

# 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

**BT Convention Centre**

**21 Jan 2022 23 Jan 2022**

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## **Negotiating and Bargaining**

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Negotiation and Bargaining

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### **1. HAVING THAT UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATION ABOUT RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE**

HAVING THAT UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATION ABOUT RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE

Following the murder of George Floyd and the continued examples of institutional racism we wanted to do something tangible, to address the issues being faced daily by Black Members in the East Midlands.

Between May to June 2020 the East Midlands Regional Black Members Committee (RBMC) Co Chairs and the sole Black Deputy Convenor, worked with the Secretary to the RBMC to design a range of questions for an online survey on racism in the workplaces across the East Midlands.

The Region sent out the online survey to all branches in our region and the results in raw data form came in July 2020.

In April 2021 we invited our new General Secretary Christina McAnea to attend our Regional Black Members Committee meeting, at that meeting we discussed our 'having that uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace campaign', Christina and our Regional Secretary Chris Jenkinson both gave us their 100% support.

We believe that it's time that our union identifies more accurately what it's like for us as Black Members in our workplaces.

- 1) We want the NBMC to request that all RBMCs, are made aware of the campaign by the East Midlands RBMC and ask them to undertake an online racism in the workplace survey.
- 2) We request that the NBMC produces a report based on the findings of each regional survey, this should be sent out prior to the 2023 National Black Members Conference.

Please support our motion, solidarity always as we already know that Black Lives Matters.

*East Midlands Region*

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### **2. Disproportionate Death and Increased levels of sickness due to covid-**

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This Conference notes:

- 1) "In UNISON, 'Black' – with a capital B – is used to indicate people with a shared history. 'Black' is used in a broad political and inclusive sense to describe people in the UK who have suffered from colonialism and enslavement in the past and continue to experience racism and diminished opportunities in today's society".
- 2) The Covid-19 pandemic has led to starkly disproportionate Black Deaths. This and the inspiring Black Lives Matter movement in the wake of the racist murder of George Floyd by police, has exposed on a mass scale the deeply institutionalised racism in society. Meanwhile Johnson's Government have turned to an intensification of the racist scapegoating of refugees and migrants.
- 3) Trade unions are critical in organising the mass anti-racist movement we need to challenge every instance of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, and opposing the threat posed by divisive racists in our communities and workplaces, the far right and fascism.

This Conference believes:

- 1) Black lives matter and we as trade unionists must fight to eradicate racism in the workplace and our communities.
- 2) That the disproportionate deaths of Black workers by COVID 19 is driven by institutional racism in the workplace that results in them more often being in low paid and casualised work, more likely to be in frontline job roles, under employed but more likely to be subject to grievance and disciplinary procedures, not reflected in management structures. The horrific murder of George Floyd and the subsequent ongoing Black Lives Matters movement is an impetus to achieve real change.

Conference calls on the NBMC to campaign to:

- 1) Ensure that, as a matter of urgency, at every level of the union, demands are made upon employers, with the direct involvement of Black members on negotiating teams, to:
  - a) Provide resources and support for Black workers to ensure health and safety; this should be included in service wide and individual Risk Assessments which cover a variety of options to support their physical as well as mental health well-being.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- b) Ensure strong equality, diversity and dignity policies, including zero tolerance for racism and all forms of discrimination. Black Workers should be able to report internally to their employer and be offered support. This should be monitored and addressed as part of collective bargaining structures between our union and employers. Employers must make it clear that they will support all staff who raise concerns about racism (and other forms of discrimination) and act to protect staff who are subject to racial abuse.
  - c) Publish data on Black Workers Pay (Race Equality), statistics on recruitment, promotion and dismissal; set aspirational targets for diversity at their organisation to at least reflect the community it serves and measure progress against those targets annually.
  - d) Address the under employment of Black staff across all service groups. Initiatives should be taken and monitored through collective bargaining structures between our union and the education sector.
  - e) Address the often-high turnover of Black staff across all service groups, as well as not proportionately employed in management structures.
- 2) Support the TUC's call for a judge-led public inquiry and the Stand up to Racism petition into the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus; The recording of the ethnic background of all Covid-19 patients is recommended by the British Medical Association.
  - 3) Continue to support both physical and virtual events organised by Stand up to Racism, Show Racism the Red card and Unite against Fascism. Organise to oppose the growing threat of racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism from the Government's hostile environment and far right and fascist organisations.
  - 4) Organise Forums with the above organisations, bringing activists from UNISON together with all affiliated trade unions to develop, organise and share best practice in challenging discrimination.
  - 5) Support Branches to develop Black Members Self-Organised Groups that can allow Black members to share, support and develop responses
  - 6) Work with Regional Black Member Committees (RBMC) & Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) to ensure that all training programmes and initiatives are promoted to Black members, encourage Black Women, Black Young Members and Black members with more than one protected characteristic to participate in leadership programmes and that equality data on all courses is monitored and reviewed regularly.
  - 7) Undertake further consultation with RBMCs and branches to consider further survey Black members around their work on the inclusion and participation of Black members in lay democratic structures, member development and capacity-building.
  - 8) Ensure that any member triggering the Race Discrimination Protocol (RDP) is offered the additional support of their Regional Black Members Committee and

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

that implementation of the RDP is reviewed annually with the involvement of the Regional Black Members Committee.

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

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#### **3. Covid and Black disabled workers – learning the lessons for the recovery**

Conference notes that Black people were four times more likely to die of COVID-19 than white people while almost 60% of deaths were of disabled people.

The myth that COVID doesn't discriminate has been unmasked. Black and disabled people were hit the hardest and we continue to be disproportionately impacted as we hopefully come out of the pandemic. 'Long Covid' has impacted upon existing conditions and triggered new conditions for many

Many Black workers were too low paid to qualify for statutory sick pay and continued to have to come to work when they needed to self-isolate. For many homeworking is a fanciful dream, whilst living at work is the daily reality.

Disabled people are already facing significantly higher levels of redundancy than non-disabled people and the disability pay gap has worsened since the pandemic started.

The homeworking revolution that many of us have enjoyed has by-passed those Black workers who are more likely to work in low paid, front line and zero hours jobs, with no access to redeployment to jobs that could be done from home.

Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Work with the service groups to negotiate with employers to include front line workers in homeworking policies, with redeployment an option for those who want it
- 2) Campaign for an increase in the level and extent of sick pay so that low paid Black workers don't disproportionately lose out
- 3) Work with other Self Organised Groups, the NEC and the Labour Link to develop a broad-based campaigning and bargaining response to learn the lessons of the impact of Covid-19 on Black disabled workers.

# 2022 National Black Members' Conference

## UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

### *National Disabled Members Committee*

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#### **4. Black Women and Sickness Monitoring for COVID-19**

Conference is aware that Black women are one of the most vulnerable groups affected by Covid 19 and are more likely to die from Covid 19 or develop long Covid. Public Health England (PHE) research states that "the emerging evidence suggests excess mortality due to COVID-19 is higher in (Black) populations". This in part is reflected in the fact that 6.1% of NHS workers are Black/Black British despite making up only 3.4% of the working age population.

It is well documented that many women from the Windrush generation came to the UK in the 1950's and 1960's to work in the NHS, and the Race Disparity Unit (RDU) concluded that "(Black) women are over-represented in health and social care services in 2020". There is a growing body of evidence which suggests that both ethnicity and income inequality are independently associated with COVID-19 illness. This is clearly the case for Black women who are more likely to work in occupations with a higher risk of COVID-19 exposure and are also more likely to use public transportation to travel to their essential work.

As a consequence, these working Black women may also find themselves being further penalised at work for their Covid related illness where sickness absence related to COVID-19 is counted for the purposes of any sickness absence triggers or sickness absence management policies.

Conference considers that employers should be encouraged to exercise the maximum amount of flexibility and discretion in relation to leave policies such as special leave, carers' leave and bereavement leave recognising the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic. They should be as supportive and flexible as possible in relation to Covid related absences.

Conference calls on NBMC to work with NWC, the NEC and Labour Link to develop bargaining strategies that deliver: :

- 1) Employer's sickness policies that ensure that absence related to Covid -19 is not counted for the purpose of sickness absence triggers or sickness absence management policies
- 2) Employer's policies that recognise the particular impact of Covid-19 on Black women and which enable Black Women who are absent due to Covid -19 to receive their full wage for the duration of their absence.

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*National Women's Committee*

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## Organising and Recruitment

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### Recruitment & Organisation

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#### 5. Racism

##### Racism

Racism is a destructive act. It disables people by decreasing their individuality. It threatens community unity and creates separation in society. It is the opposite of the democratic principles of equal opportunity and the right of all people to be judged fairly.

Racism has its roots in the belief that some people are better because they belong to a race, ethnic or national group. Racist attitudes and beliefs engender false impressions about people based on their race and are often formed because of a fear of difference, including differences in customs, values, religion, physical appearance and ways of living and viewing the world.

Racism includes negative attitudes towards the use of different languages, 'foreign' accents or the use of non-standard variations of a dominant community language.

Examples of racist actions include ridicule, racist abuse, property damage, racial harassment, racist propaganda, racial slander, and physical assault. Racism also includes practices that exploit people or exclude members of groups from participating in the society in which they live. Extreme examples of racist behaviour include ethnic cleansing and genocide.

Overt racism is the unfair or unequal handling of a person or a group on racial grounds. It involves conscious and deliberate acts of intolerance and hatred perpetrated by individuals or groups. Overt racist beliefs, attitudes and practices are expressed or shown publicly or in an obvious way. An example of overt racism would be an employer who would purposely not hire someone based on their cultural or linguistic background. This type of discrimination is typically premeditated.

Covert racism expresses racist ideas, attitudes, or beliefs in subtle, hidden, or secret forms. Often unchallenged, this type of racism does not appear to be racist because it is indirect behaviour. Examples of covert racism include avoiding people on the street or not interacting with them publicly because of their race and the denial of public benefits on the grounds of race; for example informal exclusion of people of certain cultural backgrounds from public places such as night clubs or hotels. Covert racism is the most common form of racism in our society today as overt racism is against the law and considered 'politically incorrect'.

Conference it is now 2022 we are in the 21st century and Racism is still an issue in our lives at work, and in our communities.

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Conference we call upon NBMC to

- 1) Work with NEC and Service Group Executive (SGE) and SOG Groups and Regions and Branches to challenge Racist acts against our members.
- 2) Work with Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) to promote and deliver Anti-Racism training and Equalities Training to equip our stewards to challenge all forms of racism and discrimination in our workplaces and communities.
- 3) Work alongside UNISON's affiliated Anti-Racist groups and promote this Nationally on the UNISON website, and promote as an article in the Black Action Magazine

### ***City of Wolverhampton Local Government***

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#### **6. Branch Mentoring**

Conference reaffirms that Black members and activists need good mentoring opportunities. It is clear that not all branches are able to provide this.

Conference celebrates the leadership of Black branch officers, workplace representatives and health & safety representatives in our union. We at times somehow do not consider our greatest resource – our Black members – to assist in growing our union. We believe others can learn and grow if they share their knowledge and experience.

Conference believes there should be a developmental training package for aspiring Black activists and leaders who are backed by regional and national resources. This program could help Black members aspire to educate and inform their own and other branches as to the roots of trade unionism and the push for equality and fairness within the workplace.

Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to liaise with UNISON's Learning & Organising Services and develop a mentoring programme led by Black activists that will support new Black activists and those Black members who are not yet active.

### ***Eastern Region***

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#### **7. Fair Representation for Black Members in Branches**

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Conference recalls the UNISON rule book that stipulates one of the aims of our union is to “promote fair representation in all the Union’s structures for women, members of all grades, black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members.”

With reference to senior branch posts (Branch Secretary, Branch Chair and Treasurer), not enough has been done to ensure that the principle of fair representation for Black members has been enacted. Too many branches with a substantial proportion of Black members do not have Black activists in leadership positions – even when there are activists interested in these positions.

Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) Write to all branches asking them to encourage all branch officers and activists have their ethnicity recorded on RMS
- 2) Request information on the recorded ethnicity for activists elected into the Secretary, Chair and Treasurer posts and report the anonymised figures for the union as a whole in the NBMC annual report every year.
- 3) Develop an action plan aimed at increasing the number of Black activists in these three positions. Branches should be asked for their ideas on what more can be done to promote our principles of fair representation and to ensure that the Black Lives Matter principles are carried forward within our union as well as our members' employers.
- 4) Consider if any changes are needed to the UNISON Rule Book and report its conclusions to the 2023 National Black Members Conference. If any changes are needed then these should be proposed at that conference so they can be submitted to the agenda of the 2023 National Delegate Conference from our Black Members Self Organised Group.

