

2020 Community Conference and Seminar

UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Cardiff City Hall

28 Feb 2020 01 Mar 2020

Organising and Recruitment

1. ENGAGING BRANCHES IN THE COMMUNITY SECTOR IN LGBT+ RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISING

Conference notes that at National Delegate Conference 2019 delegates unanimously agreed to change UNISON's rule book so that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) self organised group is now the LGBT+ self organised group.

Conference recalls that the community conference unanimously passed policy last year supporting the group becoming LGBT+ and that many branches organising in the community sector supported the rule change. Conference is aware that we have LGBT+ community members and hold LGBT+ caucus meetings at our conference.

Conference is aware that UNISON works with inclusive, umbrella definitions of bisexual and transgender. Meetings that include bi members are for all members who feel attraction to more than one gender. Meetings that include trans members are 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. Despite these inclusive definitions some LGBT+ members have reported that they are put off from getting more active in their branches due to lack of awareness and not feeling that we are as inclusive as we should be. 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.

Conference notes that it was initially young members who suggested UNISON move to using the term LGBT+, with many identifying their sexual orientation and gender identity in different ways beyond a binary definition.

Conference welcomes the decision to change the name of the LGBT self organised group to LGBT+ and instructs the Community Service Group working with the National LGBT+ Committee to:

- 1) Raise awareness of the remit of the LGBT+ Self Organised Group amongst branches within the community sector in the light of new national rules
- 2) Continue to work towards making organising, events, policies, systems, language and good practice advice inclusive of LGBT+ members
- 3) Encourage branches within the community service group to build LGBT+ recruitment and bargaining into their work plans.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

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2. Recruitment and organising: Building community links

Conference notes that Citizens UK has built diverse civil society alliances in London, Milton Keynes, Nottingham, Greater Manchester, Birmingham, Cymru/Wales, Tyne and Wear and Leeds, building coalitions between trade unions, faith communities, statutory and community organisations in order to both enhance capacity and to take forward common objectives benefitting the wider community such as strengthening democratic participation and developing community organising skills.

In the North West, UNISON regionally has affiliated to this organisation and over twenty branches are affiliated and actively engaged in the work of this over-arching community organising body.

The opportunity to work in collaboration with faith-based organisations such as mosques, synagogues and churches and a wide range of civil society partners, many of which employ UNISON Community and other service group members has proved to be beneficial in terms of furthering UNISON's campaigns around fair pay, Community members' working terms and conditions and the value of belonging to a recognised trade union.

Through our work with Citizens UK (and Greater Manchester Citizens in particular) we have been able to successfully influence the lobbying agenda of this national body to ensure that it's five key areas of work reflect UNISON's policies around mental health, migrant workers and refugees, housing and homelessness, intersectional hate crime, promotion of the real Living Wage and fair working practices that ensure that publicly-funded contracts remunerate Community service group members appropriately.

This partnership working has, over time, extended the reach of the North West's Care Workers for Change campaign and developed our working relationship with employers such as Methodist Homes (MHA) resulting in improved pay and terms and conditions for our members within that employer.

Conference believes that as the largest public sector trade union across Great Britain's nations and regions UNISON occupies an important position as influencer and advocate for workers within our sector. Our organisation does this using a variety of tools at its disposal. One such tool is cultivating our links with community organising and capacity-building organisations such as Citizens UK enabling us to develop effective partnerships that benefit and assist in the recruitment and organisation of members within Community.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Continue to develop and highlight working partnerships with organisations which share UNISON's campaigning objectives.
2. Promote the work of Citizens UK and other community capacity-building organisations and the linked benefits to Community membership, recruitment and organising.
3. Highlight examples of good practice in partnership working which have benefitted the recruitment, retention and organising of Community Service Group members.

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North West Region

Negotiating and Bargaining

3. Health and Safety representation

Conference notes that nationally the number of UNISON Health and Safety representatives in the workplace is diminishing.

This continues to be of particular concern to the Community Service Group where, out of a collective membership of almost 75,000 members, less than 250 across all our nations/regions are accredited Health & Safety Representatives.

