**PROCEDURAL INFORMATION & GUIDANCE**

**AROUND THE AGM**

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1. **Introduction**

Welcome to Unison Welfare’s Annual General Meeting. These notes explain how the AGM is organised and are intended to help the administration and business run smoothly for you. We want this event to be open and welcoming for new and experienced delegates alike. The AGM can consist of a mixture of motions and reports to be debated and guest speakers. Please also refer to the charity’s Constitution and Rules for further information.

The AGM will be held at a time and venue that benefits the membership and taking full consideration of the best use of the Charity’s finances and resources.

1. **Composition of AGM**

The AGM is made up of the following groups:

1. Branch Welfare Officers or, other branch delegate if the Branch Welfare Officer is

 unable to attend.

1. Regional Welfare Committee Members
2. Members of the National Executive Council
3. Board of Trustees
4. Head of UNISON Welfare and other appropriate officials

[Note: Unison Welfare Constitution - Rule 11(a) (i)-(iv) are ‘delegates to the Annual General Meeting’ refers]

1. **Quorum**

The quorum for the AGM will be either one-fifth of the total of those eligible to attend from the delegate group referred to under 2(i)-(iv) or, thirty – whichever is the fewer.

1. **Purpose of an AGM**

The aim of the AGM is to provide the charity trustees and/or officers the opportunity to explain their management of the charity to the members. It also provides delegates to the AGM with an opportunity to ask questions before voting on business items on the agenda*.*

1. **Order of business**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the order of business however it may choose to delegate this role. The Board of Trustees can include any items of business they feel appropriate.

1. **Minutes**

Minutes of Unison Welfare’s AGM can be made available to any member of Unison on request. Copies of the previous year’s minutes will be circulated with the AGM papers for the following year.

1. **Motions**

The Board of Trustees and Regional Welfare Committees may submit motions for consideration to the Annual General Meeting. Regional Welfare Committees should bring all relevant matters to the Board of Trustees’ attention as they arise so that they can be dealt with at the earliest opportunity rather than wait for the AGM.

1. Regional Welfare Committees may submit motions in accordance with the following directions of the Board of Trustees:
2. Regional Welfare Committees may submit up to two motions.
3. Regional Welfare Committees are asked to consult their branch welfare officers prior to submitting a motion and include a signed statement to the effect that a majority of the branch welfare officers from their region support the motion.
4. Motions should set out the background and actions for their motion so that delegates have an understanding of the matter to be proposed and that the AGM, which is a time limited meeting, can deal with issues efficiently.
5. The Board of Trustees will not allow a motion on the AGM agenda in the following circumstances:
6. If in their opinion the motion or the matter to which it relates has been the subject of a motion debated at an AGM during the preceding 3 years or, is substantially the same as the subject matter of another motion proposed for the same meeting; or
7. If the Board of Trustees believes the motion could adversely affect the purposes of the charity.

Where there are motions for debate, the Chair of the Board of Trustees will make sure that all trustees and delegates to the AGM understand the effect and purpose of each proposed resolution before putting it to a vote.

In general, a resolution of the AGM is simply a recommendation to the charity trustees, who are under legal duties always to act in the best interests of the Charity. When a resolution is passed, the Trustees will review it and give effect to it where possible. But if they conclude that it is not in the Charity’s best interest, they cannot implement it.

The Chair will provide the proposer of any motion up to 5 minutes to address the meeting and subsequent speakers will be given up to 3 minutes to put forward their views. As these rules apply to a charity Annual General Meeting, there will be no right of reply.

Emergency motions will only be considered if they are signed by the Secretary (or officer of the committee) and Chairperson and provide details of the date of the Regional Welfare Committee meeting at which it was adopted. Also, that the subject giving rise to the emergency makes it essential that the matter is heard by the AGM rather than discussion by the Board of Trustees. An emergency motion must be submitted

five working days before the start of the AGM, unless there are exceptional circumstances. For further advice contact the Head of UNISON Welfare.

1. **Reference Back**

For the purposes of the Trustees’ Report and Annual Accounts, delegates may move reference back of a paragraph of the report they do not agree with. If accepted by the AGM the effect of moving reference back in this case is to not accept the particular paragraph of the report.

1. **Voting**

When AGM business requires a vote, only those delegates described at 2(i)-(iv) have the right to vote. Those delegates with voting rights will be issued with voting cards.

Where a vote is required, this will generally be done on a show of hands. Where it is unclear what the outcome is a more formal count of votes may be exercised either through the use of ‘tellers’ or ballot paper.

Generally a simple majority is all that is required for a decision. However where a change to the Constitution and Rules is proposed, a majority of not less than two-thirds of those entitled to vote is required.

1. **Appointment of charity trustees**

Delegates will be entitled to vote in the election of six trustees onto the Board. Elections take place every two years with the election taking place in even numbered years. Delegates may not vote more than once for any candidate and voting is by way of secret ballot. Copies of the election addresses giving further information about each candidate are included with papers for the AGM. NEC appointed trustees are elected in accordance with NEC rules.

1. **Questions**

A member or branch may submit written questions on the Trustees’ Report and Annual Accounts at any time.

Delegates registered to attend the AGM may submit written questions on the Trustees’ Report and Annual Accounts in accordance with the timeframe set by the Board of Trustees. Where possible, these questions will be answered before the AGM itself.

Generally only delegates submitting a written question can raise a supplementary question on the issue at the AGM and subject to them giving advance notification in accordance with the timeframe set by the Board of Trustees. This will ensure that any additional information requested can be sought prior to the AGM. Where time allows this ruling may be relaxed.

1. **Members (or where a branch has registered a second delegate)**

 Members of Unison, Unison employees, or second delegates are welcome to attend the AGM where space permits but may not take part in the formal proceedings (this includes voting on any matter under discussion).

1. **During the AGM**

The Chair presides over the AGM for the whole agenda and at all debates. With the co-operation of delegates, business is processed quickly and without great formality. There are occasions, however, when the Chair may need to exercise their authority including the right to make a ruling on a question of procedures or a point of order. In these circumstances, the Chair’s ruling is final.

The Chair also has the authority to expel any delegate causing a disturbance and refusing to obey the call to order.

The Board of Trustees, the Head of Unison Welfare and other senior officers may move reports and statements. At all times they will speak on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

1. **Speaking Time**

In order to ensure that all business is heard, the Chair will indicate any time limits on speaking time and, may intervene and ask a delegate to shorten any contribution.

**For delegates wanting to speak:**

Remember:

* When you speak give your name, branch and region
* Please try to be concise and keep to any time limits that have been agreed
* Please note that racist, homophobic, disablist or sexist remarks will not be tolerated.
1. **Constitution and Rules**

Members can at any time request a copy of Unison Welfare’s Constitution and Rules.

1. **Formal Procedures**

It is hoped that the AGM’s business and any points that delegates may wish to raise can be dealt with by the Chair and the AGM without having to resort to formal bureaucratic procedures which many delegates find alienating and difficult.

However, if problems do arise the Chair will give instructions on implementing any formal procedures

Adopted: 2003

Last reviewed: 2018