*Eastern Region*

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### **8. SUPPORTING BLACK MEMBERS IN RACE DISCRIMINATION CASES BY BRANCHES USING UNISON'S RACE DISCRIMINATION PROTOCOL (RDP) EFFECTIVELY**

SUPPORTING BLACK MEMBERS IN RACE DISCRIMINATION CASES BY BRANCHES USING UNISON'S RACE DISCRIMINATION PROTOCOL (RDP) EFFECTIVELY

We believe that not all Black Members with race discrimination cases are getting the best support from UNISON's Race Discrimination Protocol (RDP).

We want to know how many Regional Black Members AGM's review annually their region's use of the Race Discrimination Protocol (RDP) and also how well the Branches review the use of the RDP at Branch Committee meetings.



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- 1) We want the NBMC to request ethnicity breakdown from all regions of race discrimination cases between Jan 2020 to September 2021 in order to gain a true picture of the extent of race discrimination cases.
- 2) We also ask that the NBMC work with the NEC and other National Committees to encourage Branches to review the use of the RDP at monthly or quarterly Branch Committee and Branch Executive Meetings.

Please support our motion, solidarity always as we already know that Black Lives Matter.

### *East Midlands Region*

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#### **9. Supporting Black Members Self Organisation (SOG) Campaigning Development**

Supporting Black Members Self Organisation (SOG) Campaigning Development

UNISON needs the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) to be proactively asking the new NEC leadership and our new General Secretary, to ensure that challenging racism in all workplaces become core values so that UNISON becomes a stronger trade union in workplaces.

Branches must encourage, mentor and support Black Members to play an active role within the lay democracy decision-making processes of UNISON.

Black Members in all Branches must be trained and empowered to become central at all organising and campaigning levels to UNISON's work, in resisting the British Government's "hostile environment" which perpetuates a false racist perspective about migrants, asylum seekers and Black workers and ultimately seeks to divide our communities.

We also need to raise awareness of UNISON's Race Discrimination Protocol as part of UNISON's commitment to both challenging discrimination in the work place, and also scrutinizing how effectively Branches and Thompsons work together to support Black Members Race Discrimination complaints.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

This East Midlands Regional Black Members Committee (RBMC) "having the uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace" campaign, can also be used to identify with Branch Leadership any potential employers who they need to focus their collective bargaining on race with, and also ensuring the Branch consults with their Branch Black Members about doing Equality Impact Assessments in the workplace.

This essential campaign will also support Branch and Regional work that will assist with improving the diversity of our union's regional workforce.

We ask that the NBMC support our motion:

- 1) The NBMC must support their NEC Black Members reps to ask the NEC to recommend that the East Midlands Regional Black Members Committee (RBMC) "having the uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace" campaign, be implemented across other regions.
  
- 2) The NBMC Regional Reps should work with Regional Convener Groups to seek their agreement that they will encourage all Branches to proactively engage with their Branch Black Members SOG's.
  
- 3) The NBMC should request a quarterly breakdown of all Race Discrimination Cases and report back to each National Black Members Conference.

Please support our motion, thanks.

***East Midlands Region***

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### **10. National Executive & Rule Book Commitment to Fair Representation**

The UNISON rule book that stipulates one of the aims of our union is to "promote fair representation in all the Union's structures for women, members of all grades, black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus (LGBT+) members."

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

As a movement built on the values of solidarity and collectivism, we know just how important it is to defeat the tendencies that divide people. It is why we in the trade union movement have a special responsibility to tackle discrimination. We know that unless we do so our objective to organise and unite all working people becomes more difficult.

UNISON has a long and proud tradition of tackling discrimination in the workplace and more broadly in society. We were the Union that championed self-organisation, proportionality, and fair representation, to guarantee through our rule book a union that reflects the diversity of its membership.

We have long campaigned for a fair, equal and just society. By embracing progressive ideals, changing our own organisation, we positioned the union so we could speak with credibility challenging others to follow in our footsteps.

Conference is extremely disappointed that the initial actions of the new NEC resulted in:

- a) An all-white Presidential team
  
- b) No Black Members have been selected as the Chair or Vice Chair of any of the 7 NEC sub-committees
  
- c) UNISON's delegation to the TUC General Council is all white (with three of the four delegates representing just one region).

There is no doubt that the union has the most unrepresentative structure of senior lay leaders since the union was founded 28 years ago. It reflects the old established order of white privilege. It diminishes the role and value of Black Members, and it ultimately weakens our union.

This Conference instructs the National Black Members Committee to

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- 1) Write to the Presidential team making it clear that the NEC should pay full attention to the rule book requirement to fair representation in the future.
  
- 2) Ensure the matter is placed on the agenda of the next NEC/SOG Equality Liaison Committee
  
- 3) Submit a rule change to the 2022 National Delegate Conference to ensure that such situations are prevented from happening in the future

***Eastern Region***

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### **11. Immigration Advice and Black Members**

Many Health Trusts have recruited new nurses from the Philippines and India. Our activists have been working hard to try and recruit them and include them in UNISON. One of the most useful tools to attract migrant workers has been our immigration advice clinic.

On top of the JCWI help line accessible through UNISON Direct, some regions have monthly face to face clinics with a solicitor. This has been a great resource that has allowed us to not only recruit members, but also gives us appropriate and current advice on immigration issues. This is particularly relevant within the context of the hostile environment that Brexit and the Windrush scandal have contributed to.

However, organising around immigration issues requires being able to follow through when someone needs support. The NBMC having been raising this issue and at present, when immigration and employment collide, members are left with advice only when they also need representation.

UNISON continues to lead on campaigns against an increasing hostile immigration environment to give reps and members the tools to recruit and organise our Black and migrants' workers.

The NBMC have the influence within UNISON structures to seek that Services to Members reviews this situation and call on the NEC Black representatives to raise this important issue.

We instruct the NBMC to ask the NEC to:

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Explore how we can give members access to more comprehensive immigration advice and representation, including to our members in Northern Ireland.

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

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#### **12. Supporting Black Members Self Organisation and challenging race discrimination in the workplace**

Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) to actively liaise and engage with the NEC leadership and General Secretary, to seek to ensure that challenging racism is adopted as a core value within UNISON, for the purpose of making UNISON a stronger and more effective trade union within the workplace.

This conference believes that the union should encourage, mentor and support Black Members to play an active role within the lay democracy and decision-making of the union.

