

## National Executive Council Bulletin for the Special Delegate Conference 2021

### Motion 72: Supporting Our Branches – Financial Update

#### Introduction

UNISON members everywhere have borne the brunt of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic which in turn continues to pose challenges to UNISON branches throughout the UK. Supporting members is at the heart of all the work that UNISON in all parts of the union undertakes and as always, the National Executive Council's priority is to support branches in this work.

The NEC on 26<sup>th</sup> May considered how to support branches in transition to the new branch funding formula scheme (if passed) during the COVID-19 pandemic when the priority for all of UNISON is, without doubt, member support, rebuilding steward networks and campaigning as reflected in the majority of other motions to the SDC.

Under the UK government, the period ahead for our union could be volatile in terms of the UK public finances, jobs and pay negotiations. The NEC have proposed a plan that will provide a transitional protection for branches in the likely difficult period ahead.

Moreover, the National Executive Council recognises the strain that branches have been under in 2020 and 2021 and is prioritising support for our branches. The NEC therefore proposes to offer branches more financial security for a transitional period from 2022 to 2024 if Motion 72: Supporting Our Branches is carried.

#### The Transitional Protection Plan

Motion 72 proposes a shift of resources towards branches, financially and with a comprehensive package of measures. The Motion 72 financial package includes a permanent increase in total branch funding of 2% from 23.5% to 25.5%.

Following approval from the Finance & Resource Management Committee, the NEC's proposed plan will provide further funding in the form of additional protection for a transitional period via the new Branch Support and Organising Fund under Section H point 19 of the new Branch Funding Scheme.

The NEC has agreed to a supplementary allocation that will be ring fenced inside the Branch Support and Organising Fund. This will be paid to branches as part of their funding entitlement. **There would be no bidding or applications required.**

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#### Transitional Arrangements

It is proposed that:

From the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 and for the first three years of the new scheme (2022-2024) the following automatic protection to funding will apply:

- In each year of the transitional arrangements a branch's percentage funding entitlement will be calculated under the existing 2001 scheme and the NEC's Motion 72 proposals.
- If a branch's funding entitlement under the NEC's Motion 72 proposals is less than their funding entitlement under the 2001 scheme, then their percentage funding entitlement will be protected under the 2001 scheme.
- The cost will be funded by way of an increased allocation to the Branch Support & Organising Fund and is supplementary to the 2% allocated to that fund under Motion 72. This will take branch funding above the proposed 25.5%.
- This supplementary allocation will be ringfenced and paid to branches as part of their monthly branch funding and will not involve an application process.

years, particularly as the new scheme does have some extra restrictions starting from 2025. All branches that gain during this period due to the extra entitlements in the new scheme, such as the expanded multi-employer factor, will receive every pound of their allocation.

The NEC will set aside an estimated £2.4m as a national contingency fund to support this 3-year transition plan (estimated £0.8m/year).

#### Summary

The National Executive Council recognises that the COVID-19 pandemic has put incredible pressure on members and branches. Further the NEC recognises that branches may be worried about future unknown challenges. This transitional arrangement is aimed at providing certainty in an uncertain world to enable branches to plan with financial security.

#### Impact of the Transitional Arrangements

As 2020 and 2021 are not typical financial years for our branches or our union due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this protection will mean **NO branch will receive less funding under the new proposed funding scheme during this transitional period.** This allows support and extra time required for branches to financially plan for the coming