Brazil and even poses a direct threat to fundamental human rights and democracy itself.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Monitor the situation closely in Brazil;
- 2) Raise any attack on fundamental human rights, including trade union rights, with the Brazilian Embassy in the UK, the UK government and the Labour Party working with Labour Link;

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- 3) Act in solidarity with public service trade unions in Brazil through campaigning and, where appropriate, the UNISON international development fund;
- 4) Work with the Brazil Solidarity Initiative in the UK.

***National Executive Council***

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**82. Colombia**

UNISON congratulates Colombia on the important advances made towards peace, including the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia's (FARC) participation in peaceful elections and the commitment to the peace process of thousands of former combatants.

However, UNISON is extremely alarmed by high levels of violence affecting many rural regions. The United Nations has said that there were 454 reported murders of social activists, including trade unionists, between the signing of the peace agreement in November 2016 and December 2018.

UNISON is concerned that lead peace negotiator from the FARC, Jesús Santrich, continues to be imprisoned.

UNISON also notes that the UN has identified major delays or obstacles to implementation of core components of the peace process, such as land reform, transitional justice and reincorporation of former combatants. Violence has also targeted communities working to implement the peace process, particularly around voluntary crop substitution.

UNISON congratulates Justice for Colombia for its work on behalf of the trade union movement to support peace, human rights and social justice in Colombia.

UNISON commits to:

- 1) Defend trade unionists and social activists in Colombia;
- 2) Lobby the British government to press for full implementation of the peace agreement;
- 3) Provide Justice for Columbia with political and economic support so that it may continue its groundbreaking work;
- 4) Encourage all branches to affiliate with Justice for Columbia.

***West Dunbartonshire***

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**83. Venezuela - Defeat Attempted Capitalist Coup**

Conference opposes the forces of international capitalism that have rallied behind the declaration of the Venezuelan right-wing opposition leader Juan Guaidó, who has declared himself the self-appointed 'interim' president.

A coup by Juan Guaidó would mean privatisation, austerity, and even greater repression of workers.



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US president Trump, Brazilian president Bolsonaro and Argentinian president Macri, along with a host of other right-wing reactionary governments, immediately recognised Guaidó as President. They are clearly attempting to carry through a coup and remove incumbent Nicolás Maduro from power. This brazen intervention by Trump was followed by Theresa May in Britain, as well as other European governments. Even the so-called 'socialist'-led governments of Spain and Portugal have joined the reactionary pack and are hunting for a 'regime change'.

### Imperialist intervention

Trump has "ruled nothing out" and hinted at military intervention if Maduro refuses to step aside. By appointing Elliot Abrams as special envoy to Venezuela, the bloody nature of Trump's intervention is made clear. Abrams was convicted for his involvement in arming the 'Contras' - paramilitary forces in Nicaragua in the 1980s.

Conference believes trade unionists and Socialists should have no truck with, nor lend any support to, the reactionary attempts at a coup carried out by these right-wing forces of reaction.

Should these forces succeed, the repression and attacks Venezuelan workers and socialists are currently suffering will dramatically worsen. Any right-wing regime coming to power to replace Maduro will enact revenge on the working class and socialists.

The hypocrisy of western imperialism knows no limits. They condemn the Maduro government, but have collaborated and supported brutal regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This long list includes Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the military dictatorships in Chile, Argentina, Brazil Pakistan and elsewhere.

Despite opposing these reactionary attempts to carry through a regime change, we cannot put any confidence or trust in the Maduro regime.

### Conference notes:

- 1) An economic and social catastrophe is engulfing Venezuela. GDP collapsed by 35% between 2013 and 2017! This is a greater collapse than in the US depression between 1929 and 1933, when it fell by 28%. It is slightly higher than that experienced when the former USSR disintegrated in 1992 and capitalism was restored;
- 2) IMF predictions indicate that hyper-inflation will soar, making wages worthless. This is comparable to the economic collapse in the German Weimar Republic between 1921 and 1923;
- 3) The economic collapse in Venezuela has resulted in the wiping out of the gains in healthcare, education and other areas that were introduced previously by the Hugo Chávez-led government;
- 4) Hunger and starvation have returned, and the social collapse is measured in the soaring crime rate in the major cities. In the largest refugee crisis in Latin American history, an estimated three million people have fled the country - about 10% of the population!

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- 5) The capitalist class and its political representatives internationally are using this devastating social and economic crisis to claim another 'failure of socialism';
- 6) Venezuela was used in a ferocious campaign in Spain and Brazil to try and discredit socialism. In Britain, it was raised in the last general election against Jeremy Corbyn and will likely be used in the next to an even greater degree. Corbyn wants to 'turn London into Caracas' will probably be the refrain;
- 7) This is a warning to any future radical left government and a potential Corbyn-led administration in Britain. A radical left reform programme will meet a ferocious resistance from the capitalist class, which will act to undermine and sabotage such a government.

Conference believes:

- a) It will only be possible to defeat such a campaign by introducing a programme to abolish capitalism and establish a socialist economy, democratically planned, and based on the nationalisation of the major companies and banks which control the economy;
- b) This was never carried through in Venezuela. The current crisis is a consequence of the failure to do this. Had this been carried through in Venezuela at the height of the revolutionary movement which developed following the failed coup against Chávez in 2002, it would have been possible to then establish a voluntary democratic socialist federation together with Cuba, Bolivia and Ecuador;
- c) This would have transformed the situation throughout Latin America and beyond. Tragically the Venezuelan working class is now paying the price for the failure of Chavez and Maduro Governments to conclusively break with capitalism;
- d) It is not certain that the attempted coup backed by Trump will succeed in forcing Maduro from power. Trump and his leading, hawkish national security adviser, John Bolton, who has led the charge for regime change, appear to have failed to secure the first elementary requirement for a successful coup: ensuring the military is on your side!
- e) Now, out of despair and desperation, when an estimated 90% of Venezuelans live in poverty, sections of workers from former Chávez strongholds like the '23 de Enero' (a working-class district named after the 23 January uprising against the military regime in 1958) have joined Guaidó protests.

Explosive situation

Should the army fracture, which is not excluded, Venezuela could be plunged into a civil war and even collapse into a Lebanese type of partition.

Should the US directly intervene militarily, which cannot be entirely excluded, this will only make a bad situation more catastrophic. Most Venezuelans and the masses of Latin America are opposed to such an intervention. The history of the US imperialist intervention in Latin America is certain to provoke a backlash from big sections of Venezuelan society and across Latin America.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Such a development by the Trump regime will severely aggravate relations between the major powers. The Chinese regime has loans totalling £38 billion to Venezuela which it fears losing should the Maduro regime be removed. Maduro has also been one of China's closest allies in Latin America. The replacement of Maduro by Guaidó would be a set-back for Chinese interests in the region as it would strengthen Venezuela's links with US imperialism.

This crisis has crucial lessons for the working class internationally.

Conference will:

- i) Oppose any attempted coup by the right wing and any western imperialist intervention;
- ii) Give no trust or confidence to the Maduro government, in Venezuela;
- iii) Support all those who are heroically fighting for a front of all workers dissident Chávistas and socialists, to fight for an alternative to the threat of right-wing counter-revolution and for a real socialist alternative based on genuine workers' democracy.

*Hackney*

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### 84. Cuba 60

UNISON applauds the achievement by the people of Cuba in liberating their country and sustaining it as a beacon of socialism over the last 60 years - with remarkable achievements in health, education and culture - in the face of massive oppression by powerful northern neighbour the USA and other reactionary forces.

The Cuban revolution in 1959 swept away the rotten Batista regime and replaced it with a socialist government led by Fidel Castro. For six decades, the small Caribbean island nation of around 11 million people has stood firm against all attempts to invade, to overthrow and to blockade it out of existence. A short lived moment of hope for a change in US policy under President Obama has been replaced by yet more rhetoric and reaction under President Trump.

UNISON has always supported the Cuban revolution and our fellow public service workers and trade unions there, notably through our support for the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC) and the smaller but no less vital Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign (SCSC).

UNISON Scotland's International Committee was honoured in November and December 2018 to take part in the union's delegation to Cuba ahead of the 60th anniversary and also as part of the 80th anniversary of the Cuban TUC (CTC – Central de Trabajadores de Cuba).

Our delegates saw at first hand the hard won benefits for workers and their families in Cuba through meetings with trade unionists, women's organisations and local communities. Cuba today has 98% literacy - higher than most nations including the USA and far in advance of most 'developing' countries. Its education system and health service outperform many rich nations. Famously but still incredibly - despite

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the blockade - Cuban medical training and expertise is provided free of charge to developing nations throughout Latin America and now in Asia and Africa. Equal rights and pay for women is constitutionally guaranteed, and Cuban women's representation in government is higher than most countries - with majorities in many areas.

Solidarity with Cuba is ever more vital and can bring success, as shown for example by the campaigns to free the Miami Five, and to end discrimination against Cuban academics and students by the Open University. Solidarity is also vital so that Cuba can continue to stand with other countries in Latin America which face similar challenges from right wing populists funded and supported by the USA.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Congratulate the Cuban people, their government and trade unions on the 60th anniversary of their revolution and pledge to work to ensure their continuing and future successes.
- 2) Campaign for an end to the cruel and illegal blockade, and work to promote international recognition and support for Cuba from governments and parliaments in the UK, European Union and United Nations – and call on the USA to improve its relations with Cuba;
- 3) Ensure we continue to publicise the threats to the Cuban revolution amongst UNISON members via the union's publications and press statements;
- 4) Work collectively through the TUC, the Scottish TUC and the Irish Congress of Trades Unions with sister unions to support Cuba;
- 5) Encourage regions and branches to visit Cuba in solidarity with the Cuban people and Cuban trade unions;
- 6) Give support to and campaign with the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and the Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign;
- 7) Encourage branches, regions and nations of UNISON to affiliate to the CSC and SCSC.

*Scotland Region*

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### 84.1

In point 4) insert "the Wales TUC" after "the Scottish TUC" and before " the Irish Congress..."

*National Executive Council*

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## 85. CUBA 60: CELEBRATING CUBA'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND RESISTING THE US BLOCKADE

2019 marks the 60th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution. Conference congratulates the Cuban people on the impressive achievements made in health care, education, social care and international solidarity during this time.

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Conference notes that Cuba has some of the lowest illiteracy and child mortality rates and percentage of students in higher education in the region, plus greatly improved life expectancy rates. It also ranks among the top countries in the world for percentage of women MPs and sustainable human development.

Conference applauds Cuba's outstanding international humanitarianism with 50,000 Cuban health professional working in 69 countries; emergency medical brigades providing vital support during natural disasters, notably the Haitian earthquake and West African Ebola outbreak; and sight restored to more than four million people as part of the Operation Miracle programme. Cuba's Latin America Medical School which celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2019 has also provided medical scholarships for thousands of working class students from Latin America, Asia, Africa and even the United States, free of charge, since opening in 1999.

Conference expresses support for the right of Cuba to choose its own economic, social and political path and opposes the USA's illegal economic blockade.

Conference notes that these achievements have been made while Cuba has suffered under the inhumane US blockade for more than 56 years. While we welcome the reestablishment of diplomatic relations made under President Obama in 2014, the blockade is still very much in place. UNISON expresses serious concern at the return to the aggressive "Cold War" rhetoric and tightening of the blockade made against Cuba by the Trump administration which constitutes new and real threat, not just to the Cuban people, but progressive movements in the region as a whole.

Conference supports the UK government joining 188 other countries in condemning the US blockade at the UN general assembly in 2018. However, Conference believes the government should take concrete measures to sanction British organisations or companies that comply with extraterritorial US blockade legislation over UK sovereign laws. We note the recent example of this in the Open University ban on Cuba students and congratulate the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and the British trade union movement for its work to pressure the Open University to overturn this decision.

Conference agrees to support the proposal of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign to celebrate Cuba's achievements and strengthen links between British and Cuban trade unions in this anniversary year and agrees to provide publicity and support for events organised under the Cuba60 banner.

Conferences calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage all Branches to donate to the Cuba 60 appeal to help fund the costs of organising events;
- 2) Encourage all Branches and Regions to affiliate to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign (CSC);
- 3) Invite representatives from sister unions in Cuba to visit the UK during 2019 which will include visiting Regions, Branches and workplaces, as well as

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

organising an event involving the invitation of sister unions from Cuba, which Branches and Regions would be invited to participate;

- 4) Coordinate a UNISON delegation made up of activists from across the union to attend CSC's Unions for Cuba conference being held in the UK during November 2019 and encourage Branches and Regions to send representatives to the event;
- 5) Encourage all branches and regions to display CSC's Cuba60 exhibition celebrating Cuba's achievements at appropriate events throughout 2019;
- 6) Campaign within the TUC to help develop a strategy designed to persuade the UK government to implement measures preventing UK based companies from complying with extraterritorial blockade legislation;
- 7) Publicise details of CSC delegations to Cuba to all Branches and Regions on a regular basis.

*Isle of Wight*

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### **86. Solidarity with the uprising for democratic change in Sudan**

Conference notes:

- 1) That demonstrations beginning in December 2018 over spiralling costs of living have developed into a mass protest movement calling for peaceful democratic change which is supported by Sudan's independent trade unions, professional associations and opposition political parties;
- 2) That doctors, teachers, lawyers, postal workers and journalists and are among the groups of workers who have taken strike action and joined the protests;
- 3) That the El Bashir regime has responded with extreme brutality, using live ammunition and beatings against protesters, arresting thousands and torturing detainees.

Conference believes:

- a) That our brothers and sisters in Sudan have the right to protest and organise without fear of repression;
- b) That Sudanese seeking sanctuary from the regime's repression are welcome in the UK, as are all other refugees.

Conference resolves:

- i) To send a message in solidarity with the demands of the uprising to the Sudanese Associations and Trade Unions in the UK care of Sudan Doctors Union – UK;
- ii) To call on the UK government to condemn the use of violence against protesters, cease all forms of security cooperation and cut diplomatic relations with the El Bashir regime;

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- iii) To publicise the demands of the Sudanese uprising and information about the situation there to our members, encouraging them to attend protests and solidarity actions;
- iv) To call on the TUC to mobilise support for the Sudanese uprising across the trade union and labour movement.

### ***London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority***

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#### **86.1**

In action point 3) delete “El Bashir” replace with Al-Bashir”

Delete action point ii) and replace with:

“ii) To call on the UK to condemn the use of violence against protestors, support an independent UN investigation into human rights violations, engage with civil society and suspend diplomatic relations and security cooperation with the Al-Bashir regime until the use of violence against protestors ends.”

### ***National Executive Council***

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#### **87. Solidarity with the uprising for democratic change in Sudan**

Conference notes:

- 1) That demonstrations beginning in December 2018 over spiralling costs of living have developed into a mass protest movement calling for peaceful democratic change which is supported by Sudan’s independent trade unions, professional associations and opposition political parties;
- 2) That doctors, teachers, lawyers, postal workers and journalists and are among the groups of workers who have taken strike action and joined the protests;
- 3) That the El Bashir regime has responded with extreme brutality, using live ammunition and beatings against protestors, arresting thousands and torturing detainees.

2. Conference believes:

- a) That our brothers and sisters in Sudan have the right to protest and organise without fear of repression;
- b) That Sudanese seeking sanctuary from the regime’s repression are welcome in the UK, as are all other refugees.

3. Conference resolves:

- i) To send a message in solidarity with the demands of the uprising to the Sudanese Associations and Trade Unions in the UK c/o Sudan Doctors Union – UK;

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

- ii) To call on the UK government to condemn the use of violence against protesters, cease all forms of security cooperation and cut diplomatic relations with the El Bashir regime;
- iii) To publicise the demands of the Sudanese uprising and information about the situation there to our members, encouraging them to attend protests and solidarity actions;
- iv) To call on the National Executive Council and the TUC to mobilise support for the Sudanese uprising across the trade union and labour movement.

### ***London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority***

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#### **87.1**

In action point 3) delete "El Bashir" replace with Al-Bashir"

Delete ii) and replace with:

"ii) To call on the UK to condemn the use of violence against protesters, support an independent UN investigation into human rights violations, engage with civil society and suspend diplomatic relations and security cooperation with the Al-Bashir regime until the use of violence against protesters ends."

### ***National Executive Council***

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#### **88. Workers' Rights are Human Rights - Campaign for Workers' Rights in Iran**

Conference notes that at present scores of Iranian trade union leaders and activists are serving long prison sentences simply for representing the interests of their members and standing up for justice.

These include Esmail Abdi and Mohammad Habibi, leaders of the Iranian Teachers' Trade Association, Ali Nejati, former president of the Haft Tappeh Sugarcane workers Trade Union and Dauod Razavi and Ibrahim Madadi, national executive members of the Tehran and Suburbs Public Bus Workers' Union. Whilst in prison they are often subject to torture and the refusal of medical attention.

Workers in Iran are prohibited from forming independent trade union organisations; forced to work in inhumane, unsafe and hazardous conditions and are denied their due wages for months and even years.

Yet despite this from the industrial workers in the steel and sugar industries to teachers 2018 saw Iranian workers continue to struggle and fight against poor pay and conditions

At the Iran National Steel Industry Group (INSIG) factory in Ahvaz, a long running strike against the failure of their employers to pay them for months at a time led to the brutal assault and arrest of 40 strikers.