Conference supports a policy that Black Members in Branches should be trained and empowered to become central to UNISON's organising and campaigning work. In particular, Black Members should be encouraged to challenge the British Government's "hostile environment" policy, which perpetuates a false racist perspective about migrants, asylum seekers and Black workers, which ultimately seeks to divide our communities.

Conference instructs the NBMC to raise awareness of UNISON's Race Discrimination Protocol as part of UNISON's commitment to challenging discrimination in the workplace. To provide statistical information resulting from referrals and cases dealt with by Thompsons solicitors.

In 2020, supported by the General and regional secretaries, the East Midlands Regional Black Members Committee (RBMC) launched the "Having the uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace" Campaign. This campaign incorporated Regional Black members meetings and an online survey on racism within the workplace across the region. The discussions and data received is being used to inform and direct the work of not just the RBMC but hopefully all branches.

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

An example of good practice from the East Midlands Regional Black Members Committee (RBMC), "Having the uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace" campaign, should be considered for use in all UNISON regions. This campaign has proven to be an effective tool which can also be used to identify Branch Leaders and activists. It is also useful in identifying employers where a focus race discrimination would be of benefit to the whole workforce. This in turn may provide a number of organising opportunities and enable branches to improve consultation with Black Members particularly with regard to Equality Impact Assessments.

This type of campaign has the potential to support the race equality agenda, together with diversity and awareness within the workplace.

This conference instructs the NBMC to:

- 1) Examine the merits of the "Having the uncomfortable conversation about racism in the workplace" campaign, for the purpose of implementation across the union.
- 2) Commission and implement an online "racism in the workplace" survey. Consider the outcome and recommendations and produce a report for distribution and discussion prior to 2023 conference.
- 3) Request an annual breakdown of all Race Discrimination Cases and report back to each National Black Members Conference.

*East Midlands Region*

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### **Campaigning**

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#### Campaigns

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### **13. No going back to normal**

2020 and 2021 will be memorable years for many reasons including Covid19 and its impact of on our Black Communities and the death of George Floyd at the hands of a white police officer in the United States.

These poignant moments together have yet again highlighted the significant inequalities that have long blighted us both socially and economically. Years of being undervalued and working in service areas where the Government has failed to value the Black people that work within them, structures that have long existed that are founded on discrimination/racism means that nothing has ever been and can ever

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

have been equal for Black communities no matter how hard we strive to be treated equally and on our merits.

Conference reaffirms our need to resist, organise, challenge and use these events as a way of shining the light on what has been long historical and entrenched institutionalised racism. This is now the platform for a new movement which should seek out the inequalities in this Country. This country is not different from America, let us not be blinded by the saying that it is not as bad here, that is just the point. In the UK it is not any better by looking at the stats, stop and search, deaths in prisons, education underperforming, housing, overcrowding, lack of employment opportunities, progression an unequal pay for many Black worker.

Black youth have been stuck on the bottom rung of the promotional ladders for too long with no support for their development and aspirations.

Conference the new concept for the government is "levelling up". This is a hollow phrase when private sector is more valued than public services and the wealth of our country is not spread around. We demand an honest commitment to review social, health and economic wellbeing of Black people in this country. It is Conservative policy that has created this situation and they are responsible for creating and maintaining these inequalities.

Conference instructs the NMBC to seek to work with the NEC and Labour Link and campaign for the implementation of all the recommendations from the Road map to equality which has set out 5 priority areas for action: Health, Education, Employment, Criminal Justice and Housing

### ***Eastern Region***

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#### **14. Black Lives Matter, Fight for a Society for All, Based on Equality**

This branch notes the growth of worldwide movements over Black Lives Matter that has developed over racism within our society. Instances of racism is becoming a daily occurrence after that of George Floyd which ignited big time protests globally. Here in UK on 17th of July Mr. Marcus Coutain - Blackman was arrested, handcuffed and a policeman knelt on his neck causing him agony in Finsbury Park area of Islington. 20th of July at Hatfield, it was reported that a Black teenager was arrested without consideration for his dignity. The case was referred to Police watchdog. 6th of August Zwelitsha Mushambadope, a Blackman was arrested, handcuffed, and detained with racial undertone. The case was later referred to professional standard department by Police. Racism can no longer be ignored or pretended it is not happening. Organised protests against racism claimed human lives and resources and still do even here in UK. The Brixton riot of April 1981 caused £7.5m of destruction over three days and roughly 5000 people were involved including many that were injured. We must come together to build a better community.

This branch recognizes protests as a positive development in that it has brought young black and white youth together to expose the underlying racism that continues

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

to prevail within our societies. We also recognise that this movement bases itself on achieving equality which ultimately means equality for all and therefore can play an enormously positive role in taking our society forward.

This branch believes that this call is a positive call for unity which fits well within the trade union and labour movement and should be supported.

This branch believes that racism and discrimination is built within the framework of capitalist society which uses racism, discrimination and scapegoating to divide working people of all colours and abilities to ensure that those with wealth are able to maintain their wealth, by attempting to keep us divided. Therefore any movement that seeks to unite people on the basis of equality should be supported and encouraged by the Labour movement to assist those in furthering the struggle to achieve a society based on equality, where wealth is shared and inequalities are things of the past. A society based upon a socialist economy where people can thrive irrespective of where they are from and where people are the priority rather than profit for a few. We need to improve on achievement made on obtaining a level ground for all to thrive. The Lord Scarman report published on 25th of November 1981 recommended BAME Police population to be increased to 20% from 0.6% before the riot but three years after the recommendation only 1.6% was achieved. In 1993 a Black teenager called Stephen Lawrence was stabbed to death by a gang in South East London in a racist attack. The Macpherson report published in 1999 eventually led to removal of double jeopardy laws in 2005 and two of the criminals were eventually jailed and recently this year Metropolitan Police closed the case, but the struggle continues with his parents.

This branch therefore request Unison promotes and supports Black Lives Matters event amongst its membership and in the communities where it operates

### ***Bucks Healthcare and Community***

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#### **15. Black Mother's Against Racism – the fight to preserve your child's mental health**

This conference recognises the commitment of young Black footballers to the success of the England football team. In particular, in the recent UEFA European Championship that saw the England team reach the final of the competition.

This conference deplores the racist backlash that these same Black players experienced during the competition and which is still on-going following the defeat of the England team in the competition final. We applaud their bravery in continuing to take the knee.