Our workplaces are constantly evolving, with members in the Community Service Group facing increased workloads due to a combination of factors ranging from cuts to local authority funding, restrictive social care contracts, project-based voluntary sector commissioning that does not cover overheads, increased commercialisation and a target-driven culture in housing associations. These pressures make the importance of ensuring good physical and mental health and safe Community workplaces clear.

Additionally, the evidence collected by the Community Service Group relating to our members' experience of violence at work, the effects of unsafe working practices on our mental health, lack of safeguarding of staff, poor sickness leave policies and the erosion of good Health and Safety practice clearly demonstrates the need to address these issues through the recruitment and retention of workplace Health and Safety representatives.

Conference welcomes the initiative the Community Service Group Executive has taken in conjunction with UNISON's National Health and Safety Unit to ensure that members are resourced with appropriate information about the key Health and Safety issues confronting us in our workplaces and the value we place on having well-resourced accredited Health and Safety representatives.

The additional and linked roll out of the End Violence at Work Charter underpins the need to build upon and enhance the capacity of UNISON Health and Safety representatives in our workplaces.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Continue to work with the National Health and Safety Committee to ensure that the issues raised by Community members are contained within their bargaining agenda.
2. Continue to work with regions and branches to prioritise the recruitment of Health and Safety representatives within their recruitment strategies in the Community sector.

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3. Regularly disseminate information about the role and function of Health and Safety representatives to members in Community demonstrating the linkages to our bargaining issues.

North West Region

4. Racism in Community workplaces

Conference believes that all forms of racism in the workplace are unacceptable. Employers in the Community Service Group have a responsibility to work with staff and trade unions to tackle racism, listening to and responding the concerns of those who are subjected to racist abuse.

Conference notes that in 2019, the UNISON Community Service Group Executive carried out a survey of Black members working for Community Employers. The survey found that in the last 5 years, 75% of respondents said they felt isolated or uncomfortable at work because of their skin colour, race, or ethnic background. The same survey also found that, over the same period, 41% of respondents said they had been personally racially harassed at work.

Respondents to the survey also reported numerous problems which they faced as a result of racism, including limiting of access to training and promotion, and the misuse of performance measures and disciplinary action.

The findings of the report show that there is a huge amount of work to be done before charities and housing associations can root out racism in their workplaces.

Conference further notes that UNISON has been at the forefront of challenging racism and discrimination both in the workplace and wider society and that continuing this work is crucial to ensuring that our members working across the Community Service Group are able to work in environments where they are treated with respect and dignity.

Conference further believes that key to ensuring this is the existence of effective employment policies and procedures which address the elimination of discrimination in the workplace and the sharing of best practice.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Work with UNISON National Black Members Committee and Community employers to identify best practice on tackling racism in the workplace, and highlight Community organisations which have successfully implemented counter racism measures.

2. Publicise these measures and examples with UNISON reps and activists in the Community Sector, encouraging them to talk to employers about how racism affects Black staff in Community workplaces and further publicising UNISON bargaining and negotiating guides on best practice around race discrimination.

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3. Repeat the racism in the workplace survey in the Community Sector, in 2021 to see if there has been any change in the prevalence of racism in Community workplaces.

4. Work with regions and branches and Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) to ensure that workplace representatives, activists and stewards in the Community Service Group are aware of, and able to implement the Race Discrimination Protocol.

Community Service Group Executive

5. Community services for women – a lifeline removed

Conference notes that support services for women are under ever increasing threat from funding cuts with many organisations reducing services, losing staff or closing altogether.

The community and voluntary (C&V) sector provides a range of services to women, children and families in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the UK. The services are wide ranging to meet the often complex needs of women and include advice and advocacy services including for those suffering domestic violence and sexual abuse, training for entering/re-entering employment, academic and vocational courses, capacity building, community leadership, health promotion, positive parenting and childcare.

Conference notes the lifeline that these services provide for women with families and particularly, women in Northern Ireland, who have experienced and continue to experience trauma from 30 years of conflict, who lost opportunities for education, careers, normal family life and who experience higher levels of poor mental and physical health.

Women in areas of high deprivation are likely to be more stressed and are more dependent on women's services. Conference notes the increase in food banks among working families in these areas. Women's centres and organisations are critical in providing women with support to access services and information that improve their health and wellbeing and that of their families.