Conference:



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- 1) Expresses its full support for the workers of Iran and calls upon the Iranian government to respect workers' rights and implement all ILO Conventions, in particular Conventions 87 and 98;
- 2) Supports demands for the release of all trade union and workers' representatives who are serving time in prison because of their legitimate trade union activities;
- 3) Calls on the National Executive Council to publicise the work of CODIR (Committee for the defence of Iranian peoples rights) to branches and urge branches to affiliate.

***City of Wolverhampton***

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### **89. Solidarity with Rojava**

Conference notes the success of the Kurdish forces of the People's Protection Units (YPG) and the Women's Protection Units (YPJ) in alliance with Arab and other forces within the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in Northern Syria in stopping the advance of ISIS and removing them from large parts of Syrian territory.

Conference also notes the establishment of democratic, secular and gender equal administrations in the Kurdish region of Rojava and the establishment of similar local administrations in the territory liberated from ISIS. In particular conference welcomes the prominent role that women have played in leadership roles in the struggle to create a better society.

Conference condemns the Turkish invasion of the predominately Kurdish region of Afrin in north-west Syria and the abuses and effective ethnic cleansing being carried out by Turkish forces and their local allies. Conference further condemns the statements of Turkish Government representatives in threatening to invade Northern Syria, targeting the Kurds and their allies.

Conference rejects the assertion that the Turkish state is entitled to carry forward its oppression of the Kurdish population in Turkey into Syria and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Write to the Turkish Ambassador calling for the withdrawal of Turkish forces from Afrin, the removal of support from jihadist militias operating in Syria and opposing any further incursions into Syrian territory;
- 2) Contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to call for a suspension of further arms sales to Turkey whilst they threaten Kurdish territory in Syria;
- 3) Support a no-fly zone across northern Syria to prevent Turkish air strikes.

***South Lanarkshire***

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### **89.1**

In paragraphs one and two delete "ISIS" and replace with "Daesh".

In third paragraph delete "abuses and effective ethnic cleansing" and replace with:

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

“forcible displacement and death and injury of civilians, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, and confiscation of property and looting”.

In action point 1) delete “jihadist militias” and replace with:

“Daesh and other terrorist groups”

Delete 3) and replace with:

“Support a temporary no-fly zone and other appropriate measures to prevent Turkish airstrikes and other incursions into northern Syria”.

### ***National Executive Council***

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#### **90. Freedom for Ocalan**

Conference notes that Abdullah Ocalan, at the age of 70, has been in prison in Turkey for 20 years and that he has been denied access to his family and lawyers for 3 years, with the exception of a short visit this year by his brother. He has been kept in solitary confinement for most of those 20 years.

Ocalan is recognised across the Kurdish population in Turkey as a leader who has promoted a democratic and peaceful solution to the Kurdish Question in Turkey. The Turkish government have held negotiations with him in the past, recognising his role as a Kurdish leader, and broke off negotiations with him in 2015 on the insistence of President Erdogan.

Conference calls for an immediate end to the isolation enforced on Ocalan and for his release from prison to allow him to contribute to the efforts to achieve peace in Turkey.

### ***South Lanarkshire***

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#### **90.1**

Insert before "Conference calls":

“Conference notes that many opposition politicians, largely from Kurdish areas in south east Turkey have been suspended, arrested or detained for alleged terrorism related offences. At the time of the June 2018 elections nine People’s Democratic Party (HDP) MPs were in prison, including the party’s co-leaders. Almost 90 elected mayors were also imprisoned.

Draconian anti-terrorism laws have also been used to detain trade unionists in the south east of Turkey, particularly from the federations KESK and DISK, for legitimate trade union activities, criticising the government or calling for peace.”

Delete final paragraph and replace with:

“Conference calls on the government of Turkey to:

- 1) Immediately end the isolation enforced on Abdullah Ocalan;

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Release all political prisoners including Abdullah Ocalan, representatives of opposition political parties and trade unionists;
- 3) Reinstate peace talks with Abdullah Ocalan and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)."

*National Executive Council*

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### **91. Palestine**

Conference notes that Israel carries on denying Palestinians their fundamental rights and refusing to comply with international law. It maintains a regime of settler colonialism, apartheid and occupation over the Palestinian people.

Conference observes that this is only possible because of international support for Israel; governments do not hold Israel to account; corporations and institutions all over the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians.

Conference condemns the Nation State of the Jewish People Law, adopted by the Israeli Knesset on 19 July 2018 with the status of 'basic law'. This now embeds into Israel's constitution provisions that, in Conference's opinion, meet the legal definition of apartheid.

Conference further notes that, because those in power refuse to act to stop this injustice, Palestinian civil society has called for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, a global citizens' response of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, which UNISON has long supported.

In keeping with this support, Conference welcomes UNISON's plan to publish, with the support of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and Palestinian Lawyers for Human Rights, a revised version of "Palestine: Is your pension fund investing in the occupation? A UNISON guide to engaging your pension fund."

Conference notes, however, these plans have been on hold since May 2018 when the Court of Appeal overturned an earlier High Court judgment and ruled that the government may reinstate regulations intended to stop local government pension funds deciding not to invest in companies complicit in Israel's breaches of international law and of Palestinian rights.

The current position is that, in December 2018, PSC won permission to take the case to the Supreme Court, it has agreed to do so, and the case is likely to be heard later this year. Conference welcomes this development since it believes that members of pension schemes have as much right as anybody else to heed the Palestinian call and to demand their money be invested ethically.

The UNISON guide is aimed, principally, at UNISON members and others in the Local Government Pension Scheme. It will also be relevant to anybody in a funded scheme that relies on income from investments. It explains how to argue for our pension funds to engage with the companies they invest in and to demand they end their involvement in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the violation of Palestinian human rights. It sets out steps we can all take to ensure our pensions are not invested in companies involved with the occupation.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference instructs the National Executive Council, at an appropriate time and having due regard to the legal position, to:

- 1) Circulate the guide widely;
- 2) Develop training and support to enable members to act, in an effective and sustained way, on its recommendations;
- 3) Collect from regions and branches, information about approaches to pension funds and the results of doing so;
- 4) Report and circulate this information appropriately.

*City of Wolverhampton*

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### **91.1**

In first paragraph delete “, apartheid”

In third paragraph delete: “This now embeds into Israel’s constitution provisions that, in Conference’s opinion, meet the legal definition of apartheid.” and replace with: “Conference believes that this action, along with many other violations of Palestinian human rights could amount to the crime of apartheid as defined by the International Criminal Court.”

In the ninth paragraph insert “subject to the outcome of judicial review, and any further guidance or regulations issued by government,” after “National Executive Council”.

*National Executive Council*

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### **92. Palestine**

Conference notes that Israel carries on denying Palestinians their fundamental rights and refusing to comply with international law. It maintains a regime of settler colonialism, apartheid and occupation over the Palestinian people.

Conference observes that this is only possible because of international support for Israel; governments do not hold Israel to account; corporations and institutions all over the world help Israel to oppress Palestinians.

Conference condemns the Nation State of the Jewish People Law, adopted by the Israeli Knesset on 19th July 2018 with the status of ‘basic law’. This now embeds into Israel’s constitution provisions that, in conference’s opinion, meet the legal definition of apartheid.

Conference further notes that, because those in power refuse to act to stop this injustice, Palestinian civil society has called for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, a global citizens’ response of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle for freedom, justice and equality which UNISON has long supported.

In keeping with this support, conference welcomes UNISON’s plan to publish, with the support of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and Palestinian Lawyers for

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Human Rights, a revised version of “Palestine: Is your pension fund investing in the occupation? A UNISON guide to engaging your pension fund.”

Conference notes, however, plans have been on hold since May 2018 when the Court of Appeal overturned a High Court judgment and ruled that the government may reinstate regulations to stop local government pension funds deciding not to invest in companies complicit in Israel’s breaches of international law and Palestinian rights regardless of the wishes of their members.

The current position is that, in December 2018, PSC won permission to take the case to the Supreme Court, it has agreed to do so, and the case is likely to be heard later this year.

Conference welcomes this development. It believes that everyone, including pension scheme members, has a right to heed the Palestinian call, to protest at Israel’s violations of human rights and to demand their money be invested ethically,

The UNISON guide is aimed, principally, at UNISON members and others in the Local Government Pension Scheme but will be relevant to anybody in a funded scheme that relies on income from investments. It explains how to argue for our pension funds to engage with the companies they invest in to demand they end their involvement in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the violation of Palestinian human rights and it sets out the steps we should take to ensure our pensions are not invested in companies involved with the occupation.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council at an appropriate time and having due regard to the legal position, to:

- 1) Circulate the guide widely;
- 2) Develop training and support to enable members to act, in an effective and sustained way, on its recommendations;
- 3) Collect from regions and branches, information about approaches to pension funds and the results of doing so;
- 4) Report and circulate this information appropriately.

*Islington*

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### 92.1

In second paragraph delete “, apartheid”

In fourth paragraph delete: “This now embeds into Israel’s constitution provisions that, in Conference’s opinion, meet the legal definition of apartheid.” and replace with: “Conference believes that this action, along with many other violations of Palestinian human rights could amount to the crime of apartheid as defined by the International Criminal Court.”

In sixth paragraph remove “regulations” and replace with “guidance intended”.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Insert “subject to the outcome of judicial review, and any further guidance or regulations issued by government,” after “National Executive Council”.

### *National Executive Council*

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#### **93. Justice for Palestine**

For the last 12 years Gaza has been devastated by a tight land, sea and air blockade, which has turned this narrow strip of land into a virtual prison for two million women, children and men. The blockade has decimated basic public services including health, education, water, sanitation and electricity, leading the United Nations to estimate that Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020.

Conference condemns the brutal massacre of over 180 Palestinian protestors, including 33 children, and injury to over 23,000 more, near Gaza’s border with Israel, during the first eleven months of the Great March of Return. We stand in solidarity with the brave health workers, who risked and even sacrificed their lives to rescue and treat protesters injured by Israeli gunfire.

Even before demonstrations began, Gaza’s health services were on the verge of collapse. Electricity cuts and severe shortages of drugs, medical supplies, clean water and staff, caused by the blockade, have severely reduced the capacity of public hospitals to treat patients, particularly complex cases. Many patients in Gaza are referred to Palestinian hospitals in the West Bank, particularly East Jerusalem, but only a fraction are permitted to travel. During the demonstrations the Israeli government approved less than a quarter of applications for exit permits to receive medical treatment outside Gaza.

Conference notes with concern that despite the continuing repression of the Palestinian people and the brutal massacre in Gaza, defence collaboration between the United Kingdom and Israeli governments, including the arms trade, has increased in recent years. Conference reaffirms its demand for the UK government to suspend the arms trade with Israel until the Israeli government complies with its international human rights obligations.

Conference condemns US President Donald Trump’s unilateral decision to move the United States embassy to Jerusalem and recognise the city as the capital of Israel, in violation of countless UN resolutions and international law. His decisions to end US support for United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the UN body responsible for the provision of health, education and other crucial services to Palestinian refugees, and to close the Palestine Liberation Organisation’s mission in Washington DC, will further undermine the prospects for peace and a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel.

The approval of the controversial ‘Nation-State Law’ by the Knesset in 2018 has significantly eroded the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel, by further undermining their right to equal citizenship and self determination, and downgrading the status of the Arabic language. It further undermines the prospects of a two state solution by declaring that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and “Jewish settlement” is a “national value”. This action by the Israeli government only confirms that Israel is an apartheid state.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes that since the election of Donald Trump, the Israeli government has intensified its colonisation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in defiance of successive UN resolutions and international law. In 2018 the Israeli government increased the rate of settlement construction in the West Bank and announced plans to build thousands more settler homes. Meanwhile the Israeli government destroyed a further 460 Palestinian structures and threatened to demolish entire communities in the West Bank. This has had a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians, restricting their freedom of movement, access to essential services, homes and jobs.

These serious violations of international law should have prompted the European Union and European governments to take action, as Israel's largest trade partner. Instead military, financial and settlement trade relations continue to undermine Palestinian human rights.

Conference reaffirms its demand for the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement until Israel complies with its human rights obligations, and welcomes UNISON's leading role in the establishment of the European Trade Union Network for Justice for Palestine, to bring together European trade unions to collaborate on campaigns to end European and corporate complicity with Israeli violations of international law.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the British government to suspend the arms trade with Israel, and the EU to suspend the EU- Israel Association agreement until the Israeli government complies with international human rights law;
- 2) Campaign for quality public services and decent work for Palestinians;
- 3) Continue its support for and encourage regions to affiliate to the European Trade Union Network for Justice for Palestine;
- 4) Encourage branches to support and affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and to support Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Campaign.

*Royal Hospital Trust*

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### 93.1

In fifth paragraph add "recognise the occupied Golan Heights as Israeli," after "unilateral decision to"

In sixth paragraph delete: "this action by the Israeli government only confirms that Israel is an apartheid state." and replace with: "Conference believes that this action, along with many other violations of Palestinian human rights could amount to the crime of apartheid as defined by the International Criminal Court."

*National Executive Council*

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### 94. Palestine

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

For the last 12 years Gaza has been devastated by a tight land, sea and air blockade, which has turned this narrow strip of land into a virtual prison for two million women, children and men. The blockade has decimated basic public services including health, education, water, sanitation and electricity, leading the UN to estimate that Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020.

Conference condemns the brutal massacre of over 180 Palestinian protestors, including 33 children, and injury to over 23,000 more, near Gaza's border with Israel, during the first eleven months of the Great March of Return. We stand in solidarity with the brave health workers, who risked and even sacrificed their lives to rescue and treat protesters injured by Israeli gunfire.

Even before demonstrations began, Gaza's health services were on the verge of collapse. Electricity cuts and severe shortages of drugs, medical supplies, clean water and staff, caused by the blockade, have severely reduced the capacity of public hospitals to treat patients, particularly complex cases. Many patients in Gaza are referred to Palestinian hospitals in the West Bank, particularly East Jerusalem, but only a fraction are permitted to travel. During the demonstrations the Israeli government approved less than a quarter of applications for exit permits to receive medical treatment outside Gaza.

Conference notes with concern that despite the continuing repression of the Palestinian people and the brutal massacre in Gaza, defence collaboration between the UK and Israeli governments, including the arms trade, has increased in recent years. Conference reaffirms its demand for the UK government to suspend the arms trade with Israel until the Israeli government complies with its international human rights obligations.

Conference condemns US President Donald Trump's unilateral decision to move the US embassy to Jerusalem and recognise the city as the capital of Israel, in violation of countless UN resolutions and international law. His decisions to end US support for UNRWA, the UN body responsible for the provision of health, education and other crucial services to Palestinian refugees, and to close the PLO's mission in Washington DC, will further undermine the prospects for peace and a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel.

The approval of the controversial 'Nation-State Law' by the Knesset in 2018 has significantly eroded the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel, by further undermining their right to equal citizenship and self determination, and downgrading the status of the Arabic language. It further undermines the prospects of a two state solution by declaring that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and "Jewish settlement" is a "national value".

Conference notes that since the election of Donald Trump, the Israeli government has intensified its colonisation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in defiance of successive UN resolutions and international law. In 2018 the Israeli government increased the rate of settlement construction in the West Bank and announced plans to build thousands more settler homes. Meanwhile the Israeli government destroyed a further 460 Palestinian structures and threatened to demolish entire communities in the West Bank. This has had a devastating impact



## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

on the lives and livelihoods of Palestinians, restricting their freedom of movement, access to essential services, homes and jobs.

These serious violations of international law should have prompted the EU and European governments to take action, as Israel's largest trade partner. Instead military, financial and settlement trade relations continue to undermine Palestinian human rights.

Conference reaffirms its demand for the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement until Israel complies with its human rights obligations, and welcomes UNISON's leading role in the establishment of the European Trade Union Network for Justice for Palestine, to bring together European trade unions to collaborate on campaigns to end European and corporate complicity with Israeli violations of international law.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the British government to suspend the arms trade with Israel, and the EU to suspend the EU-Israel Association agreement until the Israeli government complies with international human rights law;
- 2) Campaign for quality public services and decent work for Palestinians;
- 3) Support and affiliate to the European Trade Union Network for Justice for Palestine;
- 4) Encourage branches to support and affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

***Halton***

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### 94.1

In fifth paragraph add "recognise the occupied Golan Heights as Israeli," after "unilateral decision to".

***National Executive Council***

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### 95. The Great March of Return: Ongoing Crisis in Gaza

Conference is appalled by the brutal nature of the Israeli government's ongoing response to the Great March of Return which began in Gaza on 30 March 2018 and notes in particular the events of 14 May last year when over the course of one day Israeli forces used live fire to massacre 60 Palestinians, including 8 children and injured over 2,900 more, including 200 children, near Gaza's border with Israel [figures quoted are from UN OCHA (Occupied Palestinian Territory) Protection of Civilians Report]. This slaughter came as Palestinians marked the seventieth anniversary of the Nakba – when they were ethnically cleansed from their land - and protested against the US embassy move to Jerusalem and occurred in the context of the Great March of Return by which the Palestinians are reaffirming their Right of Return to their homeland, a right which is enshrined in international law.