Conference is concerned not only about the impact of these racist attacks on the mental health of the England football players but on young Black men more generally, and on the Black women who support and nurture their children. It is Black mothers who are having to deal with the mental health consequences of worrying 'copy-cat' racist behaviour in lower level and community football, and also other sports activity.



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This conference also notes the shrinking budgets for Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) services and mental health services. We are concerned that, as a consequence, mental health issues experienced by Black women and their children are not being diagnosed or properly treated and that this is also being exacerbated by the health inequalities which Black people face.

This conference recognises that combatting racism in elite football will also help address the impact of racism on young Black people involved in community sport. In particular, their mental health and consequently will support Black mothers.

This conference calls on the National Black Members Committee

- 1) To send a message of support to the England football team and management of the English Football Association (The FA) highlighting that the fight against racism in elite sport is the same fight that Black women face in supporting the mental health of their children involved in the game and sports in general.
- 2) To send a message of support, citing this motion, to the UN Anti-Racism Day event in London in March 2022.
- 3) To have the United Nations day for the elimination of racism Included in the UNISON diaries.
- 4) Work with Labour Link to highlight the issues of racism in football and challenge provocative statements that taking the knee is gesture politics, which fuels racism.

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

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#### **16. What are they hiding?: Black disabled people and PIP**

Conference notes that, in response to requests from UNISON, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) confirmed that they do not have any data on the percentage of Black claimants turned down for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) compared to white claimants. This is because the DWP do not routinely ask PIP claimants to state their ethnicity.

Conference believes that the DWP are failing to abide by the public sector equality duty (PSED) if they do not collect ethnicity data as they cannot therefore guard against a potential disproportionate impact on Black disabled people.

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Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to work with the national disabled members committee to:

- 1) Lobby for ethnicity monitoring of PIP claimants so that the proportionality of DWP's decision making and its duties under the PSED can be assessed
- 2) Raise this issue with the Labour Party, via the Labour Link, and with other organisations working on welfare benefits with the aim of provoking a broader campaign on this issue
- 3) Campaign for a fairer system of publicly delivered PIP which acknowledges fluctuating conditions, puts the needs of disabled people at its heart and does not penalise people who are in work.

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

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#### **17. Solidarity with LGBT+ Afghans - providing a place of safety**

Conference notes with extreme concern the plight of LGBT+ people in Afghanistan which is now run by the Taliban.

When the Taliban ruled in the 1990s they followed a strict interpretation of Sharia law and all the signs point to a similar situation, including homosexuality being punishable by death. In July, German newspaper Bild reported that a Taliban judge vowed to sentence gay men to death by stoning or by being crushed by a nine-foot wall.

Since taking power the Taliban have publicly said women will have a right to education and to work. However, these words are undermined by reports that women have been told to stay at home and not to leave unless accompanied by a man.

There have also been reports of LGBT+ people are living in fear with some being tortured and even killed by the Taliban.

Conference notes that pressure is building on countries to accept vulnerable asylum seekers fleeing persecution at the hands of the Taliban.

True to form, the Conservative government took no notice of a joint letter from Stonewall and Rainbow Migration (a charity that supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) people through the asylum and immigration system) calling on the prime minister Boris Johnson and foreign secretary Dominic Raab to bring queer Afghans to safety.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

The UK has said it will resettle 5,000 Afghans in the first year and 20,000 in the coming years. Eligibility is aimed at Afghan nationals most in need who have been forced to flee Afghanistan, including women, girls and children at risk given their particular vulnerability. However there is no specific provision aimed at LGBT+ people. The Home Office has said "Further details on eligibility are being developed at pace and will be shared in due course." But in the meantime LGBT+ Afghans are living in fear.

Conference therefore instructs the National Black members committee, working with the national executive council, National LGBT+ Committee and international department as appropriate, to:

- 1) To seek appropriate ways to show solidarity with Afghan LGBT+ organisations.
- 2) Lobby the Government to make explicit provision for LGBT+ Afghans in government resettlement schemes.
- 3) Work with Rainbow Migration and other appropriate organisations to lobby the Home Office to take urgent steps to improve the ways in which it deals with LGBT+ asylum seekers and refugees.
- 4) To work with Labour Link to raise these issues with the Labour party.

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

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#### **18. Mental illness in Black communities**

Black communities experience complex factors that significantly and adversely affect their mental health. Issues such as historical British colonialism, health inequalities, identity crises and the impact of racism, all contribute to disparities in diagnosis, treatment and occurrence that can be seen today.

The Advancing Mental Health Equalities Strategy is welcomed, but risks blindness to the impact of racism on mental health outcomes as well as a lack of appropriate community provision to support those in need.

The long-awaited Mental Health Act (MHA) White Paper pledged "decisive action" would be taken to cut disproportionate use of the act among certain groups. Black people are over four times more likely than white people to be detained under the act and over 10 times more likely to be subject to a community treatment order (CTO) – under which people are discharged from detention but placed under conditions. The

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Mental Health Act overhaul will be futile and will not tackle racial disparities and lower rates of detention and community treatment orders without systemic and social change.

Many leading figures in mental health and equalities agree that more needs to be done to tackle current inequalities. Hári Sewell (former mental health trust director and consultant) states “scope for change is limited without addressing ‘racist society’ and improving access to culturally appropriate advocacy”. Black people’s cultural needs frequently go unmet. Religious beliefs are seen as symptoms of mental illness. Barriers faced by Black people when accessing mental health care are cultural barriers where mental health issues are not recognised or not seen as important, professionals having a lack of knowledge about things that are important to a person of colour or their experiences.

These needs form a fundamental aspect of a person’s identity and how well they navigate their recovery, so it’s vital that they are properly understood.

Further, research suggests that religious and cultural practices may serve as either a protective coping mechanism, or an additional risk, during times of mental distress. A lack of resources, confidence and staff knowledge, contribute to stigma attached to Black people and these expressions of their beliefs which are often attributed to a person’s mental illness, treating them as delusions rather than genuinely held beliefs.