With the introduction of Universal Credit and the digitalisation of this process, women's centres and organisations provide an access point to help manage women's claims - an intrusive process requiring women to present birth certificates, medical notes, passports and other important information to apply for benefits. This includes women in work. Without these services women would have to use public libraries or government offices that are not so accommodating of children or able to offer advice and support in an environment that is comfortable for women.

From 2010 the UK government began implementing cuts to all public spending at an unprecedented level. Conference is concerned about the impact of austerity cuts on women's services at the very time they are most needed. Conference is concerned

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about the disproportionate impact on women who are affected by cuts as service users but also as providers who may be at risk of losing their job.

As government cuts the funding to these services year on year, the pressure women and families face is greater, placing women and families in precarious situations and removing a layer of protection that they offer.

Conference calls on the Community Service Group Executive to work with the National Women's Committee to lobby and campaign for:

- 1) Full equality impact assessments of all funding cuts to community services and particularly women's services;
- 2) Where inequalities are identified, a requirement to address these and demonstrate commitment to gender responsive budgeting;
- 3) A clear strategy on the part of the Government to deliver on public political commitments made to tackle the inequalities between men and women.

National Women's Committee

6. Community employers, Accessibility Passports and Access to Work

Conference notes that although disabled workers are legally entitled to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010, some community employers continue to delay or seek to avoid implementing reasonable adjustments. In particular, adjustments agreed with one manager may disappear when staff move teams or change managers.

Many members in community are also unaware that Access to Work funding may be available for the adjustments they need. Access to Work is often called "the government's best kept secret" and there are low levels of awareness from both staff and employers.

Some employers have implemented workplace adjustment passports. This is an agreement between the staff member and their manager which outlines the barriers faced and the adjustments the employer has agreed to put in place, including but not necessarily limited to the legal requirement for "reasonable" adjustments. This passport approach allows the adjustments to follow the worker when they move teams or line management changes, and minimises the need to renegotiate adjustments.

There are examples of workplace adjustment passports in the Community service group, such as the Barnardo's Accessibility Passport.

However many members in the community service group do not have access to accessibility passports and are also unaware of how Access to Work might help them to overcome the barriers they face through inaccessible workplaces.

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Conference notes that UNISON has recently produced a Reasonable Adjustment Bargaining Guide with a model policy and a template Accessibility passport. This can be used to negotiate with community employers and to agree a policy and a passport system.

Conference further notes that UNISON has also published a Quick Guide to Access to Work which can be shared with members.

Conference therefore calls on the service group executive to:

- 1) Encourage branches with community members to negotiate for workplace adjustment agreements and passports with community employers
- 2) Publicise UNISON's new Reasonable Adjustments Bargaining Guide and Accessibility Passport to branches and regions
- 3) Publicise UNISON's Quick Guide to Access to Work to branches, regions and members.

National Disabled Members Committee

Campaigning

7. Sleeping in, losing out.

Conference notes with concern the UNISON report published in June 2019 Sleeping in, losing out which presents a shocking picture of 'sleep-in' conditions, with staff abused physically and verbally including being punched and threatened with knives. The report also made clear that some care staff on overnight shifts are being forced to use dirty mattresses and are left without any washing facilities. This issue is of particular pertinence to the Community Service Group because many care staff work in the third sector.

The findings of the report come from a survey of more than 3,000 UNISON members UK-wide caring for the vulnerable and elderly by staying overnight, including in residential homes, in the accommodation of those living independently, or at the properties of those receiving home support.

Sleeping in, losing out highlights how more than one in ten respondents said their sleeping facilities were unsuitable where they worked. Some had to make do with make-shift beds in staff offices, with ripped mattresses, and 2% had nowhere to sleep at all. Others reported there was no bathroom to wash or shower in despite having to work another shift the next day, and lack of privacy was an issue too. The report shows that 72% of respondents were so busy they only got a couple of hours sleep a night, with 72% left feeling exhausted.