Conference notes that since the start of the protests near the border fence in Gaza on 30 March last year, Israel has responded to Palestinians' exercising their right to

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demonstrate with shocking and hugely disproportionate levels of violence. Having deployed snipers along the border, Israeli forces have been using live ammunition indiscriminately with deadly consequences: according to a Human Rights Watch report "Israeli soldiers were not merely using excessive force, but were apparently acting on orders that all but ensured a bloody military response to the Palestinian demonstrators. The result was foreseeable deaths and injuries to demonstrators on the other side of a border who posed no imminent threat to life". The latest figures (late January 2019) from the UN OCHA (Occupied Palestinian Territory) show that, since the protests began, 230 Palestinians (including 36 children) have been killed in Gaza (the overwhelming majority as a consequence of the use of live fire by the Israeli forces) and 27,000 injured with the majority being gunshot wounds which often result in life changing disability due to the extreme nature of the injury and the lack of medical facilities in Gaza including a chronic shortage of antibiotics.

Conference further notes that the protests since March 2018 have also been against the inhumane and unbearable living conditions in Gaza created by Israel's illegal, decade-long blockade of the coastal strip and the resulting collective punishment of the two million inhabitants. The siege has turned Gaza in to an open air prison and resulted in an ongoing humanitarian and economic catastrophe : 80% of the population are dependent on humanitarian aid to survive ; there are electrical blackouts for 16 hours day ; 97% of the water is not safe for consumption and the UN has warned that Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020 unless action is taken. The health care system, which was still reeling from Israel's last major attack and bombardment in 2014, is at breaking point trying to cope with the huge wave of seriously injured protestors since March 2018.

Conference is dismayed at the failure of the international community to take effective action in response to this situation, allowing Israel to continue to massacre civilians and maintain the siege with little or no consequence beyond symbolic statements of condemnation. Shamefully, our own government continues to supply Israel with weapons and other military aid despite the gross human right violations being committed against the protestors and the wider Palestinian population and abstained in the UN Human Rights Council vote on 18 May last year to assign international war crimes investigators to look in to Israel's violent response to the protests.

Conference condemns the clear breaches of international law and of human rights norms which Israel's behaviour towards the protests in Gaza represents and therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Urge the UK government to:
  - a) Immediately implement a comprehensive, two-way arms embargo on Israel (including on joint military research projects, such as those on drone technology, and the sale to Israel of so called "dual use" items);
  - b) Take immediate action via its position on the UN Security Council and all other diplomatic channels to put pressure on the Israeli government to end the illegal siege of Gaza and alleviate the suffering of its population;

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- 2) Encourage branches to make a donation to Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), the non-government organisation which is providing essential medical supplies and health personnel to care for the victims of the Israeli violence in Gaza;
- 3) Work with partner organisations (Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Campaign Against the Arms Trade and War on Want) to campaign against the arms trade with Israel for as long as Israel continues to defy international law and oppresses the Palestinian people in Gaza and throughout the Palestinian Territories.

### *Northumberland County*

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#### **95.1**

In first paragraph delete “they were ethnically cleansed” replace with “many were killed or injured, had their property destroyed or confiscated, and were forcibly displaced”

In fifth paragraph insert “, and the UK government’s failure to support decision on Palestinian rights at the UN Human Rights Council,” after “protests in Gaza represents”.

In 1) a) Delete “including on joint military research projects, such as those on drone technology, and the sale to Israel of so called “dual use” items”

In 3) insert “Occupied” after “and throughout the”

### *National Executive Council*

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#### Europe

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#### **96. EU Exit and Protecting the Peace Process**

Conference notes that at the time of writing, the UK is still set to leave the EU on 29 March but that the terms of its exit and whether it will exit at all remains very unclear. Conference believes that regardless of whether the UK has left the EU on 29 March under the terms of Theresa May’s deal, Article 50 has been extended, or a general election or second referendum has been called, protecting the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland and the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts must remain of paramount importance, be it during a transition period, an extension of Article 50 or any election campaign.

Conference believes that too many have reduced the impact of the UK exit from the EU on Northern Ireland to questions of how goods will move across the border, North and South. Conference believes that the UK exiting the EU presents much more serious and grave issues, negatively affecting the peace process, massively interfering in the day-to-day lives of our members, their families and their communities and in the delivery of public services.

Conference recalls the unwavering support this union has demonstrated for the peace process in Northern Ireland, including support for the Northern Ireland region in campaigning for the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and in all its campaigns calling for genuine power-sharing government and the full implementation of that agreement ever since. Conference believes that the UK exiting the EU undermines

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and threatens the agreement, as already seen by the collapse of devolved Government in Northern Ireland.

Conference further believes that exiting the EU threatens the key aspects of the agreement relating to equality of citizenship and parity of esteem, creating borders between communities that the Good Friday Agreement was meant to bring down.

Conference notes that whilst UNISON does not support Theresa May's deal, it agrees that any deal between the UK and EU will only be possible if it includes a 'backstop' designed to protect the Good Friday Agreement, North-South cooperation and the all island economy on the island of Ireland. Conference agrees that our members in Northern Ireland need this insurance policy, which is designed to both keep an open border across the island of Ireland and mitigate the impact of an EU exit on the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland membership in particular, to:

- 1) Continue to campaign against a 'no deal' exit from the EU if Article 50 has been extended beyond 29 March;
- 2) Campaign for a bilateral British-Irish treaty that protects the rights of British and Irish citizens across these islands as part of the Common Travel Area and for the highest standards of equality of treatment for citizens in Northern Ireland regardless of their chosen identity;
- 3) Resist any attempts to remove or weaken the backstop if Article 50 has been extended and the Withdrawal Agreement has yet to be passed;
- 4) Continue to seek a future relationship between the UK and EU that builds upon and strengthens the protections set out within the backstop, which protects the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts and prevents a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland;
- 5) Call for the establishment of an independent international body to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement and to ensure future decisions of both guarantor governments align with the provisions and intention of the Good Friday Agreement;
- 6) Through Labour Link, to press the Labour Party to take all actions necessary to protect the Good Friday Agreement in the context of the UK exit from the EU.

### *Northern Ireland Region*

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#### **97. Public services and EU exit**

Conference, on behalf of public service workers in the East Midlands and the rest of the UK, is horrified at how the UK Government has conducted EU exit negotiations so far. The turmoil in the Westminster Parliament does not give workers any confidence that their best interests are being served whatever deals or legislation finally emerges in the coming months or years ahead.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Conference recognises that UNISON's EU exit campaign, since the 2016 Referendum, has consistently prioritised the protection of public services and workers rights regardless of the political upheaval.

Conference believes the current EU exit agenda of the Conservative Party does not guarantee the protection of public services and UNISON members' rights. Their free trade plans will not secure an economic deal that will deliver quality public services, free from harmful global liberalisation policies in the future.

The government's EU exit agenda threatens our workers rights and must be stopped. A Tory Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the EU, and also other countries subsequently, would promote a new global race to the bottom in workers' rights, consumer standards and environmental regulation and open up UK public services to the lowest bidder.

Conference further notes that UNISON has created its own six tests based on our annual Conference decisions to evaluate what we would like to see included in any future EU-UK deal to protect our members' rights and public services:

- 1) Protect existing health and safety and workers rights through a level playing field of regulations, with a non regression clause, an enforcement mechanism and accessible dispute mechanism that enforces the adherence and future upgrade on these rights;
- 2) Protect public services from a bad economic deal that will prevent growth of the UK economy, continue public service austerity instead of increased funding, lower living standards and offer less training and skills opportunities for workers;
- 3) Keep UK public services out of global trade deals, maintain only the existing beneficial social provisions in public procurement regulations, expand the right to public ownership and the positive use of State Aid;
- 4) Safeguard rights, standards and regulations (e.g. employment, health and safety, consumer and environment) and any new EU measures in the future so that they cannot be weakened in the UK through any future trade deals with non-EU countries like the USA;
- 5) Maintain existing equality and human rights, EU citizen rights, EU freedom of movement;
- 6) Prevent a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland, uphold the Good Friday Agreement and respect the devolution legislation of the Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Public services, the voluntary and community sector and the UK nations and regions will particularly lose out financially when we exit. There will be no so called 'deal dividend' as promised by the UK chancellor in the 2018 autumn budget if the economy collapses.

The government's own evaluation report published at the end of 2018 demonstrated that any type of Brexit deal will make us poorer. Their impact assessments predict that Britain's economic growth will be lower over the next 15 years (growth will be

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

reduced by 8% with a No-deal, 5% with a FTA and 2% with an EEA option). Most economic analysis shows that the knock to public finances will dwarf many times over any cut in our EU membership fee.

Conference further notes that the UK's £8 billion a year net contribution to the EU will not go to zero post Brexit because all parties have stated they will pay to stay in certain crime-fighting, science and student exchange programmes among other things. There have been no official announcements on what this will cost but it will certainly be in the billions – and so the saving on EU membership fee is likely to be pretty small.

Furthermore conference believes it is paramount that the UK amount from the European Structural and Investment Funds must be matched in its replacement with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), in order to support the UK economic goal of regional economic equality. Conference notes that the Local Government Association (LGA) has estimated the EU funding gap will be £8.4 billion after 2020.

Conference agrees that any Brexit deal must not leave workers worse off, living standards must not fall. The government must end austerity and provide a Brexit deal that can properly fund the NHS, social care, local government, transport, police, education and housing and investing in our communities. Public services and its workers must not pay the price for a bad deal or no – deal.

Conference also notes that Brexit will not only put financial funding for public services at risk but also with the ending of EU freedom of movement and the introduction of Settled Status for EU migrants it risks staff shortages in key public services like health and social care.

EU joiners in the UK have fallen by 17.6% and the number of EU leavers has risen by 15.3% in the 12 months since the EU referendum resulting in a net outflow of EU national from NHS employment.

The social care sector currently cannot survive without workers from EU countries working in its teams. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of EU nationals employed in social care grew by 68%, or 30,600 people.

A report by the Cavendish Coalition, which UNISON is a member of, found that the NHS could be short of 51,000 nurses, enough to staff 45 hospitals, by the end of the Brexit transition period. And in social care the sector is under considerable strain with a vacancy rate of 12.3% and will have to navigate a Brexit transition period in which a critical portion of its EU workforce considers its future if the government does not manage EU migration to make EU citizens feel welcome.

If we do not solve this social care crisis the knock-on effects to the NHS will be enormous. People who are best cared for in their homes or in the community will instead be forced to visit already over-crowded hospitals, putting yet more strain on the system.

Conference notes that UNISON has grave concerns about the Migration Advisory Committees' (MAC) recommendations to the government to include a £30,000 a year minimum threshold in its post Brexit migration plans. This will limit the crucial

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

source of valued social care colleagues. The care sector relies on lower paid colleagues who would be effectively cut off by a salary threshold of £30,000.

It would be irresponsible for the government to bring the shutters down overnight, especially to those in important lower-wage roles such as care workers, or to others performing vital services to the public but who are earning less than £30,000 a year, such as nurses.

Conference notes UNISONs work with the 3 million and Cavendish Coalition to ensure the process for registering for Settled Status is as easy and smooth as possible. The campaign by UNISON regions and branches to get public sector employers to pay for their settled status fee has gone from strength to strength. It reinforces the message that EU workers, alongside non – EU workers, play a valuable contribution in the delivery of our public services.

Conference calls on all parts of UNISON to remain vigilant in protecting on our rights and public services through the coming months, whatever emerges from Parliament.

Conference further calls on the National Executive Council to continue to:

- a) Campaign for an EU exit deal that puts the protection and future growth of UK public services, equality and employment rights at its core;
- b) Call for a general election to break the parliamentary deadlock;
- c) Work with Labour Link and the Labour Party, parliamentary allies, TUC and EPSU and our key civil society alliances including the3million, Cavendish Coalition and the Brexit Civil Society Alliance (BCSA) to promote UNISONs six tests in any future final deal;
- d) Campaign for a cast-iron guarantee from the UK government that its settled status programme for EU nationals will be honoured in the event of a no-deal Brexit to prevent a damaging staff shortage in health and social care services;
- e) Campaign for the government's future UK's Industrial Strategy to address the EU funding deficit in a post Brexit local landscape and provide for public funded infrastructure initiatives for regional economic growth as well as funds for social cohesion and skills development in the local workforce.

***East Midlands Region***

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### **98. Workers rights post Brexit**

EU law has provided a framework for employment rights to UK workers for the last 46 years. This has helped protect equal pay for equal value work, improve pay and conditions for outsourced workers and provided limited rights for agency, part-time and temporary staff. Also the EU charter of Fundamental Rights includes worker participation as a basic democratic right, as well as the right for unions to negotiate and conclude collective agreements.

We share the concerns expressed by the TUC about the erosion of workers' rights post Brexit. With a predicted smaller economy post Brexit, UK workers face an increasingly uncertain future.

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Whilst the European Union (Withdrawal) Act is due to protect workers' rights on the day we leave, the Act won't prevent future governments from repealing or watering down these rights in the future. The act gives ministers powers to repeal, dilute or limit employment rights, indeed some ministers opposed amendments to make it harder for future governments to weaken these rights.

The UK government has stated "legal protection for workers [should] keep pace with the changing labour market". In practise this means a future government could water down workplace rights on the pretext of promoting labour market flexibility or creating jobs.

As a trade union we stand for improving and extending workers' rights and we do not support a 'race to the bottom'. We recognise that strong unions are the best defence against erosion of our hard won rights whether won by UK or by EU workers. A future trade deal must secure at least a level playing field on employment rights and must acknowledge the right for unions to negotiate and conclude collective agreements.

Therefore we call on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Co-ordinate a wide-ranging campaign to improve future employment rights involving members, branches and regions in educating and consulting on what future employment rights are important;
- 2) We should work alongside UK and European trade unions that share our values in strengthening employment rights;
- 3) We should also use our influence working with the TUC, STUC, WTUC, ICTU and Labour Link and harness our collective membership to lobby M.Ps and devolved representatives as well as support legal challenges that extend collective and individual employment rights.

***Cambridge City and South***

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### **98.1**

Insert new third paragraph:

"However, Conference notes that there are examples of EU membership having a directly negative impact on workers in the UK, including many UNISON members. In particular, in the 'Alemo-Herron' decision, the European Court of Justice ruled that private employers who take on the provision of public services cannot be required to pay transferred staff the pay rises they would have had if they had stayed in the employ of the public sector. This prevents UNISON members in outsourced services benefitting automatically from a dynamic link with improved pay rates in the public sector."

Insert new action point 4):

"4) Campaign to ensure that on leaving the EU the UK is no longer subject to the Alemo-Herron decision."

***Sefton Health***



## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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Equalities

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### **99. Disability History Month**

Conference believes that UNISON should celebrate Disability History Month on an annual basis.

Disability History Month was set up in 2010 to provide a platform to focus on the work that has been done to fight for equality for disabled people. Each year the month has a theme – for example, the 2018 disability history month ran from 22 November to 22 December and was themed around 'Disability and Music'.

Our local committees, branches and self-organised groups can organise activities for their members and non-members during the month to mark and celebrate achievement, to learn and to understand more about the issues facing disabled people.

These events can help educate and raise awareness about disability but can also be useful to highlight the work of trade unions to encourage membership, participation and activism.

This motion seeks to raise awareness of this annual event and encourage branches and committees to plan and promote events.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Encourage branches and regional Disabled Members Committees to set a budget, organise, promote and share information about events. This information should be available in all accessible formats, where necessary, including British Sign Language (BSL);
- 2) Produce materials for use in regions and branches;
- 3) Encourage promotion of Disability History Month by highlighting events that have been held and sharing information about these on our website and in union journals.

***South West Region***

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### **100. Make 2021 the Year of Disabled Workers**

Conference believes that one of UNISON's strengths lies in its recognition of the value and unique experiences disabled people bring to the workplace and to our union. UNISON recognises that people are disabled by societal and environmental barriers rather than their medical condition.

Conference, commends the work of UNISON's National Disabled Members Committee to raise the profile of its disabled membership across the UK and also commends its achievement in securing representation for disabled members on our union's highest lay body, the National Executive Council.

Conference joins in the international condemnation of how the UK Government's policies affect disabled people and the lack of progress towards fulfilling the

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obligations set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that the UK signed in 2009. In particular we share concerns relating to the persisting disability employment gap, the persisting wages gap, and concern that not enough is being done to ensure disabled people can gain and maintain employment.

Conference draws attention to Article 27 of the Treaty that places a duty on the UK government to create the conditions that promote equal opportunity for disabled people in relation to work and employment.

The UK government has committed to the employment of one million more disabled people by 2027 but this cannot be achieved through the current policy of penalising disabled people who are not in work. A 2018 Report by the House of Commons "People with Disabilities in Employment" noted that there would need to be an 18% rise in the employment of disabled people from current levels to meet that target. Conference is concerned about the potential for under-employment and lack of meaningful work and progression opportunities for disabled people which are both factors that contribute to disparity in wages.

Conference is concerned that the UK's withdrawal from the EU could affect both the progress towards meeting the Treaty's obligations and also the UK Government's commitment to the employment target set.