We call on the NBMC to work with the NEC to highlight the wider issues within mental health services, including:

- 1) How gaps in knowledge create and maintain inequalities in how Black members access and receive services.
- 2) How a lack of genuine engagement with Black communities can impact negatively on Black people.
- 3) How culturally competent and relevant services and community resources can be developed to meet the needs of Black communities
- 4) The importance of appropriate training that explores and includes cultural awareness
- 5) To campaign for a directory of religious and cultural needs, which could include an assessment tool that identifies these needs
- 6) Constructive steps employers can take to support staff with mental health

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- 7) Help to signpost Black workers to current support and mental health services that are available

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

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#### **19. Challenging Racism and Strengthening Black Community links**

Conference notes that Black members make up a large percentage of the frontline workforce. The high-profile death of George Floyd triggered the 'Black Lives Matter' campaign which shone a bright light on the injustices of racism across the world, including the UK.

UNISON's Challenging Racism in the Workplace continues to lead on delivering UNISON objective to promote equality and challenge all forms of discrimination, including racism. This work needs to be a priority for all organisations.

UNISON continues to be applauded on successfully maintaining its membership figures and Black members are still said to be 'most likely to join a union', nevertheless, for Black members the issue of racism and discrimination still prevails. Conference notes a continued trend of research that reflects some of the barriers Black members face by lack of engagement and representation across the public and private sectors in our regions and branches.

The Campaign Fund supports branch, regional and national initiatives that encourage and involve members in the workplace and in their wider communities via a vast range of equality events.

These numerous events have helped increased membership, interest in the union, and have been the source of positive feedback regarding UNISON's visibility. The events provide an opportunity to discover exactly what the union is doing for members, and how we as a union can be responsive to the real issues which concern them.

We must continue to connect with and support Black people by building sustainable community engagement, by being more visible to our members, and offering support which allows them to see the wider benefits of trade union involvement.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Black Members' Committee to:

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- 1) Continue to build on the Challenging Racism in the Workplace campaign and explore how to further expand on community engagement, especially with Young Black people
- 2) Where possible and appropriate engage in specific work to connect with local Black community groups who do work in support of our members in their communities.
- 3) Review survey findings concerning members' experiences of racism, as conducted by service groups and regions, for further action and support.

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

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#### **20. BLM Black Lives Matters Who's Next?**

Conference Who's Next?

It could be you, your son, daughter, grandchildren or even your parents. People across the world are taking a stand against police brutality and racism. In 2020 we have seen a rise in Police brutality unfairly singling out of our families, our sports, and political figures. Targeting Black people as witnessed on many videos captured and shared on the social and all media platforms.

The death of George Floyd highlighted this injustice, kicking off a series of rallies, and promoting the work of Black Lives Matter supported by many, across the whole world.

Conference there has been many of these unfortunate events before and since the death of George Floyd.

BLM and SUTR has been at the forefront of this mass demonstration across the world as we all stand together to say enough is enough, how long can this injustice carry on?

Conference we call upon National Black Members Committee to:

- 1) To work together with UNISON NEC, Police & Justice and Labour Link to educate and promote the inequalities of police brutality and injustices within the Black Community.
- 2) To promote and support the BLM and SUTR Events nationally, regionally and at Branch level.
- 3) To publish UNISON supported events of BLM and SUTR supported within Black Action Magazine and share widely.

***West Midlands Region***

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

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### **21. Windrush how far have we reached, where do we go next.....**

The Windrush Scandal rocked the UK in 2018; At least 83 cases where individuals were wrongly deported from the UK by the Home Office. We must not forget that the scandal only came to public attention because of a campaign by the Windrush Generation due to the hostile environment policy instituted by the then Home Secretary Theresa May. This policy came into effect in October 2012 and measures in the policy made staying in the United Kingdom as difficult as possible for people without leave to remain in the hope that they may voluntarily leave.

From November 2017, newspapers reported that the British government had threatened to deport people from Commonwealth territories who had arrived in the UK before 1973, if they could not prove their right to remain in the UK. In January 2018; the Home Affairs Selected Committee issued a report which said the hostile environment policies were 'unclear' and had seen too many people threatened with deportation based on 'inaccurate and untrusted' information.

In February 2020, government ministers were told that the number of people wrongly classified as illegal immigrants could be much greater than previously thought and that as many as 15,000 people could be eligible for compensation. Up to that date 35 people had been granted "urgent and exceptional support" payments. In June 2020, Britain's human rights watchdog, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) launched a legal action to review the "hostile environment" immigration policy. It is assessing whether the Home Office complied with its equality duties and planned to develop recommendations by September 2020.

#### The Story of Paulette Wilson

Paulette Wilson, a prominent Windrush campaigner, has died. She was 64.

Her death comes one month after she delivered a petition, along with other campaigners, to Downing Street, signed by more than 130,000 people and calling for action to address the failings that led to the scandal.

Wilson's daughter, Natalie Barnes, said that she found her mother early on Thursday, July 23, and that she appeared to have died in her sleep.

Barnes said: "My mum was a fighter, and she was ready to fight for anyone. She was an inspiration to many people. She was my heart and my soul, and I loved her to pieces."

Wilson, from Wolverhampton, came to Britain from Jamaica aged 10 in the late 1960s. She attended school in Britain, paid national insurance contributions for 34 years, and worked hard to build a life in the United Kingdom (UK).

The grandmother of one was a chef; she worked in the House of Commons restaurant and also volunteered at her local church, preparing meals for homeless people.

Wilson spent two years under the threat of deportation and was wrongly locked up in the Yarl's Wood detention centre before being told she could stay in the UK in 2017.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

### **OUTPOURING OF TRIBUTES**

There has been an outpouring of tributes from the cross section of the society – from Windrush campaigners to ordinary people – who took to social media to express their condolences.

Windrush campaigner Patrick Vernon said: “Paulette Wilson was mother, grandmother, and a campaigner and spoke truth to power regarding the Windrush scandal. She inspired many other survivors to share their story.

“Paulette was proud of her Jamaican and Wolverhampton roots. She was like a big sister to me because we had our connections and roots in Wolverhampton.”

The ordeal as a victim of the Windrush scandal had a profound impact on her, Vernon said, adding that it's paramount that the UK government make amends to those affected.

“Paulette’s spirit and mental well-being were broken by the hostile environment and the challenges in completing the Windrush compensation form,” Vernon added.

Bishop Dr Desmond Jadoo, Chair of the Windrush UK Movement and the Windrush national organisation, said: “Paulette was a shining example of grace and humility. Despite the severe inequality and injustice that she faced; her zeal was to help others by highlighting the issues that they faced.

“I recall a conversation she and I had in January, when she said that many people are dying awaiting their status and compensation. Who would have thought that now, in July, we would be talking about her death?