The duties staff assume responsibility for overnight include calming people with learning disabilities or mental health issues when distressed, assisting vulnerable people to go to the toilet and giving medication. 41% reported feeling bad for not being there at night when their families need them. The same percentage has missed out on family events because of having to sleep away from home.

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Nearly a third who responded to the survey had experienced personal threats or even been attacked. Some had been bitten, punched, kicked, spat at, had people try to strangle them, been threatened with knives, and boiling water.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Work with UNISON Labour Link, NEC and other stakeholders including lobbying political parties in positions of power and influence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to highlight the particular problem of unsafe, unclean and inadequate conditions for people carrying out overnight sleep-in shifts.
2. Where we have recognition, ensure UNISON negotiates with Community employers to ensure conditions for overnight sleep-in shifts are clean and safe.
3. Continue to campaign for a care sector which is adequately funded, helping to ensure care staff no longer have to experience the kind of shocking conditions outlined in the "Sleeping-in, losing out" report.

Community Service Group Executive

8. Making it fair for social care

Conference recognises that, for the UNISON Community Service Group, fair funding for social care is a core issue. Many of those providing care to the elderly and the vulnerable work for charities and not-for-profit providers. Our members in Community want to see a well-resourced social care system, not one ravaged by austerity and unable to meet rising demand.

Conference notes UNISON's analysis of HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) statistics published in July 2019 shows the number of taxpayers earning more than £1m each year has risen from 15,000 to 21,000 since the then Chancellor George Osborne introduced the tax cut in 2013. The savings for super-earners with incomes of more than £1 million a year have reduced payments to the Treasury by £13.98 billion, between 2013 and the current financial year 2019/2020.

Conference agrees with our General Secretary that "Instead of helping the rich line their pockets, the government should be ploughing money into services which make a real difference to society and our ageing population across the whole of the UK."

Conference further notes the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group Inquiry into the Professionalisation of Social Care Workers and the publication in July 2019 of the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee report on Social Care Funding "Time to end a national scandal" which highlighted that adult social care in England continues to be inadequately funded.

The report noted that 1.4 million older people (14 % of the population) had an unmet care need in 2018; that the number of older people and working-age adults requiring care is increasing rapidly, and public funding is not only not keeping pace, but has declined in real terms by 13% between 2009/10 and 2015/16.

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The Economic Affairs Committee's report importantly also urged the government to provide an immediate £8bn cash injection and reform the provision of care, including by giving free personal care to people who need it.

Conference welcomes the fact that this report shares many of UNISON's concerns and reflects our union's national policy and campaigning agenda. In particular, that increased funding for adult social care should provide for a higher paid workforce and one that benefits from investment in development and training.

Conference believes that these issues are key to securing an appropriately resourced industry that is populated by skilled, trained and appropriately remunerated staff who benefit from decent terms and conditions, trade union recognition and, ultimately, from an effective collective sectoral bargaining machinery.

Conference further believes that these issues also remain crucial to attracting and retaining a workforce who are valued and developed as skilled deliverers of key public services.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Continue to campaign vigorously for adequate investment, training, remuneration and value for our members in social care, working with other affected UNISON Service Groups and forums, such as local government, health and private contractors.
2. Specifically campaign for a social care system where care workers:
 - A. No longer have to endure poverty pay
 - B. Have adequate time to provide care, rather than rushing between unrealistically short appointment times
 - C. Are paid at least National Minimum Wage for Overnight Sleep in Shifts
 - D. Are paid for travel time between appointments
 - E. Are properly protected from violent attacks in the course of their work
3. Work with regions and branches and Community employers to identify good practice in social care training provision and to highlight the disparity in provision across the sector.
4. Work with the NEC, Service Groups, Labour Link and other stakeholders including lobbying political parties in positions of power and influence in Scotland, Cymru/Wales and Northern Ireland to continue to highlight the gross under-funding of adult social care and the impact this has on society.

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Community Service Group Executive

9. Right to buy and shared ownership in Housing Associations in England

Conference notes that In October 2019 the then Secretary of State for Housing, Robert Jenrick MP issued a press statement stating that the government wished to work with housing associations on a voluntary basis in regard to introducing shared ownership right to buy. The press release stated:

“For those tenants in new stock, there will be an automatic right to buy a share of their home from as little as 10%, with the ability to increase that share over time, up to full ownership.”