Conference observes that there is no equality monitoring of Disabled Members in UNISON and no requirement for employers to report on the numbers of disabled people they employ or the disability pay gap. We need an understanding of how many of our members are disabled, the barriers they face and how austerity has impacted disabled people in the workplace if we are to provide our activists relevant training to support our disabled membership in the workplace.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to make 2021 the Year of Disabled Workers, in UNISON and to ask the TUC and other unions to support the initiative. As part of that Year Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members Committee:

- 1) To develop and deliver events and activities to mark the Year of Disabled Workers that:
  - a) Celebrate the successes and contributions of disabled people in the workplace;
  - b) Challenge societal and environmental barriers to employing disabled people;
  - c) Showcase success stories and visible role models.
- 2) To undertake a survey of our membership to determine the number of members who self-declare as disabled and the barriers they face, and to report on the findings;
- 3) To undertake an audit of disability-related training available across UNISON and including training on specific health conditions (for example, dementia

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awareness) and to map the density of activists trained in each across each of our Regions and to report on the findings.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the Labour Link and other relevant groups to lobby Parliament and devolved governments to enshrine the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into law across the UK irrespective of the Brexit outcome.

Conference also calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members' Committee:

- i) To encourage branches to share experiences, both good and bad, to provide learning opportunities for our activists when supporting disabled members at work;
- ii) To encourage branches to press for meaningful work and progression opportunities for disabled members and progressive workplace policies, such as disability leave, to facilitate this.

***South Lanarkshire***

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### **100.1**

In the paragraph that begins "Conference observes" delete "no equality monitoring of disabled members in UNISON and"

***National Executive Council***

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### **101.Disability - Meaningful Annual Statistics**

Conference recognises that in November 2018 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) launched a voluntary scheme for employers to publish their statistics on employing disabled people. We welcome this but it is only voluntary when we believe it needs to be compulsory.

We recognise that under the Equality Act 2010 there should be no disability discrimination and in fact the law allows for more favourable treatment where is a duty to provide reasonable adjustments.

Where the Equality Act does allow for positive discrimination we believe it is now time for employers to become properly accountable. In Scotland, the Scottish government has called for employers to become Disability Confident and Aberdeenshire Council is one such employer to gain the bronze award.

We believe that as part of this, employers should openly publish statistics yearly on the employment of disabled people to prove they are disability confident employers.

We believe that statistics should be published annually by all employers, that demonstrate a commitment by employers to employ and promote disabled people and that evidences the disability gap is closing in relation to the employment, progression, and management of disabled workers.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

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- 1) To actively campaign alongside the National Disabled Members Committee for public sector employers to voluntarily take part in the existing DWP scheme and to annually publish their stats;
- 2) To work with the National Disabled Members' Committee to determine a range of useful key statistics on disabled workers that would allow organisations to close that disability gap, and then to promote the collation of these as a standard;
- 3) To encourage branches to similarly ask employers from other sectors who have a contract or service level agreement to provide (or to contribute to provide) public services to voluntarily sign up to the scheme and annually publish their stats;
- 4) To lobby the UK government to establish a set of key employment indicators relating to disabled workers and require employers across all sectors to publish that key employment information;
- 5) To call upon the Labour Link to raise this through the Labour Party and call on them to campaign for these standards.

*Aberdeenshire*

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Racism

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### **102.THE TRADE UNION RESPONSE TO FASCISM - NO PASARAN**

Conference is deeply alarmed at the rise of a resurgent and unapologetic fascist threat. A resurgence in organised and violent racist, anti-semitic and Islamophobic politics has profound consequences for us all. Conference notes that while the far right is attempting to use anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and anti-semitic sentiment to build support, the depth of their hatred of women, LGBT and disabled people is also unflinching and shocking.

Over the past few years the far-right have felt further emboldened to organise in public on our streets. They have also used social media and the internet to target victims and potential recruits. Conference is deeply concerned that the threat of far right violence and harassment against vulnerable groups of people and communities, against trade unionists and against democratic politicians. Conference is alarmed that harassment and racist attacks are on the rise and political rhetoric against minority communities is becoming increasingly toxic.

Conference further asserts that fascism is fundamentally anti-trade union. Fascists and Nazis have, and always will, target trade unionists because we truly represent and fight for the rights and wellbeing of the people to whom they direct their appeal. Trade unions are the ultimate protection and guarantors of working people's rights and aspirations. Conference notes with alarm the recent attack by far right protesters on an RMT picket line in Manchester which singled out Black strikers for racist abuse. Conference believes this underlines the increasing vulnerability of visible minorities on our streets and workplaces and asserts our commitment to trade union and anti-racist solidarity.

Conference believes that the struggle for equality, social justice and a better world has been at the heart of UNISON's work from our founding. It is the foundation of a public service ethos built on the labour of workers of all backgrounds serving all

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

communities. This has been at the heart of our commitment to tackling the far-right and the politics of hate whether at the ballot box, in our public spaces or in the workplace.

Conference reasserts its opposition to the “Hostile Environment” which makes second class citizens of migrant workers and anyone who is suspected of being a migrant. This has attempted to turn public service workers, landlords and bank staff into immigration officials. Conference notes the way that upfront charging in the NHS has seen vulnerable patients being wrongly denied life saving treatment. Conference believes that this will have widespread detrimental consequences to public health, trust in public services and tackling exploitation and vulnerability in the labour market.

Conference believes that the far right will attempt to capitalise on Brexit-related political, economic and social turmoil to sow division and hate, setting a new challenge for the trade union movement to mobilise, campaign and organise to defeat them once again.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the TUC, STUC, ICTU and WTUC and sister unions to renew the trade union struggle against the far-right wherever they organise;
- 2) Continue our work with a wide coalition of anti-racist groups at national and local level to support local community organising against racism and xenophobia, including branches affiliating and working with HOPE not hate, Show Racism the Red Card, Unite Against Fascism and Stand up to Racism;
- 3) Continue to support the TUC’s march to mark UN anti-racism day;
- 4) Continue to develop, promote and implement training materials and campaigning resources in conjunction with self organised groups and branches to challenge discrimination and prejudice;
- 5) Have a renewed focus on collective bargaining and trade union activity to challenge racism and xenophobia in the workplace and beyond;
- 6) Continue to campaign against the ‘Hostile Environment’;
- 7) Resist attempts by the Westminster Government to further strip away the rights of migrant workers and campaign for a rights-based approach that prioritises decent pay and treatment for all.

***National Executive Council***

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### **102.1**

After existing paragraph ending “increasingly toxic”, insert new paragraph:

“Conference is also deeply concerned that the far right is seeking to become normalised in political discourse, and mainstream media and politicians are assisting them, by, for example, broadcasters such as the BBC giving air time to notorious far right activist Tommy Robinson, and Jacob Rees-Mogg retweeting a post by the

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

leader of the AfD, a far right party in Germany. As Britain's counter-terrorism chief, Neil Basu, said in March, mainstream media coverage is helping to radicalise the far right. The number of far right terrorists in British prisons tripled between 2017 and 2018."

After existing paragraph ending "the labour market", insert new paragraphs as follows:

"Further, Conference recognises that the political and media establishment all too often contribute to an environment in which hatred can thrive. Much of the British press incites hatred against minorities - there have been decades of vilification of "bogus asylum seekers" and "illegal immigrants"; a Daily Express front page proclaimed "Muslims tell British: Go to hell", the Times published an article declaring that "Islamophobia is a fiction to shut down debate" and the Spectator has published articles claiming that Black people have lower IQs than white people, and an article that stated "there is not nearly enough Islamophobia within the Conservative party.

Much of the press coverage of the opposition to the introduction of LGBT- inclusive relationship education in schools has focussed only on the opposition from some in the Muslim community, although the same kind of arguments have also been made by some within the Christian, Jewish, and other faith communities. The far right are using the situation to further their political aims by falsely presenting it as a clash between Muslim people and LGBT people. Conference asserts that those who only talk about LGBT rights to attack Muslims are not allies in the struggle for LGBT rights"

In action point 2), after "racism", insert ", Islamophobia"

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

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#### **102.2**

In the first paragraph after "for us all" insert:

"Whilst Islamophobia has been the key component in the recent growth of the far right events like the horrific massacre in Pittsburgh and the driving out of Hungary of the Soros University have demonstrated all too clearly that where the politics of hate are allowed to flourish all the old bigotries also rise to the surface. Anti-Semitism remains a core element of fascist ideology."

Add new point 4) and renumber after:

"4) Continue to support initiatives against anti-Semitism such as Holocaust Memorial events and to encourage Regions, Branches, Self-Organised Groups, Young Members and all other appropriate bodies to actively engage in appropriate educational and other events to raise awareness of, and build opposition to, anti-Semitism such as the delegations to Auschwitz-Birkenau organised by regions and branches and annually by Unite Against Fascism."

***Tower Hamlets***

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#### **102.3**

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Insert new fifth paragraph after "or in the workplace":

"Conference believes that the rise of racism and fascism has been encouraged by the policies of the Tory government such as the Prevent agenda and the so-called hostile environment for migrants. Leading Tories such as Boris Johnson have made repeated public statements attacking Muslims. This is intended to divert the attention of working people away from the politicians who are responsible for austerity and poverty and has created an environment in which the far right can grow."

### *London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority*

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#### **102.4**

Add point 4) and renumber after:

"4) Support and publicise Unite Against Fascism's yearly educational trip to Poland and Auschwitz encouraging branches and other union bodies to send delegations,"

Add to existing point 6) after "Hostile Environment":

"and campaign for the repeal of the 2014 Immigration Act. Reaffirm our support for Freedom of movement and right to remain. Fighting racism, discrimination and promoting equalities and human rights;"

### *Salford City*

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#### **102.5**

Add new point 6):

"6) Mark the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report by also monitoring and challenging institutional racism in the workplace and beyond."

And renumber remaining points accordingly.

### *Camden*

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#### **103.The Windrush papers, generations and their descendents – a hostile environment - what next?**

Conference, arriving in the UK between 1942 – 1971 from the Caribbean islands, at the invitation of the then government, came the generation named the 'Windrush Generation'. The name came from 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.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

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.

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-Second 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 came on the promise of equality, carrying the same passports as an individual born in the United Kingdom, Colonies and Commonwealth countries. They did not, however, realise that a 'hostile environment' 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. 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. Some have been forced to give up social or council housing, forced into debt and made to feel like criminals. They have been denied treatment for illnesses such as Cancer. A Londoner, who had been diagnosed with prostate cancer, was refused NHS medical treatment because of his immigration status and billed £54,000.

Conference condemns the Tory government's actions as institutionally racist and holds Home Secretaries in particular, responsible for the many individual tragedies. Those targeted had their rights further eroded as the appeals process effectively made them guilty until proven innocent. They withstood the racism whipped up by politicians like Enoch Powell and stood through many ensuing struggles. They changed both the labour movement and society for the better. It is a betrayal and an insult that in retirement they have been told they don't belong.

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.

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. Many of you will have heard of or seen the signs that read 'No Blacks, No Irish, and No Dogs' and the absolutely appalling conditions that they put up with in a bid to build a life and contribute to society.

In 2014 Theresa May, then Home Secretary, produced a new immigration policy which created a hostile environment toward illegal immigrants 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



## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

did not follow through with the new policy. Teresa May and her government have tried to bury their heads in the sand.

The Tory government has created a racist hostile environment in which if you cannot prove you are British from specific paperwork you are in fact classed as an illegal immigrant and will be deported. The Home Office have used disgraceful, divisive rhetoric, including vans with 'Go Home' emblazoned on them, to scapegoat migrants for government failures and to divert attention away from the austerity agenda of benefit cuts, attacks on our NHS and schools, and other public services.

The resignation and apology by the previous Home Secretary Amber Rudd was welcomed. 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 essential. UNISON made submissions to the government's Compensation Scheme and Lessons Learnt in October 2018 and made it clear that the government should seek to make this a non-contentious, helpful process to those who have been affected.

UNISON have also supported no cap on the compensation scheme, given the scale of the damage inflicted includes deportation, lack of access to vital cancer treatment, loss of home, loss of livelihoods and even loss of life.

UNISON will continue to work with Labour Link 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.

We welcome the Movement for Justice's 'Widen Windrush' Campaign to include the descendants and relatives of the Windrush generation who came to Britain as adults after 1973, in the government's 'Windrush Scheme' thereby offering them a route to citizenship. At its launch Janet Daby MP, David Lammy MP, Eleanor Smith MP and Baroness Hamwee all spoke in support of this campaign.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue in raising awareness of the issues facing the Windrush generation in all UNISON media;
- 2) Build and strengthen alliances with other charities and organisation such as the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) who are supporting victims of immigration crisis;
- 3) Explore with Labour Link how Labour can support the call to reform the immigration system when it gets elected into government;
- 4) Work with other Trade Unions and through the TUC Race relations Committee to continue to campaign against the hostile environment, and help establish a network of support for Black workers/members subject to these hostile policies;
- 5) Work with all appropriate campaign groups and stakeholders' including the Widen Windrush Campaign to challenge the racism of immigration legislation and its impact on the descendants of the Windrush generation;

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- 6) Prepare and circulate information to all branches about the Windrush campaign, support available from the union for members affected, and how they can access this;
- 7) Work with the Movement for Justice Campaign and other affiliated organisations to campaign for the removal of 'immigrant' status of the Windrush generation and descendants in recognition of their British Citizenship, even before arriving in the UK.

### *National Black Members' Committee*

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#### **104. Justice for Windrush Generation**

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.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

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.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council:

- 1) To continue to support UNISON members who are part of the Windrush Generation to ensure their immigration status is settled;
- 2) To build and strengthen alliances with other charities and organisation such as the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) who are supporting victims of immigration crisis;
- 3) Campaign for a fairer immigration system that recognises the vital contribution migrants have made, and continue to make, to public services and UK communities;
- 4) Request Labour Link seeks to ensure Labour's policy on immigration reflects UNISON's position.

***Bedfordshire Police***

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### **105.Tackling Racism at Work**

Conference condemns the continuing rise in racism and fascism across the UK. Conference believes that those who face racism should be at the forefront of the campaign for race equality and that our self organised structures are integral to this work.

Conference also believes that all members have a role and a responsibility to challenge racism and fascism wherever it emerges.

Conference believes that it is time for the union to deepen our already leading work against racism and fascism by ensuring that all levels of the union are fully equipped for the scale of the developing challenge.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Black Members Committee to develop a specific training programme for all activists to enable the union to be better equipped to challenge racism and fascism in the workplace and in wider society.

***Northumberland Tyne and Wear Health***

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### **106.Jane Haining Memorial & Holocaust Study Tour**

UNISON Renfrewshire and Dumfries and Galloway branch, as part of UNISON's ongoing campaign against racism and fascism, last year led a study tour to Krakow and Auschwitz. This was jointly funded by the branches and UNISON's Regional Pool Fund.

During the study tour, a service was held outside the block where Jane Haining was housed in Auschwitz/Birkenau. She is thought to be the only Scottish Woman known to have died at Auschwitz.

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A farmer's daughter, from Dunscore in Dumfriesshire, Jane worked for over ten years at Paisley's JP Coats thread Factory followed by a brief spell in Manchester before taking up a position as matron in a girls home at the Scottish Mission to the Jews in Budapest. It is estimated that Jane helped save over 400 Jewish girls from the Nazis.

Jane was captured by the Gestapo and after a short time being held in a prison in Budapest, she was transported to Auschwitz and died shortly thereafter.

UNISON Renfrewshire has been working with Jane's family, Renfrewshire Council, UNISON North West Region, Dunscore Heritage Centre and JP Coats Ltd to highlight the atrocities of the Holocaust and highlight the sacrifice and service demonstrated by Jane Haining.

As part of the 2018 Sma Shot Celebrations, UNISON Renfrewshire unveiled a banner to commemorate Jane Haining and plans for a permanent memorial, including a street naming, will take place.

The branch is in the process of producing a DVD and booklet of the study tour to be used in schools and local communities.

Conference resolves to:

- 1) Encourage regions to look at the work being done by North West region in highlighting the atrocities of the Holocaust;
- 2) Consider sending delegations on study tours in order to create 'living witnesses';
- 3) Ensure, as part of our ongoing work against racism, fascism and antisemitism that the Holocaust is not forgotten.

*Renfrewshire*

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Civil Rights

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### **107.ABUSE IN CARE HOMES**

There is an increasing demand for care in the UK. The proportion of elderly people requiring care in the future will place even more demands on a service that is already struggling.

With year-on-year cuts to local councils, over 1.8 million people are already denied access to care. This will, as time passes, create an increase in the number of people assessed as being in critical need. It will also place a further burden on the NHS in the intervening period.

The private sector provision of care – whether residential, nursing or home care – will see growth as budget cuts hit local authorities and hospital trusts. Currently, approximately 80% of all social care is delivered by the private sector. Billions of pounds are spent on tendering processes – money that could be invested in hospitals and local services.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Many residential/nursing homes are no longer owned by local authorities, with the majority of home care outsourced. Private care homes often use untrained staff or staff with limited training and do not have the necessary ratio of carers to patients. The turnover of staff is high in these establishments.

Although there are many very good and caring staff working in this field, they are amongst the lowest paid. They struggle with the demands of patients and a lack of support from their managers, who themselves are often not trained in the effective management of care. There is frequently not enough staff to be able to afford the care, dignity and respect that should be given to elderly patients, particularly where the needs of patients are complex and time consuming. Stressful situations can lead to heightened incidents of verbal and/or physical abuse.

Although most care homes will display menus with choices, there is, in actual fact, little choice. Food is often scarce and not nutritional in its value to older people. Elderly and disabled people in the care system are not getting enough food and drink leading to hospitalisation due to malnutrition and dehydration.