“Clearly, the government is acting too slowly in righting the wrongs. There is a long way to go on this, and I would urge the British government to take stock, as how many more people must die before the scandal is resolved?”

### **WAKE-UP CALL**

“The injustice that Paulette went through took its toll on her.

“On behalf of myself and the Windrush organisation, our heartfelt condolences go out to all of Paulette’s family here in the UK, and in Jamaica, who had an opportunity of seeing her last year when she visited after 50 years.

“This is yet another wake-up call that we must not rest until the impact and injustice is resolved.”

Writing in The Guardian, Labour MP Diane Abbott said: “Paulette Wilson’s untimely death also reminds us that the victims of the Windrush scandal are an ageing cohort, and consequently, the delay in compensating them is a mounting scandal. Unless the Home Office drastically improves the process for obtaining compensation, many more will die without receiving a penny.”



## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

After former Home Secretary Amber Rudd apologised for the Windrush scandal in 2017, Wilson described it as “a good thing” in an interview with the BBC but added: “What about all the other people who were sent away before my case became big?”

She went on: “It’s just upsetting to think that an ordinary person like me could go through something like that. I’m still going through hell now.

“It’s really hard for me to put it in words. I’m still hurt, that’s all I can say.”

Conference Paulette Wilson has since sadly died.

Her story broke into the NEWS and Media highlighting the injustice of this Tory Government against our Windrush Generation.

Conference therefore calls on the National Black Members Committee to -

- 1) Work with Labour Link to review the injustices that have taken place and to support the Windrush generation through this fight.
- 2) Update conference on the status of the Windrush Scandal.
- 3) Share updates as an article in Black Action; using this motion as a starting point.
- 4) To update members on the current application process to become a British citizen.

***West Midlands Region***

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

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Beyond remit of the Conference

#### **Motion COVID 19 IMPACT AND RACIST TREATMENT OF EMPLOYERS TARGETTING BLACK MEMBERS**

**COVID 19 IMPACT AND RACIST TREATMENT OF EMPLOYERS TARGETTING  
BLACK MEMBERS**

We believe that some public and other sector employers have been using the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown to unfairly target Black workers, either for redundancy, disciplinary action or changes to terms and conditions.

We ask that the National Black Members Committee (NMBC) finds out what has been happening to our Black members during the pandemic.

We are also concerned that many of those targeted are front line staff and we want to know what branches and regions have been doing to support and protect Black Members.

We want to know how many employers have taken advantage of lockdown to not consult with either branches or our union structures. This has potentially resulted in less favourable, racially motivated, decision making by racist employers.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Actions for the National Black Members Committee (NBMC):

1. We want the NBMC to request ethnicity breakdown from all regions of disciplinary cases between Jan 2020 to September 2021 in order to gain a true picture of the extent of racist actions by employers.
2. We also ask that the NBMC obtain ethnicity breakdown from all regions of members made redundant between Jan 2020 to September 2021.

Please support our motion, solidarity always as we already know that Black Lives Matter.

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

#### **Motion RACIST POLICING ACTIONS AGAINST BLACK COMMUNITIES - JOINT WORKING BETWEEN NATIONAL BLACK MEMBERS COMMITTEE AND THE NATIONAL POLICE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**RACIST POLICING ACTIONS AGAINST BLACK COMMUNITIES - JOINT WORKING BETWEEN NATIONAL BLACK MEMBERS COMMITTEE AND THE NATIONAL POLICE AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

Evidence shows that police forces across the UK are misusing stop and search against Black communities.

We believe that some police forces have also been using the Covid 19 pandemic lockdown, to unfairly target Black communities too in terms of Covid 19 Breach fines

We ask that the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) finds out what has been happening to our Black members in terms of policing during the pandemic.

The ongoing racially motivated abuse by the police of their use of powers, for example stop and search, use of tasers, use of handcuffs and racist targeting of innocent non criminal backgrounds young Black males too has increased the levels of racial targeting during the pandemic.

We also don't know how Black Support Staff members working in the Police are being treated by their white colleagues.

We believe it's time for the NBMC to work more closely with the National Police and Justice Executive Committee (NPJEC), this will enable both National Committees to devise organised approach to challenging the ongoing police targeting of Black members and Black communities.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Actions for the National Black Members Committee (NBMC):

1. We want the NBMC to work jointly with the NPJEC to request data on ethnicity breakdown from all regions on police use of powers.
2. We also ask that the NBMC obtain half yearly evidence from the NPJEC about what each police force is doing to improve relationships with Black communities.
3. We request that the NBMC asks the NPJEC about what each police force is doing to recruit more Black staff, this should also include annual recruitment targets for each police force.

Please support our motion, solidarity always as we already know that Black Lives Matters.

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

#### **Motion No school-based police officers**

This Conference notes the recent increase in the number of school-based police officers across the country. It also notes the plans from the Greater Manchester Mayor to increase the number of school-based police officers across the region.

This NW Black Members Committee notes:

Any conversation around crime must be placed into the context of a decade of austerity which has seen cuts to social services, public services and education. It's also seen real term wages decline, rents and child poverty increase.

The institutional racism in both the criminal justice and education system with significant disparities faced by black students and communities.

Studies from the US suggests that school-based police officer have no impact on school staff and student safety. However, the consequences of having school-based police officers can be unintended and damaging where:

- Students and staff previously willing to disclose information may be reluctant due to an onsite police presence.

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

- The criminalisation of black students and their behaviour
- Creating the perception of a school needing an on-site police officer where in reality cases of knife crime and assaults are extremely rare.
- Students and staff may have had previously traumatic experiences with the police and witnessed police brutality over the summer on social media and in their own communities.
- The surveillance of students to build intelligence that may contribute to gang databases, which we know to be racially discriminate in make up through the criminalisation of non-criminal behaviours (culture, interests e.g., music).'
- The harmonisation of the education and the criminal system –where half of the children prison population is Black (as defined by Unison) and seen in the development of 'secure schools' replacing Youth Offender institutions and run by multi-academy trusts.

This conference agrees to:

- Develop and support alternatives to school-based police officers including pastoral support, properly funded restorative justice, social workers and funded education and public services.
- Oppose the appointment of any school-based police officer in this school and the local authority or multi-academy trust.
- Support campaigning for police free schools.
- Support campaigning against child poverty and for full employment, democracy in the workplace and community, a real living wage, end to precarity in work, trade union rights, access to housing, rent controls and properly funded school and public services.