UNISON is strongly opposed to the existing “right to buy” for council and housing association tenants because it moves social housing into the private sector, all too often leading to homes built with public money ending up in the profit making private rented sector, at a time when we are not building enough social rented homes and there’s a growing demand for such homes.

For precisely the same reason Conference is opposed to the introduction of the voluntary Right to Buy Shared Ownership for housing association tenants. This conference believes that both housing association homes must be preserved as a societal resource, providing homes at social rents. Diversifying and extending the Right to Buy in England will lead to a reduced stock and reduced rental income which could impact on the financial viability of housing associations to maintain and build homes, and put housing association jobs and services at risk.

Conference therefore opposes this proposed policy which would impact on the sustainability and stability of the housing associations sector in which our members work.

Conference therefore calls on the Service Group Executive to:

- 1) Lobby and campaign to ensure the proposed policy on right to buy and shared ownership in housing associations is not implemented
- 2) Work with colleagues on the Housing Associations Sector Committee to produce a briefing on the negative impact that right to buy can have, for use as a campaigning tool by members

National Housing Association Sector Committee

10. Supporting People

Conference the time has come to recognise the specialist work being carried out by UNISON frontline workers employed through the Supporting People Programme and back those UNISON members in their call for an independent review into the Supporting People Programme.

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UNISON members working in Supporting People funded programmes continue to deliver vital services for vulnerable people, despite experiencing pay freezes or pay cuts, cuts in hours and an erosion of their terms and conditions of employment.

1. Staff having to take on extra duties and dealing with increasing numbers of clients with increasingly complex needs, including severe mental health issues, drug addiction, alcohol abuse, self-harm and suicide attempts;
2. Staff working weekends, holidays and unsocial hours
3. Increasing incidents of verbal/physical aggression towards staff and other service users from clients with complex needs;
4. Staff being expected to deal with complex medication for clients or provide counselling services when they are not trained or qualified to do so;
5. High rates of staff turnover and concerns at unsafe staffing levels, with poor morale, mental health concerns amongst staff and sickness absence. This in turn leads to agency staff being used, at increasing cost;
6. Concern at differences in terms and condition both within organisations and across organisations providing similar services;
7. Concerns at the inability of management to act when issues are raised with them and a lack of protected time to undertake training activities.
8. UNISON members report that morale within the sector is dwindling and that they feel undervalued. This specialist work is vital in easing the pressure on health, social services and probation services and this must be recognised through decent pay, better terms and conditions and job security.

It is clear that in the first instance, additional funding for the Supporting People Programme is required to reverse the cuts in funding that have occurred and meet rising levels of demand.

However, it is vital that the NI Housing Executive, as the commissioner of services under the Supporting People Programme, undertakes a review of how organisations currently funded by them use their funding, including pay and terms and conditions for their workers.

We believe some organisations funded through the Supporting People Programme can and should be doing more to ensure their staff have decent pay and terms and conditions of employment, particularly those employers who do not recognise UNISON for the purposes of collective bargaining. Additional funding for providers, which we believe is necessary, must be translated into better pay and terms and conditions for workers.

We therefore call upon the Community Service Group Executive to:

- A. Work with UNISON's Labour Link and other stakeholders seek engagement with the Department of Communities and NI Housing Executive in relation to the Supporting People Programme.

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B. Work with UNISON's Labour Link to campaign for and lobby the Department for Communities, the NI Housing Executive and all other Government Departments and public bodies with responsibilities in this area to:

- i) Immediately reverse the cuts that have taken place.
- ii) Immediately review all funding arrangements that community and voluntary sector employers have to provide services under the Programme and make sure that workers are not exploited. This should be fully transparent and must involve UNISON.
- iii) Commission an independent, expert-led review into the Supporting People Programme, with full UNISON Community branch involvement and engagement, to make recommendations on the level of funding that is required to meet need and ensure our members are properly paid for the vital work that they do.

Community and Voluntary Sector Branch NI

11. National standards for social care – protecting disabled workers

Conference notes that many of our community members work in social care where they provide care services to older and disabled people. This includes members employed as personal assistants (PAs) via personal payments budgets.