A report "Where Does the Money Go?" shows how much the taxpayer is giving to private companies and how little actually reaches the individual needing care. It is not acceptable that these private companies can structure themselves in such a way as to lay the risk at the door of staff, patients and councils.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Challenge and raise awareness of the various financial structures which companies use which may place the elderly and vulnerable at risk;
- 2) Work to challenge practices that are against equality and human rights legislation including lack of procedures to protect residents from misappropriation of personal finances;
- 3) Seek to achieve a longer-term aim of reabsorbing the provision of care into the public sector.

### ***National Retired Members Organisation***

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#### **108.Decriminalisation For Safety**

Conference notes that UNISON's policy on sex work, adopted in 2010 on the basis of a motion from women's conference, is to support proposals which decriminalise the selling of sex acts while introducing a 'sex buyers law' criminalising those who purchase sex acts.

Conference recognises that the great majority of sex workers are women. Conference also recognises that a significant number of women sex workers identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender (LGBT), and there are many gay, bisexual and trans sex workers who do not identify as women. Sex work is an issue for the LGBT community.

Conference notes that national LGBT conference takes a different view to women's conference, having adopted motions at several conferences which:

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- 1) Recognises that the criminalisation of any kind, including of buyers, increases the risks for sex workers and hinder the global fight against HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome);
- 2) Oppose the introduction of a sex buyers law;
- 3) Reflect the view that sex workers are workers, who should have the same rights and protections as workers in other industries.

Conference further notes:

- a) That there have been significant developments since 2010 including Amnesty's 2016 publication of its policy on sex workers, which includes advocating for the decriminalisation of all aspects of consensual adult sex work;
- b) Full decriminalisation is also supported by many other organisations including the World Health Organisation, the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women and Anti Slavery International, and by sex worker's organisations;
- c) The rejection by 2018 UNISON women's conference of a motion 'Nordic Model Now' which called for women's conference to affirm its position of supporting the Nordic Model, a legal model based on decriminalising the selling of sex acts while introducing a 'sex buyers law'.

Conference further notes. New Zealand decriminalised sex work in 2003. The legislation recognises sex work as work, and it is therefore covered by employment law. Sex workers have the legal right to refuse any client for any reason at any point – the law treats sex worker consent as crucial.

The 'New Zealand model' has been praised by women's rights organisations, human rights organisations, and international bodies such as the World Health Organisation, as the best legal approach to protect the safety, rights and health of people who sell sex.

Conference recognises that decriminalisation is not about 'encouraging' sex work – it's about the safety of people who sell sex. It believes that as a trade union we should be listening to the workers – to sex workers – and should not be calling for laws that put sex worker, including women and LGBT sex workers, at greater risk.

Conference therefore believes that UNISON should no longer call for the introduction of a 'sex buyers law'.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council to begin a dialogue with the National LGBT committee, National Women's Committee and other appropriate bodies within the union with a view to reviewing and advancing UNISON's policy in this area.

***Camden***

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### **109. Encourage Homeless People to Have a Voting Voice**

Conference knows that under austerity the number of people in this country who are homeless or living in temporary accommodation has risen dramatically. This issue

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has cut across race, gender and age. Homeless people still have a democratic right to request to be registered to vote by applying to their local electoral registration office or council. They can do so by declaring a "Place of Local Connection" and completing the necessary form. In that way they will not be disenfranchised from the voting system and can use their vote to let their voice be heard.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Committee to:

- 1) Promote the use of "Place of Local Connection" registration within all branches, regions and self organised groups;
- 2) Encourage politicians at local and national level to raise awareness of the issues of voting registration.

*Renfrewshire*

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Decentralisation

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### **110. Review of the Devolution Protocol**

Post Brexit political scene merely heightens the constitutional debate in a "disunited kingdom" of growing civic nationalism and regionalisation, the unsettled will for political change, the growing plurality of politics, which will have further implications for government and governance.

In turn, these are issues of plurality and diversification for the trade union to address in policy, organisation and resourcing.

The more diverse models of procurement and contracting, leading to more private/not for profit/community employers to organise and service, to redefine local and sectoral bargaining.

The Scottish Parliament and other devolved administrations have enhanced powers since UNISON Conference 2004 approved the Devolution Protocol.

The Scotland Act 2016 has provided additional enhanced powers to the Scottish Parliament in areas of elections to the Parliament and local councils, taxation and welfare and social security, borrowing for capital investment, and devolved bargaining in the public services. All impacting upon UNISON Scotland's engagement with Scottish Government, Parliament and its institutions.

The Scottish Government Fair Work Agenda and the previous trade union submissions to the Smith Commission, have raised the prospect of Devolved Employment Rights.

The bargaining and campaign environment is likely to get more complex in future, with greater devolution to nations and regions.

The more diverse models of procurement and contracting, leading to more private/not for profit/community employers to organise and service, to redefine local and sectoral bargaining, more regulation and practice work, not just for legal services.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Trade union learning, including Scottish Government support for Scottish Union Learning, is how we empower people through insight and confidence. It is also how we align values and build skills for change. Time off to attend formal trade union learning is increasingly difficult and creates a further challenge. We need to ensure our learning remains relevant to the aims of the union, aids the development of a culture to take us forward and is accessible.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to initiate a review of the Devolution Protocol (Rule D 2.11.5).

### *Scotland Region*

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Environment

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#### **111.ENERGY CLIMATE CHANGE A JUST TRANSITION AND JOBS FOR A LOW CARBON ECONOMY**

Conference notes the growing concern in the UK, and worldwide, about the ability of governments to regulate and slow the growth of carbon emissions, climate change and global warming. As an energy, environment and public service union our members, and their families, are directly affected. When our economy shifts it must be a just and fair change that does not leave communities and energy workers stranded without hope as the collapse of coal and manufacturing jobs and industries did in the 1980s.

The current Westminster Government has been slow to grasp the scale of the investment necessary to secure a future energy supply that is low carbon, renewable, secure and affordable. The present piecemeal approach is summed up by the ineffective smart meter roll out and the cancellation of the Swansea Bay Lagoon tidal project. The UK Committee on Climate Change predict we will be falling behind the targets set in the Climate Change Act between the years 2023 to 2027.

Conference knows that the UK and international union movement publicly recognises that change is unavoidable based on the science. Also that public ownership, investment and regulation will be essential to make this change and that the free market will be unable to deliver. Public services will be needed complement a green industrial strategy and there will be an expanded role for both further education and higher education too.

UNISON has been the leading union in the fight against fuel poverty and the only union to be a funder and partner of the national End Fuel Poverty coalition. Our members in all the different public services see the effects of cold homes on adults and children and their life chances. It is shameful that we have more winter deaths than colder Scandinavian countries. Our welfare charity helping members with expensive fuel bills has become a necessity. What our members in the energy service group have long advocated is a major energy efficiency programme rolled out locally for every home that needs it in the UK. Such a programme would go a long way to eradicating fuel poverty.

In Scotland, Conference welcomes the UNISON and STUC partnership with Friends of the Earth, and other allies, to convince the Scottish Government to set up a Just



## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Transition Commission to safeguard workers and communities whilst climate change is tackled.

In 2017 the TUC Congress backed public ownership and a just transition in order to tackle climate change and in 2018 also backed specific safeguards for energy workers, a green industrial strategy and a moratorium on fracking. UNISON also does not support fracking based on the evidence seen so far and therefore, like the Scottish Government, backs a moratorium.

UK energy unions, including UNISON, met and responded in 2018 to the growing interest in a Just Transition by holding a conference and setting out ten principles that would involve them in addressing climate change while also safeguarding their skills and creating new well paid jobs to transfer to in their area.

UNISON has produced a fossil fuel disinvestment guide for Pension Funds and has also led the way too in promoting Hydrogen as a way for the UK gas industry to transition to a low carbon, then zero carbon future, supplying people's homes (recognising that gas central heating is in almost 90% of UK homes), transport and industry. This is based on work in Leeds (H21 project), initiatives in the North West on hydrogen blends supported by Mayor Steve Rotherham and Teeside where half of UK hydrogen is currently produced. UNISON also played a key role in getting the new Hydrogen All Party Parliamentary Group set up and chaired by the Labour MP Anna Turley.

Furthermore UNISON has led the way on expanding the public ownership debate in the UK and internationally. Labour's historic 2017 manifesto committed to bring in to public ownership the gas and electricity network and grid system but left out the supply of energy, instead leaving it to the mercy of the failing market which has witnessed rapid growth to just under 70 current UK wide suppliers. A number of the new suppliers have concerning ownership structures and are inherently unstable. The Labour manifesto suggested inserting a dozen new public companies in to the market with regional franchises. This would simply add to the current crazy competition which is inefficient and is currently leading to the unionised companies our members work in being constantly undercut, with pressure today on pay, pensions and conditions. The 'Big Six' companies in energy supply are ripe for public ownership and UNISON is convinced the manifesto of any political party, including Labour, would benefit from such a proposal and which would massively benefit consumers too. If investment in renewable energy sources falters then public intervention and ownership on a greater scale may be required.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to work with, and support, the UNISON energy service group on:

- 1) A specific just transition plan for energy workers;
- 2) The development of hydrogen as a clean future fuel and industry to employ gas workers into the future and provide sustainable and affordable warmth for all;
- 3) Developing plans to bring the 'Big Six' companies in to public ownership and for sectoral collective bargaining for the whole energy sector;

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference, on behalf of all our members, reaffirms our commitment to:

- a) Tackle carbon emissions and climate change;
- b) A massive energy efficiency programme to end fuel poverty and winter deaths;
- c) Campaign for public services to be climate change ready, leaders in reducing environmental impact and assisting directly in the expansion of the use of renewable and low carbon energy and technology;
- d) Campaign for the UK government, and devolved administrations, to have ambitious targets, regulation, investments and plans to exceed all Climate Change Act and international treaty obligations;
- e) Support a broad just transition programme to move away from an economy based on carbon emissions to one based on public ownership, fair taxation and public investment to create a zero carbon emission one that excludes no one from access to secure and affordable sources of energy and heat;
- f) Call on the National Executive Council, regions and branches to take action on these issues.

***National Executive Council***

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### 111.1

At the end of the first paragraph add:

"Conference applauds the courageous stand taken by Greta Thunberg and school, college and university students around the world, who have taken part in the Youth Strike 4 Climate. Trade unions should be part of the growing international movement demanding governments take action now to limit the catastrophic climate disaster facing the planet and the people who live on it."

After "whilst climate change is tackled." Insert new paragraph:

"Conference notes and welcomes work done, such as the One Million Climate Jobs report from the Campaign Against Climate Change, to develop strategies for a zero-carbon economy that have workers and trade unions at their heart. The One Million Climate Jobs report is backed by seven national unions and argues that no worker should lose out in the transition to a zero-carbon economy."

Replace sentence commencing "UNISON also does not support fracking", with "UNISON also does not support fracking. The position of our Energy Service Group is, like that of the Scottish Government, to support a moratorium."

After "...on a greater scale may be required." insert:

"We will also require massive investment in developing and expanding energy infrastructure. For instance, the electrical grid will need to be significantly upgraded to cope with a transition to an energy system based on renewable energy. The "decarbonising" of home energy will create significant jobs and alongside this we need to retrain workers in the gas (and other fossil fuel industries) to ensure a just

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transition to the new zero carbon economy. Fossil fuel industry workers should not lose out."

Add new paragraph after "public intervention and ownership on a greater scale may be required", which states:

"Conference believes that in the face of a government and industry that is determined to undermine basic democratic norms to develop hydraulic fracturing, the time has come to strengthen UNISON's stance on the issue of fracking. Conference therefore believes that fracking should be banned and should have no place in the future development of energy."

Add new point 3), and renumber accordingly.

"3) The promotion of UNISON's clear opposition to fracking, in a way that is sensitive the views of those working in the industry and which makes clear our belief that the development of cleaner, greener alternatives must have the wellbeing of the workforce at its heart."

At end, add:

"Finally, Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to support the One Million Climate Jobs campaign developed by the Campaign Against Climate Change (CaCC) and to affiliate to the CaCC."

Change final point accordingly.

***Salford City***

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### 111.2

Add new second paragraph:

"Conference applauds the courageous stand taken by Greta Thunberg and school, college and university students around the world who took part in youth strike 4 climate. Trade unions should be part of the growing international movement demanding governments take action now to limit the catastrophic climate disaster facing the planet and the people who live on it."

After "...whilst climate change is tackled." Insert new paragraph:

"Conference notes and welcomes work done, such as the One Million Climate Jobs report from the Campaign Against Climate Change, to develop strategies for a zero carbon economy that have workers and trade unions at their heart. The One Million Climate Jobs report is backed by seven national unions and argues that no worker should lose out in the transition to a zero carbon economy."

After "...Labour MP Anna Turley." Insert:

"However we note the August 2018 briefing from Friends of the Earth that acknowledges the role of hydrogen as a potential "secondary fuel" with home heating to be "largely provided by electricity" in order to meet the required targets for

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

emissions reductions. The UK has “unparalleled” renewable resources which must form the basis for most energy requirements in a low or zero carbon economy.”

After “.on a greater scale may be required.” Insert:

"We will also require massive investment in developing and expanding energy infrastructure. For instance, the electrical grid will need to be significantly upgraded to cope with a transition to an energy system based on renewable energy. The “decarbonising” of home energy will create significant jobs and alongside this we need to retrain workers in the gas (and other fossil fuel industries) to ensure a just transition to the new zero carbon economy. Fossil fuel industry workers should not lose out."

Replace existing point 2) with:

"2) The development of renewable energy generation and infrastructure together with the upgrading of the electrical grid as the primary method of producing energy in a zero-carbon economy."

Insert new point f):

"f) To support the One Million Climate Jobs campaign developed by the Campaign Against Climate Change (CaCC) and to affiliate to the CaCC."

Change final point accordingly.

***Portsmouth City***

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### **111.3**

Insert new second paragraph, after "1980s.":

“Public services are vulnerable to the increasingly severe impacts of climate change including the need to repair bridges, roads, sea defences, ensure secure water supplies and other infra-structure damaged by extreme weather events being met from the public purse and the impact on health services from increased ill-health such as asthma and other respiratory illnesses.”

Add at end of the fifth paragraph which begins: "In "Scotland":

“The Scottish Just Transition Commission, which includes trade union representatives, must give a voice to energy and other workers in high carbon industries and should ensure that all Scottish Government policy contributes to developing the energy, industrial and education policies needed for a Just Transition to a low carbon economy that will secure a future for energy workers, through creating new low carbon industries and technology, training current and future workers in the necessary skills.”

***Scotland Region***

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### **111.4**

Insert new third paragraph:

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"Conference welcomes the new wave of activism by young people across the world demanding urgent action to stop climate change. We believe that action by governments and companies to stop climate change is required now if humanity is to avoid catastrophic climate change which will have a devastating impact on life in earth. We believe that climate change can be stopped given the political will, but that massive pressure will be required by trade unions and campaigners to make this happen."

***London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority***

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### **111.5**

Add at the end of the motion, add.

"Conference welcomes the recent upsurge of monthly school student and college student strikes that have occurred across the country and Internationally in hundreds of towns and cities. Further we urge our union at national, regional and branch level to build links and provide support to these inspiring student protests and campaigns to save our planet."

***Hackney***

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### **111.6**

Add at end:

"Conference calls on branches and regions to work with the Campaign Against Climate Change and Extinction Rebellion where appropriate, lawful and in line with UNISON policy."

***London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority***

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### **112.Campaign for Climate Change Resilient Public Services**

Conference recognises that as part of the Just Transition to a low carbon society the governments of the British Isles urgently need to establish public sector services that are Climate Change Resilient. Funding programmes are urgently needed now to prevent the loss of key services and the associated impacts upon our communities as climate change induced weather patterns become more disruptive hurting those people least able to defend themselves or their communities.

Conference notes that putting profits before people has resulted in the Climate Change crisis that is sweeping the world. UNISON members their families and communities are on the frontline of this crisis.

Public services rely on an infrastructure that was developed in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and is particularly sensitive to the problems we now see happening more and more frequently in the UK as heavy rain, strong winds, higher tides and even droughts disrupt transport, power, food and water supplies. Droughts and storms elsewhere in the world further threaten food availability and food security, the last thing people on low incomes need in Food Bank Britain. Care for the sick and the elderly becomes harder as heat waves worsen health problems.

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Guidance and funding for public sector infrastructure that fails to plan for climate change is planning to fail its service users.

The climate change crisis is affecting UNISON members as they struggle to deliver and maintain services within an infrastructure that is not geared up to the rapidly changing weather.

Climate change damage to public sector infrastructure has to be met from the organisation's reserves! A cash strapped public sector cannot afford to plan for infrastructure damage, struggles to have enough staff to cope with the emergency and has to beg for additional money to repair the damage. Conference our members and the people of the British Isles need and deserve climate change ready public services.

Conference recognises that the Paris Agreement to reduce the use of fossil fuels needs urgent action in order to address the rise in global temperatures that is causing climate change.

Climate change will exacerbate inequality in our society as those least able to afford it face more flooding events, disrupted transport, power, communication, health care, water and food supplies.

Climate change will without action now disrupt public services leading to the marginalisation of people, and communities in the British Isles just as it does in the rest of the world.

Investment in a twenty first century climate change resilience public sector linked into changing lifestyles will deliver a more fairer and equal society.

Conference calls on all branches and the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Engage fully with our members, their families and civic society across the UK to seek support for a climate change resilience public services strategy and public sector infrastructure funding programme;
- 2) Engage with the TUC, Scottish and Welsh Trades Union Congresses, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, environmental groups and the people's assemblies to build a broad coalition to support a campaign for climate change resilient public services infrastructure so that the burden of dealing with climate change induced emergencies does not fall entirely upon cash strapped local government and the NHS.

***Aberdeenshire***

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### 112.1

Add at the end of the motion add:

"Conference welcomes the recent upsurge of monthly school student and college student strikes that have occurred across the country and internationally in hundreds of towns and cities. Further we urge our union at national, regional and branch level to build links and provide support to these inspiring student protests and campaigns to save our planet."

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

*Hackney*

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### **113. Climate change and a Just Transition**

Conference notes the crisis of global warming and the warnings of significant climate change that will impact on all populations of the world.

It is recognised that the release of carbon into the atmosphere through the burning of fossil fuels has been and continues to be a major contribution to this crisis and that all expert advice is that we must move from a high-carbon economy to a low-carbon economy in order to prevent global temperature rises reaching catastrophic levels.

Conference recognises that this means that most of the known fossil fuel reserves cannot be exploited and should remain in the ground and thus restates its support for the campaign to divest our pension funds from investments in these fossil fuel reserves. It also means that there is no justifiable reason to develop new extractive industries such as fracking or further expansion of the North Sea oil and gas sectors.

Conference congratulates the initiative of UNISON Scotland in establishing its Green Network which provides a forum for members to discuss issues such as global warming and threats to the environment and organised a Green UNISON Day in September where branches organised activities in workplaces and completed branch audits on their carbon footprint.

Conference recognises that past major technological and industrial transformations have impacted negatively on workers and communities who have been left behind. Therefore we support the policy of a Just Transition to a low-carbon economy that provides continued and future employment for workers and supports those communities most at risk from the transition.

Conference welcomes the expansion of renewable electricity generation and the phasing out of carbon fuels such as coal, oil and gas. Conference also welcomes the policy of UNISON's Energy Sector of developing the use of hydrogen to replace methane gas as a source of heating for domestic and industrial energy supplies. If this 'hydrogenisation' of the gas networks proves feasible it will allow the gas industry to become a low carbon industry and secure an energy supply and jobs into the future.

Conference supports calls for ambitious targets to achieve a no-carbon energy supply by 2050 or earlier and calls on the UK and devolved governments to develop the critical industrial strategy necessary to meet such a target. This would identify and develop low-carbon new industries that will provide jobs for the future, support for high-carbon industries to transition, identify and develop strategies to address skills gaps for the new industries and engage with education and training providers to meet these demands.

However Conference recognises that climate change is already happening and that we are experiencing the highest temperatures on record year after year. Other extreme weather events such as storms resulting in floods and damage to buildings and infra-structure have become more frequent. This poses threats to coastal communities here and abroad and significant costs on local authorities as well as national governments.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

A Just Transition is therefore not just about the energy sector workers but many other workers and communities also. Therefore we recognise this is an issue that all members have a stake in and should be encouraged to take part in the efforts to win the political arguments and to participate in the creation of the low-carbon, climate change resilient society of the future.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support the Just Transition movement by building alliances with other trade unions, professional associations and environmental groups;
- 2) Demand government action to invest in new technologies, such as hydrogen, carbon capture, wave and tidal power, as part of a detailed industrial strategy to create new industries and jobs, educate and train today and tomorrow's workers;
- 3) Produce material for members on Just Transition, support activities to promote awareness of the issues of climate change such as Green UNISON Days and other collective actions of workers, and refresh advice to branches on negotiating policies to reduce energy use and meet carbon reduction targets.

*South Lanarkshire*

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### 113.1

Add at the end of the motion, add:

"Conference welcomes the recent upsurge of monthly school student and college student strikes that have occurred across the country and internationally in hundreds of towns and cities. Further we urge our union at national, regional and branch level to build links and provide support to these inspiring student protests and campaigns to save our planet."

*Hackney*

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### 114. UNISON Climate Change Declaration

UNISON is the largest trade union in the country with over 1.3 million members. It is in a unique position to influence members, trade unions, employers and government.

Conference notes that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, published in October 2018, describes the enormous harm that a 2°C rise is likely to cause compared with a 1.5°C rise, and confirms that limiting global warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities and others.

As well as increasing temperatures and more extreme weather, human activities are also having a catastrophic impact on nature. The worldwide population of mammals, birds, fish and aquatic creatures, amphibians and reptiles have plunged by almost 60 percent, since 1970. Current rates of species extinction are 100 to 1,000 times higher than the 'standard rate' of extinction. There are also huge health impacts associated with fossil fuels, for example, air pollution causes 40,000 excess deaths every year in the UK and reduces average life span globally by two years.



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To reduce the chance of runaway global warming and limit the effects of climate breakdown, it is imperative that, as a species, we reduce our CO<sub>2</sub>eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from their current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than two tonnes as soon as possible. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, infrastructure etc., to make low carbon living easier and the new norm. The good news is there are many social, environmental and economic benefits in doing so.

We welcome action by London, Bristol and other cities around the world to declare and commit resources to tackling a 'Climate Emergency'.

For the sake of future generations we urge UNISON to join with these councils and to be a leading example in the fight against climate change. To show leadership and become the first major trade union to declare a Climate Emergency.

Conference calls the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Declare a Climate Emergency;
- 2) Work with other Trade Unions (both within the UK and Internationally) to also declare a Climate Emergency;
- 3) Pledge to make UNISON carbon neutral by 2030;
- 4) Call on Government to provide powers and resources to make this possible;
- 5) Develop a detailed Action Plan and report back within six months with an update on the actions being taken to address the Climate Emergency.

***Environment Agency Midland***

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### **114.1**

Add at the end of motion add:

"Conference welcomes the recent upsurge of monthly school student and college student strikes that have occurred across the country and internationally in hundreds of towns and cities. Further we urge our union at national, regional and branch level to build links and provide support to these inspiring student protests and campaigns to save our planet."

***Hackney***

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### **115.UNISON to become much more proactive in reducing its carbon emissions**

UNISON says that carbon emissions must be reduced, but much more needs to be done to reduce its own carbon footprint; to start we should:

- 1) Be aware of and work harder to reduce the huge amount of single-use plastic used by UNISON. For example the entirely unnecessary magazine wrappers, promotional materials in wholly superfluous packing etc;
- 2) Use video conference facilities more widely for straightforward meetings. Already our remotest areas are familiar with the options and adept at using many

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

platforms. Unfortunately, some of the more urban areas have not embraced the technology so well. This means that the carbon emissions caused by all that travel is much higher than necessary.

UNISON becomes much more proactive in reducing its carbon emissions by actively considering the impact its activities have on the wider environment, by reducing the amount of single-use plastic in and on its products and publications and adopts video conferencing more widely.

### *Western Isles Health*

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#### **115.1**

In point 2) delete in first sentence “Use” and replace with “Consider using” and delete “more widely for straightforward meetings” and replace “where practicable”.

Insert a new point:

“3) Assess UNISON’s carbon footprint and how it can be reduced.”

In final paragraph delete from last line “more widely” and replace “where practicable”.

### *National Executive Council*

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Health

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#### **116.The NHS Long Term Plan**

Conference notes the publication in January 2019 of the Long Term Plan for the NHS in England.

The plan follows on from the government’s announcement of an extra £20.5 billion for the NHS by 2023/24, but Conference notes that this money does not include crucial education and training budgets, still less anything extra for public health or social care.

Conference welcomes a number of aspects of the plan – particularly the focus on improving mental health services and the suggested options for legislative change which would remove the worst aspects of the NHS market – and is concerned by others, such as expanding the use of personal health budgets and aiming for yet more “efficiency savings” from administrative budgets.

However, Conference believes that the major issue with the plan is its inability to provide more concrete proposals for the health and care workforce, with a separate workforce strategy yet to materialise and a number of aspects dependent on future funding commitments from the government.

Conference is concerned that the continued failure by the government to publish its social care green paper, along with cuts to public health and other local government services, threatens to undermine the goal of a more joined-up health and care service.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

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- 1) Continue campaigning for improved funding for our NHS, public health and social care;
- 2) Work with other unions and allies to influence the implementation of the plan and the development of the workforce strategy;
- 3) Pursue all opportunities to rid the NHS of damaging and wasteful market mechanisms.

### *Newcastle Hospitals*

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#### **116.1**

Add an additional action point:

"4) Seek to ensure that all decisions relating to the plan are made with the involvement of the NHS Trade Unions and are fully accountable to patients and local communities who rely on the NHS."

### *Mid Yorkshire Health*

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#### **117. Abolish Trust/Foundation Status in the NHS**

The introduction of trust status to our NHS by John Major's government in the 1990s and subsequently foundation trust status by Tony Blair's Labour Government were a drive towards the privatisation of our NHS.

Conference calls on the next Labour government to abolish trust/foundation trust status and the reinstatement of the government's duty to provide key NHS services throughout England, including hospitals, medical and nursing services, primary care, mental health and community services as a step towards reversing the marketisation/privatisation of our NHS.

### *Medway Health*

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#### **117.1**

Add a third paragraph:

"Conference believes the division of the NHS into a series of unelected, corporatised quangos must be reversed if it is to be rescued from the clutches of big business. Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs), NHS Improvement (NHSi), and the numerous other quangos within the service must be replaced. Therefore the full democratisation of the NHS is a necessity with local and accountable decision making at its core."

### *Mid Yorkshire Health*

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#### **118. Abolish NHS Car Parking Charges**

The exorbitant cost of car parking at hospitals and GP surgeries is putting an increasing financial burden on patients and carers, especially women who are traditionally the main carers for elderly family and children who need routine and regular appointments. For more serious ailments and long term stays in hospital, the cost become so expensive that it places additional pressures on families.

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The Press Association has found that NHS Trusts made more than £226 million in 2017/18 from car parking charges and penalty fines and that most hospitals also charge for disabled parking. These costs are variable depending where you live, but the cost to carers living in the South East of England will usually be higher than most other regions. Hospital car parking charges in Scotland and Wales were abolished in 2008 but this practice has not been followed in England. Although car parking charges still exist in Northern Ireland, allowances for free parking have been made for patients receiving radiotherapy or chemotherapy treatment, renal dialysis and for next of kin visiting patients in critical care or a high dependency unit.

Charities such as MacMillan Cancer and groups such as the Patients Association have said that hospital car parking charges are morally wrong, especially for disabled patients and those who have to attend hospital for life saving treatment, i.e. radiotherapy. The Patients Association also stated that the claim from hospitals that car parking revenue is reinvested back into patient care and front line services is simply not true.

The economic value of the contributions made by carers in the UK is £132 billion a year. The majority of carers are fed up and angry with the government making money from their unpaid labour and that they actually have to pay (via charges such as hospital car park costs) in order to carry out their role. Conference believes that NHS England can do more to ensure that patients and carers are not made to pay what amounts to a financial penalty.

Conference believes that the government should take action to limit this unfair financial burden. Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with Labour Link, National Self Organised Groups, Young Members and other committees and department and external agencies as necessary to develop a national campaign and lobby government for a review and cessation of car parking charges at hospitals in England as has been achieved in both Scotland and Wales.

*Waverley*

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Education

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### **119. End the attacks on our education system**

Education is the lifeblood of a fair and successful society. It is an engine of economic success and a vehicle for tackling inequality and delivering social justice. However, since 2010, government funding cuts (transmitted to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland through the Barnett Formula) have decimated the education sector. The blind pursuit of political ideology and dogma has led to the breaking up and undermining of our education systems.

Since 2010, real terms cuts in school funding across the UK has led to significant job losses and outsourcing of support services. A UNISON Scotland study showed that around 20% of support staff jobs have gone since 2010, whilst in England there have been cuts of around 10% in Teaching Assistants since 2013. Job cuts have also hit Cymru/ Wales and Northern Ireland with negative impact on school staff morale. Remaining staff have a greatly increased workload and an expanded range of duties to perform. A UNISON survey of school office staff – a shockingly undervalued group - reported that 87% were concerned at their increased workload.

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Further education has seen even more disruption. As the so called 'Cinderella of Education', it is subject to less public scrutiny and Tory ministers at Westminster often have little knowledge of the sector. Constant reorganisation and the heaviest funding cuts in education have taken their toll, with widespread job losses and course closures. The removal of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) hit participation rates in the sector too.

In England, the scrapping of the NHS bursary is on course to do the same for the training of nursing and allied health professionals. Higher Education also suffers from weak governance, which has seen huge increases in Vice Chancellor and senior manager pay, whilst the majority of staff have had below inflation pay rises. Changes in legislation in Scotland which has introduced the role of a trade union governor, elections of Chairs of governing bodies and further increased student representation on governing boards is an example of good practice that should be replicated in other parts of the UK.

Conference welcomes the Labour Party policy proposal for a new National Education Service in England that would provide a cradle to grave opportunity for equal access to education – particularly relevant given UNISON's recent early years survey which said 40% of branches said they had school or local authority nurseries facing closure and how per pupil funding for 16/17 year olds has been frozen since 2013 resulting in cuts to courses and student support. However, Conference notes that this would need to come with significant additional funding in order to succeed and that the UK government must properly support the governments of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to deliver world class education systems.

In light of the above, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for:
  - a) Increased education funding, particularly in early years and halt the closure of children's centres;
  - b) An end to the academies and free school programmes in England and with a move back to a coherent local education system and national education services appropriate to each UK country;
  - c) The abolition of grammar schools and of charitable status for private schools;
  - d) An end to the low pay and low status culture for school support staff;
  - e) An end to outsourcing of education services;
  - f) A face to face independent and impartial careers advice and guidance service;
  - g) Additional funding for Special Educational Needs (SEN);
  - h) The Education Maintenance Allowance, the NHS bursary and fully funded disabled student allowance;
- 2) Campaign for no further restructuring or new types of education establishment and a period of stability in education policy;

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 3) Reassert the benefits of a public, properly funded and free education service based on ability to learn not pay;
- 4) Work with the political funds, other unions and the WTUC, STUC and ICTU to fight for a democratically accountable, publicly funded, comprehensive education system.

*Lincolnshire*

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### **120.Higher Education as a Public Service**

Conference notes since the introduction of tuition fees, the idea of higher education as a public service, available to all based on educational merit, has been ruthlessly attacked. Fees at the vast majority of institutions are now £9,250 and universities are forced to develop marketing strategies to compete for students, who are seen as customers buying degrees as a product.

Introducing competition into higher education has been and continues to be a disaster for students, education workers and all working people, irrespective of their involvement in university life. Whilst many public services delivered by local authorities and the NHS are being relentlessly starved of funds, the elaborate system of student loans for fees is a con trick designed to fiddle the accounts and ultimately extract profits from future generations of graduates, as if young people don't have enough to worry about.

The speed of change is forcing vice-chancellors to turn their institutions into businesses, with the inevitable impact on jobs, terms and conditions of our members. Unprofitable courses are being cut and campuses are closed, whilst students are crammed into sub-standard classrooms and ripped off by private landlords, or unaffordable university halls.

The review of higher education funding, in the hands of such a reactionary government, will inevitably mean an attack on our members' jobs and education as a public service.

The trade union movement has a responsibility to defend higher education as a public service and the workers providing and supporting it.

To return higher education to a service free to all, fully funded from taxation, and to write off all loans would cost billions. However, this is entirely possible given the colossal wealth which exists in the hands of the rich and the billions wasted on armaments etc.

A clear call for free education, combined with an end to fees and effective taxation of the rich, will gain a major echo from millions of working people looking for an alternative to cuts and privatisation.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Be loud and clear in campaigning for free and properly funded education at all levels and for all ages;

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Identify and implement a strategy to make free education a major theme of UNISON's political campaigning, with emphasis on recruiting young workers and students into the trade union movement.

*University of Brighton*

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Social Policy

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### **121.STOPPING SOCIAL INSECURITY**

The damning report of the United Nations Human Rights Rapporteur found that in the UK “14 million people, a fifth of the population, live in poverty. Four million of these are more than 50% below the poverty line, and 1.5 million are destitute, unable to afford basic essentials. The widely respected Institute for Fiscal Studies predicts a 7% rise in child poverty between 2015 and 2022, and various sources predict child poverty rates of as high as 40%. For almost one in every two children to be poor in twenty-first century Britain is not just a disgrace, but a social calamity and an economic disaster, all rolled into one.”

On Universal Credit the Rapporteur said that social support should be a route out of poverty, and a universal credit should be a key part of that process. Consolidating six different benefits into one makes good sense, in principle. But many aspects of the design and rollout of the programme have suggested that the Department for Work and Pensions and The Treasury are more concerned with making economic savings and sending messages about lifestyles than responding to the multiple needs of those living with a disability, job loss, housing insecurity, food poverty, illness, and the demands of parenting.

This is highlighted by the Government's failure to honour the commitment that it made in the 2010 white paper that no-one would lose as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit.