Additionally, some of our disabled members in Community are also recipients of social care which allows them to overcome barriers they face in accessing work. Some of these disabled members employ PAs either directly or through private agencies or third sector providers.

Conference notes that the Labour party has committed to free personal care for older people and to consider how they might roll this out to working age disabled people in the future. Labour also have a vision of a National Care Service with the public sector again playing the majority role in delivering care.

Conference believes that there can be a role for charities and not-for-profit organisations in a future model of care, so long as our members are covered by national terms and conditions and ethical commissioning standards.

Conference further believes that our members who work as PAs, often for community and not for profit organisations, should be included in agreed national terms and conditions, levelled up to local authority standards, with personal budgets calculated to require payment of fair pay and provision of national terms and conditions.

National standards should ensure that our members providing care for third sector or private employers are treated fairly and our disabled members working in the Community sector can continue to employ PAs through personal budgets, allowing these members to continue to work.

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Conference therefore calls on the Service Group Executive to work with the National Disabled Members Committee and other appropriate UNISON service groups and forums to:

- 1) Campaign for a social care system that values social care workers and social care recipients, where there are agreed national standards on pay, terms and conditions and ethical commissioning
- 2) Campaign for a personal budgets system that incorporates payment of national terms and conditions for Personal Assistants
- 3) Work with the Labour Link to lobby the Labour Party to include working age disabled people in their vision for free personal care.

National Disabled Members Committee

Efficient and Effective Union

12. Branch Structures

Conference notes that highly effective recruitment and organising in Community can be carried out by branches organised in different ways.

Conference recognises that dedicated Community Branches in Cymru/Wales, West Midlands and Northern Ireland have had considerable success in improving services to members and boosting recruitment and organising.

Conference further notes, that other regions like the North West, have undertaken wide ranging on-going consultation exercises with their branches to determine what types of structures and approaches need to be in place to meet the challenges of the changing trade union organisational landscape.

Conference recognises that there is no “one size fits all” solution to the challenges posed by organising in the Community Service Group, but wishes to be reassured that all UNISON regions across the UNISON’s nations/regions have given full consideration to the structures surrounding Community members and how they might be better tailored to meet these challenges.

Conference therefore calls on the Community Service Group Executive to:

1. Consult with every UNISON region and devolved nation to encourage active consideration the structures used to organise community members, particularly Community Branches
2. Consult with every UNISON region and devolved nation to ensure UNISON regions and branches are aware of the frustrations of some Community members in being unable to access UNISON services as quickly and easily as they should be able to.

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Community Service Group Executive

13. Inclusive Workplace Policies for Non-Binary Members in the Community Sector

Conference notes the motion passed at last year's Community Conference on Inclusive Workplace Policies in the Community Sector which called on the community service group executive to:

1. Gather good practice examples from branches organising in the community sector of inclusive policies and practices, including in record-keeping, language, any dress codes and in the provision of safe and accessible gender neutral facilities;
2. Promote good practice across the service group;
3. Promote the Gender equality: non-binary inclusion fact sheet to community branches.

Conference believes that there is still a lack of awareness about non-binary inclusion in community workplaces. This can range from intentional misgendering and refusal to use correct pronouns to lack of understanding of non-binary issues and failure to provide accessible gender neutral facilities.

Conference notes that the community sector has a range of diverse employers and that we organise across the sector in a variety of ways. However, this should not prevent us from gathering good practice and negotiating workplace policies that are inclusive for non-binary members in the community sector.

Conference instructs the Community Service Group Executive to:

- a) Gather and promote good practice from branches in the community sector of non-binary inclusive policies and practices;
- b) Continue to promote the Gender equality: non-binary inclusion fact sheet to community branches;
- c) Provide guidance to branches in the community sector on making branch records, communications and meetings inclusive and accessible for everyone including our non-binary members.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

14. Recruiting and organising Black members in the fragmented workforce

The National Black Members Committee welcomes the work that the Community Service Group Executive has been doing over the past year in building and strengthening Black community links. The development of racism within the workplace survey will help explore effective ways of dealing with race discrimination in the workplace going forward.