Conference notes:

- 1) The £1,000 per annum increase in Universal Credit work allowance for families with children and disabled people;
- 2) The delay to the roll out of 'managed migration' – the moving of existing claimants of legacy benefits to Universal Credit;
- 3) The decision not to retrospectively apply the two child limit to Universal Credit claims made after 31 January 2019;
- 4) The decision not to 'naturally migrate' people in receipt of Severe Disability Premium and that they should only transfer to Universal Credit through the managed migration process to guarantee that they receive transitional protection, and the decision to mitigate the financial loss of those that have already been 'naturally migrated';
- 5) The High Court judgement (11 January 2019) that the Department of Work and Pension's interpretation of regulation 54 (calculation of earned income) used in the calculation of Universal Credit entitlement is flawed (this refers to the issue UNISON describes as the 'pay date effect');

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- 6) The proposed two week roll on of Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Income Support (IS);
- 7) The invitation to UNISON to participate in the stakeholder group to inform the design of the managed migration process due to our experience of state benefits;
- 8) That in January 2019 1.4m people were in receipt of Universal Credit and that that figure is expected to rise by a further 1.6m during 2019;
- 9) The research by the Resolution Foundation showing that 2.4 million families on legacy benefits will be better off on Universal Credit while 3.2 million will be worse off.

Conference objects to these punitive measures and notes both the concessions made so far and also the role that UNISON has played alongside the Work and Pensions Select Committee, the Labour, Liberal Democrat, Plaid Cymru, Green and Scottish National Parties and some Conservative MPs, the TUC, voluntary sector organisations such as Child Poverty Action Group, think tanks such as the Resolution Foundation, religious organisations and civil society at large in working to secure these changes.

Composite D, passed at NDC 2018, clearly set out the impact of planned changes to Universal Credit on UNISON members and disabled members in particular.

Conference believes that despite these changes Universal Credit created, by its design, a 'hostile environment' for people on low incomes; that Universal Credit remains fundamentally flawed; that as a 'brand' Universal Credit is now seen as toxic and has lost public confidence; and radical change is now required for the whole benefits system.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council working with Labour Link where appropriate, with MPs, MSPs, AMs and Councillors, with the TUC and other trade unions, with the voluntary sector, religious organisations and civil society organisations to continue to influence public opinion so that the implementation of Universal Credit is stopped. Fundamental changes for a modern social security system must include sufficient funding to support the multiple needs of those living with a disability, job loss, housing insecurity, illness, and the demands of parenting, be fair, provide a quality service that is quick to respond, easily accessible, delivered through an integrated national and local framework, and leaves people with dignity. The system itself must be administered in line with the public service ethos, based on compassion and inclusion, which is best provided in the public sector by a well resourced and adequately staff service.

The changes should retain the positive aspects – one claim, the extra support received by some groups of claimants, disregarding 100% of pension contributions, the use of digital technology (but with expanded choice in the ways to make a claim to prevent digital exclusion) and result in the launch of a modern social security system with a new title and vision.



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Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for the implementation of Universal Credit to be stopped and for fundamental changes to be made, including:

- a) Ending the five week wait for the first payment, making the first payment within 7 days of the claim so claimants have no need to take an advance and get into debt;
- b) The extension of protection to those that 'naturally migrate' to Universal Credit to honour the commitment made in the 2010 White Paper;
- c) The introduction of choice for claimants in relation to:
  - i) Payment of the housing element to landlords;
  - ii) Payment frequency (weekly, fortnightly or monthly);
  - iii) Split payments;
- d) Measures that ensure the financial independence of women;
- e) The removal of sanctions for failing to attend a jobcentre appointment or telephone call and specifically to remove sanctions for refusing to accept a zero hours contract or for leaving a zero hours contract;
- f) Ensuring that UC payments equate to at least existing legacy benefit and tax credit rates, including all premiums payable for disability and restoring work allowances to at least the original position and increasing Universal Credit allowances so that they return to their real original value (in line with the Retail Price Index);
- g) Repealing the two child limit;
- h) Limiting the total amount that can be deducted for repayments of advances, overpayments of legacy benefits or third party debts to no more than 10% of the standard allowance element of the Universal Credit claim;
- i) Varying the date on which the assessment period begins to avoid the pay date effect and fluctuating Universal Credit that prevent households from planning household finances;
- j) Removing the benefit cap on the total benefits per household;
- k) Removing the freeze on benefit increases.

***National Executive Council***

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### **121.1**

In action point e) after "The removal of" insert "all unnecessary Universal Credit sanctions including"

After i) insert two new action points as follows:

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“j) Introducing a change that will average earnings across longer periods to reflect the reality that many employees, as well as self-employed people, have irregular earnings and varying pay cycles;”

“k) Ending the Bedroom Tax in both the housing benefit and housing element of Universal Credit”.

Add new action point at end: “Reforming work capability assessments to take a person centred and holistic approach to claimants based on medical knowledge and specialist advice on labour market disadvantage and the barriers disabled people face.”

### *National Disabled Members' Committee*

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#### **121.2**

In the paragraph beginning ‘Conference notes ...’, add a new sub-paragraph:

"7) The removal, on fifteenth May 2019, of Pension Credit and pension-age Housing Benefit from couples where one partner is over state pension age and the other under that age. Dubbed ‘The Toyboy Tax’, this change forces couples on to Universal Credit instead, typically making them £579 a month worse off."

Re-number remaining sub-paragraphs accordingly.

In the final paragraph, add a new action point:

" l) Abolishing the Toy Boy Tax."

### *City of Wolverhampton*

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#### **122.Upholding Human Rights in the Social Security System**

Conference notes the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston (16 November 2018) following his visit to the United Kingdom. The statement highlights that it is “patently unjust” that in the world’s fifth largest economy which contains many areas of immense wealth that so many live in poverty.

The Special Rapporteur highlights the shocking reality that across the UK, 14 million people live in poverty, with child poverty rates predicted by some to be as high as 40%. Conference agrees with Professor Alston’s conclusion that “for almost one in every two children to be poor...is not just a disgrace, but a social calamity and an economic disaster, all rolled into one.”

Conference agrees with the Special Rapporteur that more and more working people are trapped in poverty by a “rising tide of low pay, debt, and high living costs” and that “being in employment does not magically overcome poverty”.

The Special Rapporteur highlights:

- 1) That in-work poverty is increasingly common with 2.8 million people living in poverty in families where all adults work full time;

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- 2) The shocking reality that low wages, insecure jobs, and zero hour contracts mean that even at record unemployment there are still 14 million people in poverty, with one in six people referred to Trussell Trust food banks being in work;
- 3) How Universal Credit is “fast falling into Universal Discredit” due to the severe hardships being suffered by claimants often waiting as long as 12 weeks to receive benefits, pushing them into debt, rent arrears and being forced to choose between food or heat;
- 4) How capping benefit amounts to working-age households, limiting support to two children per family, reducing the Housing Benefit for under-occupied social housing, and reducing the value of a wide range of benefits, have all made it much harder for people to make ends meet.

Conference notes the conclusion of the Special Rapporteur that the huge cuts in spending for local authorities in England has led to cuts to preventative, proactive services, including the closures of libraries and children’s centres and a focus instead on crisis intervention, which in reality is more costly than preventative services.

Conference further notes the conclusion of the Special Rapporteur that local government is even struggling to provide their basic statutory services, including frontline child protection services.

The Special Rapporteur states that it is “outrageous” that the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern have to spend resources to shield people from the impact of UK Government policy, whilst also suffering significant reductions in block grant funding.

Conference notes that in Northern Ireland, despite the promise of the peace agreements, policy and resource allocation decisions continue to be taken outside of an equality and human rights framework which has led to persistently high levels of poverty, major inequalities in housing and in peoples’ health and educational outcomes, and continuing austerity and welfare cuts. Northern Ireland has no Anti-Poverty Strategy based on objective need, in breach of the legal duties introduced from the peace agreements. Conference notes the warning of the Special Rapporteur that the £500 million mitigation package established by the Northern Ireland Executive against welfare cuts is set to run out in 2020, and its expiration could have dire consequences for people living in poverty, leading to a ‘cliff edge’ unless alternative arrangements are put in place.

Conference agrees with the Special Rapporteur that the costs of austerity have fallen disproportionately upon the poor, women, racial and ethnic minorities, children, single parents, and people with disabilities.

Conference further agrees with Professor Alston’s conclusion that the UK Government has “remained determinedly in a state of denial” about the true effect of the disastrous austerity policies and welfare cuts that it has implemented. Conference agrees with the Special Rapporteur that key elements of the post-war Beveridge social contract are being overturned.

## 2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference believes that the findings of the Special Rapporteur are a damning indictment of the Conservative's continuing austerity agenda, that the evidence that this breaches fundamental human rights is overwhelming and that austerity and welfare cuts have inflicted untold misery on our members and the most vulnerable throughout society.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Campaign for a social security system that upholds human rights and ends poverty for those in and out of work, including significant changes to Universal Credit, the ending of the two-child cap for child tax credits and the ending of discrimination against disabled people going through the PIP assessment process;
- b) Continue to campaign against the ideologically driven austerity agenda at Westminster, which in turn has led to massive reductions in the block grant for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland;
- c) Campaign for progressive taxation to fund public services, which places the burden for properly funding public services on those who can most afford it and for tougher actions against tax avoidance schemes, which deprive public services of much needed resources;
- d) Support the Northern Ireland region in campaigning against a 'cliff edge' scenario of no welfare mitigation funding beyond 2020;
- e) Given the vulnerability of the lowest paid, and women workers in particular, to poverty, link these campaigning activities to our bargaining strategy, including our ongoing campaigns for a real Living Wage based on the recommendations of the Living Wage Foundation to be the minimum standard of pay for all workers and our campaign to eliminate the gender pay gap.

### *Northern Ireland Region*

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#### **123. Universal Credit in-work conditionality**

Conference notes the government set out in-work conditionality in regulation 90 of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013. These rules mean that anyone earning less than their individual earnings threshold (or joint earnings threshold for a couple) will be subject to in-work conditionality and sanctions by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The threshold is set by multiplying the national minimum wage by the expected hours that Job Centre Plus sets (usually 35 hours but can be adjusted in certain circumstances). This figure is then multiplied by 52 and divided by 12.

This is a fundamental shift in the benefits system and for the first time part-time workers whose wages are supplemented by in-work benefits will be expected to make efforts to increase their income. This may include increasing the hours worked, finding extra work or finding a new job with a higher income. This also means that families earning higher rates of pay will have to work fewer hours than the lowest paid to be free of the strictures of in-work conditionality.

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Many UNISON members work part time for charities, voluntary agencies and local authorities who cannot extend the working hours of their employees, even though they may wish to, owing to the financial constraints imposed by austerity.

Conference also notes that the main in-work conditionality rules are currently suspended under rules which mean that (unless an individual is selected for the 'in-work pilot scheme') anyone earning over £338 per month (for single people) or £541 per month (for couples) will not be subject to in-work conditionality. Nevertheless, the principle of in-work conditionality has been set out in the legislation so we can be quite clear about what is planned and as a union with many part time workers UNISON needs to prepare members for when in-work conditionality is rolled out.

Conference is clear that workplaces with high, and well organised, trade union membership are the best ways of delivering higher wages.

Conference instructs National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign against the roll out of Universal Credit in its current guise;
- 2) Produce guidance that helps employers of workers in public service employers understand the difficulties that will be created by in work progression. For example, they may see their part time employees called to regular interviews with DWP and subject to sanctions which may make it difficult for them to afford to keep working in their existing jobs. They may have problems with higher turnover and lose good quality part time staff who they may wish to retain;
- 3) Consider how UNISON's workplace learning activities can promote career and wage progression in areas of work with a low paid, part time and undervalued workforce such as the care sector;
- 4) Promote guidance for branches on negotiating effective flexible working policies with employers which will benefit members who need a set number of part time hours because of caring or child care responsibilities;
- 5) Continue to campaign for the raising of the National Minimum Wage to (at least) the level of the real living wage and the removal of exemptions for younger workers.

***UNISON Essex***

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### **123.1**

In point 5) insert after "Minimum Wage to" the words "ten pounds an hour or"

Add new point 6):

"6) Work with other unions, the TUC and Employers organisations for the replacement of in-work conditionality with a system of support and assistance that is designed to encourage in-work progression. It would enable part time workers to increase their hours, all workers to secure training and/or skills development and it would encourage employers to promote in work progression."

***National Executive Council***

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### **124. Universal Credit**

Conference recognises that Universal Credit has become a toxic brand and that any positive aspects of the move to a simplified universal benefit system, replacing a variety of different and complicated benefits, has been lost by the suffering and humiliation caused by the chaos of the implementation of the Tories attack on benefits.

The brutality of sanctions for missing appointments or for refusing a zero-hours contract job; the two child limit; the failure to protect the income of people 'naturally migrating on to Universal Credit; the refusal to allow choice in relation to payment of the housing element to landlords or payment frequency; the pay frequency penalty when two pays are received in the one month; are all examples of what is wrong with this Tory benefit-cutting scheme.

Conference welcomes UNISON's significant efforts to highlight the injustices of Universal Credit and, working with other organisations, to put pressure on the Government to achieve reforms to it and to delay its wider roll out.

Conference recognises the limited steps that the Scottish Government have taken to mitigate against some of the worst aspects of Universal Credit but recognises that this does not change the fundamental injustices of the system. More responsibilities in relation to social security have been devolved to the Scottish Parliament and this has created opportunities for a limited but more humane system to be developed.

Conference believes that Universal Credit, as designed and delivered by the Tory Government, is not fit for purpose, that it is being used to harass those unfortunate enough to have to rely on benefits and that its design to reduce the overall cost of benefits victimises the most vulnerable in society.

Therefore Conference supports calls for, as soon as possible, Universal Credit to be replaced with a modern social security that can support the multiple needs of disabled people, unemployed workers, the ill, carers and those living with housing insecurity. The system must be fair, provide a quality service that is quick to respond, be easily accessible and delivered through an integrated national and local framework, treating people with dignity.

In the meantime we call on the National Executive Council to continue to campaign to ensure that any further roll out of Universal Credit and any migration of people from legacy benefits to Universal Credit will result in no loss of income to claimants and that new claimants receive no less than they would have received if qualifying for the legacy benefits.

*South Lanarkshire*

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### **125. Universal Credit / PIP Assessments**

In order for the next Labour government to achieve its aim of dignity for those who cannot work it has become clear that merely pausing and reforming the Conservative's disastrous Universal Credit system is no longer enough.

While unnecessary top down reform should be avoided where possible, it has become all too clear that there is no way for the inherent flaws in Universal Credit to

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be reformed and instead we will need a root and branch reform of the welfare system in order to make it fit for purpose and to ensure that social security provides a safety net for those in need of support, not a punitive attack on the most vulnerable in our society.

While a move towards a simplified benefits system is to be welcomed, Universal Credit has proven, in its limited roll out so far, to be unworkable, riddled with inherently hostile assumptions about those needing to claim benefits and designed purely to save money rather than meet the needs of claimants.

Conference therefore calls on UNISON Labour Link to raise our opposition to Universal Credit at every level of the Labour Party and seek support for a change in Labour policy to:

- 1) Pledge to deliver a welfare and benefit system that starts from a position of no detriment to current claimants while removing the punitive sanctions and unbearably long waits for benefits that have been a prime driver in the horrific rise in food bank use, homelessness and child poverty;
- 2) Oppose the PIP assessment checks by private agencies which have attacked disabled people with a sole focus of attacking their rights reducing benefit entitlements and showing utter disrespect to vulnerable people.

*Manchester*

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### 125.1

In the fourth paragraph, after “Labour Link” delete the following “to raise our opposition to Universal Credit at every level of the Labour Party and seek support for a change in Labour Policy to:” and replace with:

“to argue at every level of the Labour Party that Universal Credit remains fundamentally flawed; that as a ‘brand’ Universal Credit is now seen as toxic and has lost public confidence; that radical change is now required for the whole benefits system and seek support for a change in Labour policy to:”

In point 1) delete “Pledge to deliver welfare and benefit system that starts from a position of no detriment to current claimants” and replace with:

“Pledge to ensure that those moving to Universal Credit (or other systems that replace it) through natural or managed migration receive at least the amount they would have received under legacy benefits and that the financial structure is reformed to address the losses faced as a result of the freeze to in work benefits and the changes that have adversely affected disabled people and single parents in particular.”

Also in point 1) delete “while removing” and replace with “Remove” to create a second sentence.

*National Executive Council*

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**Efficient and Effective Union**

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

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### **Branch Funding**

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#### **126.RESOURCING OUR BRANCHES - A UNISON PRIORITY**

Conference notes that UNISON's branches are of key importance in the provision of support for members and their responsibilities are ever increasing. The reduction of employers in national bargaining arrangements and the significant fragmentation of the workforce point to this trend.

Many branches now deal with hundreds of employers, receiving no consolidated facility time and no additional resource.

Conference notes that the topic of branch resourcing has been debated for many years but there is now a pressing need to ensure branches have sufficient stable and sustainable resource levels.