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We thank conference for recognising the significance in retaining and supporting Black members and self-organisation within the sector.

It is however, important that Black workers and members are equipped for the challenges within the changing and evolving landscape of the UK today, especially in the Community sector.

Conference recognises that the Black workers left behind after restructures are now likely to be working in more isolated workplaces, under increased pressure and with fewer resources making them even more susceptible to unfair and unequal treatment.

Conference believes that recruitment is more than just handing out leaflets. Branches need assistance to reach out to Black workers and members in the fragmented workforce to engage members and encourage activism. They will need continued support, bespoke training and mentoring.

We also recognise that some employers in the community sector may not recognise trade unions, and therefore members do not get paid time off to attend training to become workplace representatives or health and safety reps, which makes it harder for members to get support.

Conference calls on the Community Service Group Executive to work with the National Black Members Committee to:

1. Consider ways to support Black members who wish to become workplace representatives but are unable to access paid time from their employer.
2. Explore effective and clear pathways which will assist Black members developing as activists, with specific training targeted towards them in the fragmented workforce.
3. Develop information and resources targeted at Black members and workers in the community sector to assist with this recruitment drive.

National Black Members' Committee

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Motions Ruled Out of Order

Not sufficiently clear

Motion Locked into poverty

From late 2008 the UK Government set out a programme of austerity that has continued for over 10 years. Research from the Runnymede Trust and Women's Budget Group in 2019 showed that women, people of colour and particularly women of colour were impacted by job cuts, as they were more likely to be employed in the public sector, be in low-paid jobs and insecure work, and have higher levels of unemployment.

The unemployment budget was frozen, which has led to increased difficulties due to rising inflation. Benefit claimants affected by budget cuts and sanctions led to increased use of food banks and Trussell Trust latest figures report over one and a half million people in the UK using a food bank with over half a million of these food parcels going to children. With an increase in zero-hour contracts, part time work and low paid work there is a new generation of working poor who are also dependant on benefits.

Universal Credit and the draconian welfare cuts imposed on working people, as well as those in search of employment or due to ill health unable to work, are having a devastating effect on women, creating more problems as it pushes women and their families into poverty.

We are calling on UNISON Community conference 2020 to do all in its power to ensure that the following issues are raised and reversed.

- Review Universal Credit and end the six weeks wait for payments. Partners should be entitled to split payments. Incentives for second earners and the work allowance need to be improved
- Victims of the crime, domestic violence and abuse, must choose whether they can survive with no money for at least 5 weeks, maybe with children, or stay with abuser!! That must change.
- The two-child benefit cap is disgraceful, neglecting our children, creating inequalities within families. It pushes women into deeper poverty. Whilst fully supporting women's right to choose, it is not the role of government to push women into having abortions and dictate the size of a family through financial punishments. Two Child Tax Cap must go.
- The vile "Rape Clause" must be removed as it forces women to disclose or lose benefits, women in violent relationships are not able to do so. Benefit officers are not equipped to process disclosures on rape or violent sexual crime and do not have capacity to manage these disclosures.
- Working mothers struggle to access affordable childcare, in NI we have the highest weekly expenditure in childcare and therefore the highest weekly childcare element of Child Tax Credits. Universal Credit payments are paid in arrears of up to 6 weeks, this places greater financial burdens on families accessing childcare. Children in NI should be able to receive up to 30 hours of childcare as in other

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regions, this doesn't happen creating deep unfairness in these benefit changes and cuts that results in negative impacts on women and must be reversed.

Conference I ask to support this motion

Community and Voluntary Sector Branch NI

Motion Stop low pay in the Community and Voluntary sector

This is the second motion in two years that has made this request.

Conference, we do not want to be standing here again next year asking for the same thing.

We have for too long, put up with low pay and poor terms and conditions within the Community sector. It is time, to stand up and force commissioning bodies to pay a fair rate for the work being done. It can never be fair that staff supporting the most vulnerable people in society get paid a few pence above the minimum wage. We have got to stop this unfairness.

Conference calls for the Community Service Group Executive to wake up to the seriousness of this issue and organise a national campaign to right these wrongs within 2020.

***South West Region
Community Service Group Executive***