As demands on the whole union increase, consideration now needs to be given to how the union as a whole is funded, so that branches can be resourced in a way that better meets the union's objectives and the needs of members with particular reference to direct organisational support for branches.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to ensure:

- 1) That a review of activity and expenditure at all levels of the union – national, regional and branch-level – is conducted to enable the prioritisation of union activity and expenditure with a view to redirecting additional resource to branches. This review will ensure that all UNISON spending, including the regional pool allocation, reflects the union's agreed objectives, is based on sound financial governance and ensures the highest levels of financial probity;
- 2) This review will be lay-member led and will commence immediately following Conference and be completed within two years. The review will be conducted by a review group comprising 12 members of the National Executive Council and one representative from each region;
- 3) Until completion of the review and agreement by Conference, an amended scheme of funding will be effective from 1st January 2020, based on the following principles for increasing branch funding:
  - a) For branches with reserves at or greater than £16 per member, the current funding formula will continue to apply. No branch will receive a lower level of funding than under the current funding formula;
  - b) Branches with reserves less than £16 per member will receive an increase in the standard entitlement of total annual subscription income from 20% to 25%;
  - c) If a branch holds reserves under £16 per member, and an increase in the standard entitlement would take the branch above £16 per member in reserves, that branch will only receive that portion of the increase in the standard entitlement which would take them up to £16 per member in reserves.



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- 4) That all additional percentage enhancements for branches with reserves below £16 per full member at the annual point of calculation will remain unchanged, except for 'Number 12: Branches with Multiple Employers' which will be amended effective from January 1st 2020 as follows:
- i) The number of employers relevant for the calculation will be employers which are defined as independent legal entities which have 5 or more UNISON members;
  - ii) Additional entitlements will follow these amended bandings:
    - A) More than 5 and less than 20: 0.5%;
    - B) More than 19 and less than 35: 1.0%;
    - C) More than 34 and less than 50: 1.5%;
    - D) More than 49 and less than 100: 2.0%;
    - E) More than 99 and less than 150: 2.5%;
    - F) More than 149 and less than 200: 3.0%;
    - G) More than 199 and less than 250: 3.5%;
    - H) More than 249 and less than 300: 4.5%;
    - I) More than 299 and less than 350: 5.0%;
    - J) More than 349 and less than 400: 5.5%;
    - K) More than 399: 6.0%.
  - iii) If a branch holds reserves under £16 per member, and an increase due to their multiple employer entitlement would take the branch above £16 per member in reserves, that branch will only receive that portion of the increase which would take them up to £16 per member in reserves;
- 5) To align with the current branch funding formula, for branches with less than 501 members an absolute reserves base of £8,000 will be used instead of £16 per member;
- 6) That the Activity-Based Budgeting system of budget 'top-ups' agreed at National Delegate Conference in 2016 will be deleted, in favour of the funding increase set out in points 3-5 above.

**National Executive Council  
Manchester  
West Sussex**

## **2019 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

In the paragraph that starts "As demands on the whole union increase" after "the needs of members" insert ", including those who rely on self-organised groups to ensure their voices are heard,"

At the end of action point 2) insert "and one representative from each national self organised group committee".

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

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#### **126.2**

At end add new point 7):

"7) That the Regional Pool, under lay member control at Regional level, can continue to provide additional funding allocations to branches in support of UNISON's organising agenda. During the period of the amended scheme of funding which will be effective from 1 January 2020 (outlined at point 3 above), the total funding allocation to the Regional Pool will be protected at the 2019 level of funding allocation to the Regional Pool."

### ***North West Region***

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#### **127.Reduction in branch funding**

Conference believes that the legitimacy of branch funding reductions, due to branches achieving less than 50% National Delegate Conference attendance of their delegation, is predicated on trust and confidence in the systems, human and electronic, used to register delegate entry into each conference session.

Conference notes that branches who legitimately believe their delegation had met the minimum criteria for 50% National Delegate Conference attendance, have nonetheless had their funding reduced following an unsuccessful appeal. And that the evidence used by the union to justify such funding reductions is based on the systems, human and electronic, used to register delegate entry into each conference session.

Conference believes that no system is infallible in operation. And that legitimacy, trust and confidence, is eroded when our union bases decisions to reduce branch funding by many thousands of pounds on such systems being infallible. Furthermore, there appears to be no reliable and robust method such as an app by which branches could verify the attendance of their delegates that contradicted the systems put in place by the union.

Our branches employ people, and branches rely on full and reliable funding to ensure our members receive the best possible service. They also run on the goodwill of activists who may feel that despite their best efforts and honest endeavours in attending conference, that their union calls into question their honesty and integrity by giving primacy to systems of recording conference session attendance that this conference believes are not infallible.

Conference, by such means legitimacy and confidence in our union is potentially undermined.

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Conference calls upon the National Executive Council, in consultation with branches and regions, to institute a full and urgent review of the systems used to record conference session attendance, and to subsequently bring forward a motion to be considered by National Delegate Conference 2020 with the aim of ensuring the most reliable, robust and verifiable systems are in place thereafter.

*Leicestershire County*

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### **127.1**

Delete last paragraph and replace with:

“Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to institute a review to encourage branches to send full delegations to Conferences and of the systems used to record conference session attendance and to subsequently bring forward a motion to be considered by National Delegate Conference 2021 with the aim of ensuring the most reliable, robust and cost effective systems are in place thereafter.”

*National Executive Council*

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### Resources

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#### **128.A National Case Management system for UNISON branches**

Conference notes that UNISON’s approach to managing casework in branches is paper based and relies on the completion and processing of CASE forms. Branches use varying methods for handling this information, some using spreadsheets for summarising and querying cases and some using purely paper-based systems. While some branches have experimented with online alternatives, this is limited in scope and the data is only held at branch level. Casework data is our critical business information for supporting our members. From it, we can determine and predict: trends in types of case work, time spent on cases, training needs for reps, members and specific teams, summary information on cases from each branch and region, activity of stewards handling cases and regional support needed for cases to be referred. There is currently no way of easily querying this information coherently at a branch, regional and national level because there is no overarching system to capture and manage the data. A national, online database system to handle cases for all UNISON branches would offer significant benefits for the union, enabling us to plan our resources to organise around the issues in every employer, branch and region. The system would be an effective organising tool and keep our union at the forefront of the British trade union movement by supporting and enhancing our ability to plan strategically using the information collected. Conference notes that such a system already exists and is used at regional offices and believes the same benefits should be available to branches. The system for branches should incorporate the following features:

- 1) Linked to the national membership database (RMS);
- 2) Securely accessible from an internet browser and mobile platforms;
- 3) Capture all relevant information for case processing;
- 4) Flexible enough to be adapted to changes in employment law;

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5) Accessible to activists and branch employed staff and easy to learn.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Consult with all relevant levels of the union to define the requirements of a branch-based CASE system;
- b) Set out a clear timetable for the introduction of this system at branch level;
- c) Report back to regions and branches on progress at regular intervals;
- d) Ensure a dedicated committee or sub - committee of the National Executive Council retains responsibility and funding for the ongoing maintenance and development of the system once installed;
- e) Manage the deployment of the system to users, including providing appropriate training.

***Northamptonshire County***

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### **129.On-Line Joiners**

Conference instructs the national union to:

- 1) Ensure that on-line joiners pay the same subscription rates, if they pay by Direct Debit, as those paying by Deduction of Contributions at Source (DOCAS);
- 2) Re-instate the facility (in the relevant branches where it has been stopped) for on-line joiners to pay subscriptions by DOCAS;
- 3) Ensure that the ability to join on-line and pay by DOCAS, is “rolled-out” to all branches who request it where there is a DOCAS agreement with an employer.

***Kirklees***

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#### **129.1**

Replace the whole of action point 3) with:

“3) Ensure that the ability to join on-line and pay by DOCAS, is initially “rolled-out” to the largest 500 employers where there is a DOCAS agreement.”

***National Executive Council***

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### **130.Membership Subscription Payments**

UNISON, and its members, have changed over our 25 years. One such change is that Deduction of Contributions at Source (DOCAS) is no longer the means by which most members, in most employers pay their subscriptions. This migration is all the more profound in England, a consequence of the Trade Union Act. Another change is that many new members now join on-line and pay by Standing Order or Direct Debit, with the subscription level set by the salary they declare upon joining.

Understandably, after joining, the vast majority of our members have little involvement with the union and may not consider advising that their salary has

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increased due to pay awards or promotion. This need not be a problem to the individual unless they do find themselves in trouble and come to us for help. If, as the case form is completed, it emerges that the member's subscription is wrong, there can be issues over representation.

We call upon UNISON to run an annual all-member mailing, drawing their attention to the need to check that their subs and salary levels are correct and pointing out the risk they run if they are no longer.

*Cardiff County*

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Member Services

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### **131. Working Women and access to a refuge**

Women's Refuge Services provide a very important and potentially lifesaving service that provides a safe place for women to stay for those who are being subjected to domestic abuse in their home. Accessing Refuge services is a very difficult time and having to worry about how you will pay the fee to stay at a refuge makes an already difficult situation insurmountable.

Working women who are fleeing domestic violence and need to access refuge are often at a disadvantage as they usually are unable to claim housing benefit to cover their stay. At the point of referral for the refuge an income/housing benefit check with the local authority is carried out. Based on the amount of earnings, a woman may or may not be entitled to Housing Benefit. If the earnings are low enough and this will happen sometimes if there are children, she will be able to claim Housing Benefit. If a Woman claims Working Tax Credit as it is a means tested benefit it will usually mean they will be unable to claim Housing Benefit.

Women's Aid who provide refuges are voluntary and rely on the rental payment in order to maintain the refuge, this means that the same amount of rent must be charged for women who can claim Housing Benefit as those who cannot claim Housing Benefit and as the cost of staying at a refuge could be an average of £400 per week this makes accessing a refuge very difficult for a working woman.

This normally gives the woman a stark choice, which is either try and find the money to pay the rent and in a lot of cases the woman is unable to access monies due to them having joint accounts with the abusive partner or have other financial outgoings which makes the payment of rent to have a place at a refuge totally unobtainable, or to return to the home and the abusive partner which could result in danger to that person.

UNISON has a moral responsibility to ensure our members are safe and are able to access a place in a refuge to ensure their safety and wellbeing away from an abusive relationship. At present this means a lot of our members who work and are above the threshold which allows them to claim housing benefit are unable to find safety at a refuge when escaping from a dangerous and abusive relationship.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to lobby the Westminster and the devolved Governments to investigate what help can be given to working women who are seeking a place in a refuge to escape an abusive partner but are above the

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threshold to receive housing benefit but are unable to pay themselves due to their financial commitments and money being in joint accounts.

Conference requests that:

- 1) UNISON's welfare "There For You" look into how they may assist our members who seek a place in a refuge but are above the threshold where housing benefit can be claimed, but are unable to pay themselves due to their financial commitments and money being in joint accounts;
- 2) For the National Executive Council to report back to National Delegate Conference 2020, with what progress has been achieved.

*Cwm Taf Area*

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### Schedules

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#### Schedule B Members Benefits

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##### 1. Schedule B Benefits of Members in Education

In existing Schedule B 2.3 after "above" delete the full stop and insert "with the exception of holding office. Persons in this category of membership shall not be entitled to hold any office in the Union."

*National Executive Council*

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### Rules

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#### Rule B Aims and Objects of the Union

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##### 2. Rule B Union Democracy

###### B 2.3

Delete "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members" and insert "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members"

And

###### D 5.1.4

Delete "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members" and insert "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members"

*National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

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##### 3. Rule B Aims and Objectives of the Union

###### B 2.3

Delete "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members" and insert "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members"

*Imperial College  
Islington*

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Rule C Membership

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### **4. Rule C Obligations of Membership**

Delete current C 6.2 and replace with:

“C 6.2 Details of where the rulebook may be downloaded from the UNISON website will be provided to each new member when they join. Hard copies of the rulebook may be requested.”

*National Executive Council*

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### **5. Rule C Arrears of Subscriptions**

C 7.2.1

Delete "three months" and replace with "four weeks"

*West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport*

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Rule D Structure of the Union at National Level

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### **6. Rule D The Right to Attend and Speak**

D 1.7.1

Delete all after "National Executive Council"

*Manchester*

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### **7. Rule D Standing Orders Committee**

D 1.8.1.1

Delete all after "National Executive Council"

*Manchester*

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### **8. Rule D Standing Orders Committee**

D 1.8.1.2

Delete all.

*Manchester*

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### **9. Rule D Self-Organised Groups**

D 5.1.4

Delete “lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members” and insert “lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members”

*Imperial College  
Islington*

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### **10. Rule D Young Members' Organisation**

Insert a new rule after D 6.2.4:

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“D 6.2.5 The National Young Members Forum may establish a national conference of young members from branch and regional groups.”

*National Young Members' Forum*

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**11. Rule D Retired Members' Organisation**

D 7.8

Delete "Retired Members' National Committee" and replace with "National Retired Members' Committee"

*City of Wolverhampton*

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Rule G Branches

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**12. Rule G Branches**

Rule G 2.1.1:

After "elected annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 3.4.2:

After "the coming year" insert "or two years dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 4.1.2:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 5.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 7.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

Rule G 8.1:

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cardiff University  
City and County of Swansea  
Conwy County  
Neath and Port Talbot County  
Powys Health Care  
Welsh Government  
Wrexham County*

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**13. Rule G The Branch Committee**

After "elected annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*



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### 14. Rule G Branch Meetings

After "the coming year" insert "or two years dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*

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### 15. Rule G Branch Officers

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*

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### 16. Rule G Stewards

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*

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### 17. Rule G Health and Safety Representatives

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*

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### 18. Rule G Equality Representatives

After "annually" insert "or biennially, dependent on branch rules"

*Cymru/Wales and the South Gas*

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### 19. Rule G Branch Meetings

Insert a new Rule G 3.4.4:

"G 3.4.4 Agree any proposals for branch honoraria in line with the National scheme. Should the meeting be inquorate then these proposals should be considered by the Regional Council or the relevant delegated Lay body in the region."

Renumber existing Rules accordingly.

*National Executive Council*

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### 20. Rule G Branch Officers

In existing rule G 4.1.6 insert after "branch secretary," "branch chair"

*National Executive Council*

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### 21. Rule G The Branch Secretary

In G 4.2.4 at the end of the sentence insert the following: "and the law with particular reference to the Data Protection Act 2018".

*National Executive Council*

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Rule I Disciplinary Action and Appeals

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### 22. Rule I Disciplinary Action

I 8.5 Delete after "for" and add "a period not exceeding 24 months;"

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***Bolton Metropolitan***

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**23. Rule I Disciplinary Action**

I 8.6 Delete after "for" and add "a period not exceeding 24 months;"

***Bolton Metropolitan***

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**Amendment to Motions Ruled Out of Order**

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In breach of Rule D.2.12 Employment of Staff

**Motion 126 Resourcing Our Branches - a UNISON Priority**

In point 1), in the second sentence insert "and the Fighting Fund" after "including the regional pool allocation".

Insert point 7):

"7) Furthermore conference reaffirms its support for the additional organising capacity created following the introduction of the Fighting Fund. Conference agrees that until completion of the review and subsequent agreement by conference, the Fighting Fund will continue and on terms overall no less favourable."

***Eastern Region***

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Negative Amendment

**Motion 79 Nationalise the Big Drug Companies**

After "Conference calls for" replace the remaining wording with the following:

"the National Executive Council to give consideration to the pros and cons of campaigning for part nationalisation of sections of the drug industry or the use of state-run drug companies as a way of countering the lack of private investment in the sector and the failure of the sector to provide sufficient generic medicines."

***National Executive Council***

**Motion 83 Venezuela - Defeat Attempted Capitalist Coup**

Delete all inclusive from tenth paragraph starting "Despite opposing..." to point e) ending " ..joined Guaido protests"

Delete point ii)

***Halton***

**Motion 121 Stopping Social Insecurity**

Delete the remainder of the motion after "Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for" and replace with "Universal Credit to be completely scrapped and replaced with a fair welfare benefit system that restores the funding cut during the years of austerity."

***Portsmouth City***

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### **Motion 121 Stopping Social Insecurity**

Delete the remainder of the motion after "Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for" and replace with "Universal Credit to be completely scrapped and replaced with a fair welfare benefit system that restores the funding cut during the years of austerity.

- a) To support the national Stop and Scrap campaign called by DPAC, Mental Health Resistance Network, Housing campaigns and others;
- b) To support the TUC's call for the rollout to be halted now and for UC to be stopped and scrapped before it does any further damage to some of the lowest paid workers in the UK;
- c) To publicise the campaign to Stop and Scrap Universal Credit and to promote it to our members urging them to support the campaign;
- d) To work with UNISON Labour Link and other stakeholders including lobbying political parties in positions of power and influence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to promote the need for legislative change in relation to Universal Credit and its application;
- e) To call on Local Councils and Housing Associations to ensure that effective pre- eviction protocols are in place and enacted to mitigate against loss of tenancy as a result of benefit changes."

***Salford City***

### **Motion 121 Stopping Social Insecurity**

Replace:

"Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for the implementation of Universal credit to be stopped and for fundamental changes to be made, including:" with:

"Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Campaign for Universal Credit to be completely scrapped and replaced with a fair welfare benefit system that restores the funding cut during the years of austerity;
- B) Support the National Stop & Scrap campaign initiated by DPAC, Mental Health Resistance Network, Housing Campaigns and others;
- C) Use our influence to encourage the Labour party and other organisations who currently have a Pause and Fix approach and urge them to adopt and work with those who wish to stop and scrap Universal Credit;
- D) Call on Local Councils and Housing Associations not to evict tenants in rent arrears due to Universal Credit;
- E) Whilst campaigning for the full scrapping of UC to continue to support any changes which in it which are favourable to claimants including:"

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*Tower Hamlets*