# 2022 National Black Members' Conference

## UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

### *North West Region*

#### **Motion Oppose the Nationality and Borders Bill 2021**

This Conference notes:

- 1) The Government's stated three main objectives of the Bill are:
  - a) To increase the fairness of the system to better protect and support those in need of asylum.
  - b) To deter illegal entry into the United Kingdom, thereby breaking the business model of people smuggling networks and protecting the lives of those they endanger.
  - c) To remove those with no right to be in the UK more easily.
  
- 2) That wide-ranging critiques from political parties, civil liberties organisations, legal experts and practitioners highlight that the measures contained within the proposed legislation will not achieve the government's objective but additionally complicate and frustrate an already opaque and burdensome process."
  
- 3) At its centre is the government's proposal that only those who arrive through a 'legal' route should be offered any assistance.
  
- 4) Those deemed to have arrived illegally will be placed in 'reception' centres and the government will try to send to another 'safe' country under proposals – and even if their UK application claim is successful, they will only get 'temporary' protection (for up to 30 months) and little access to welfare benefits.
  
- 5) The Bill will introduce new powers to stop and redirect boats out of UK waters if they suspected of facilitating illegal entry to UK.
  
- 6) Additional clauses in this wide-ranging Bill make significant changes to the rules and manner in which Appeals are heard and how evidence is submitted - further penalising appellants."

This Conference further notes:

- 1) Millions of refugees around the world are forced by circumstances, as they flee war zones and authoritarian regimes for example, and the ever-diminishing legal

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

options for migration to resort from necessity and desperation to 'illegal' methods and routes.

2) Fewer than one percent of the world's refugees get chosen for resettlement schemes, which are the main 'legal' route.

3) The head of the Refugee Council in the UK, Enver Solomon, described offshore processing as "an act of cruel and brutal hostility towards vulnerable people." and that UNISON's national campaigning partner the Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants deem the Bill 'inhumane and farcical.

This Conference believes:

1) That far from being motivated by wanting to be 'fair' as Priti Patel claims, the Nationality and Borders Bill is driven by racist scapegoating and puts into primary legislation measures which further frustrate the opportunities to create a fair, equitable and just system for those seeking asylum and migrating to the UK.

2) That refugees should be welcomed here and that attempts to whip up hostility to refugees as 'undeserving' and 'illegal' must be firmly opposed.

This Conference resolves:

1) To campaign with all our political and civil society campaigning partners to oppose the Nationality and Borders Bill 2021.

***North West Region***

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Could place the union in legal jeopardy

**Motion Access to immigration advice and representation to recruit and organise new Black migrant worker members**

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

***UNISON Northern Ireland***

**Motion Defend the Right to Protest – Oppose the new Police Bill**

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

***North West Region***

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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Not competent

### **Motion Domestic Violence – Black women and cuts in refuge support**

Domestic abuse does not affect everyone in the same way. In Black communities, the forms of abuse can be wider such as violence from extended family members, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Black women may also have additional barriers when seeking help.

Black women also experience additional barriers because of their intersectional identity for example, Black women living with disabilities and Black LGBT+ women, including Black Trans women, are disproportionately impacted by Domestic Abuse yet face greater barriers to reporting abuse and accessing support services. These barriers are increased where Black women's identity intersects with migrant status.

Domestic abuse support services run "by and for" Black women have been subjected to years of austerity, competitive tendering and commissioning which have all had a significant negative impact on the sector. Policies such as one size fits all and gender neutrality, which challenged women only services to open to men, are at the detriment of specialist services such as by and for Black women, including Black LGBT+ domestic survivors.

Almost half of all the women that struggled to find a refuge space in the past year identified through Women's Aid and No Woman Turned Away (NWTa) were from Black backgrounds. And Just 5% of refuge spaces listed last year were accessible to women with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).

Without access to specialist Black-led services, Black women are often made victims of structural racism repeatedly. Reporting rape and violence leads to their immigration status being questioned, and access to housing, health services and other support being restricted or removed.

Imkaan is the only UK-based umbrella women's organisation dedicated to addressing violence against Black women and girls. Imkaan gave evidence to the parliamentary Select Committee that "Without ring-fenced funding to address the historical under-funding of specialist independent support services for Black women they will not have access to the support they need to address the trauma of rape and sexual violence".

The current Domestic Abuse Bill has been described as a 'landmark' Bill, however the Government has so far chosen not to make any changes to the Bill that would

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

ensure migrant victims of domestic abuse can get the help that they need. This is despite the barriers to support and protection for migrant women being raised at every stage of the Bill's progress through parliament.

We call upon the NBMC to work with Labour link to:

1. Seek that the Bill includes a non-discrimination principle in line with the Istanbul Convention, which is seen as the international "gold standard" in responding to violence against women, and the principle of protection without discrimination on any grounds - including migrant and refugee status.
2. Support the EAW recommendation that the Bill introduce a statutory duty on public authorities to ensure that services and support are accessible to all victims of domestic abuse, without discrimination on any grounds, including migrant status.
3. Abolish the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition for victims of domestic abuse and ensure all women are able to access vital, often life-saving support and routes to safety; and extend eligibility for the existing Domestic Violence (DV) Rule.
4. Use the Domestic Abuse Bill to ensure migrant women are no longer left behind and have access to the same protections regardless of their immigration status by introducing a principle of non-discrimination in line with Article 4(3) of the Istanbul Convention to ensure all victims of domestic abuse have equal access to protection and support regardless of immigration status.

***National Black Members' Committee***

### **Motion Call Me by My Name**

Conference, it seems incomprehensible that in this day and age, Black workers would be suffering the indignity of having their names changed in the workplace to make it easier to pronounce and are often westernised in the process.

Names represent deep personal, cultural, familial, and historical connections. Our name gives us a sense of who we are, the communities in which we belong, and our place in the world. Our names are an incredibly important part of our identity. We cannot afford to take a step back into the 1960's where having our names changed was a common occurrence and too easily tolerated.



## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Most workplaces have policies in place that promote equal treatment but what happens when they are not put into practice? Black workers should be able to work in places where they feel welcomed, and inclusivity is promoted. Call Me By My Name has to be promoted and implemented as soon as possible to give Black workers the dignity and respect that we deserve.

We therefore instruct the NBMC to work with the NEC, national Self-Organised Groups, and the Young Members Forum to promote the Call Me By My Name campaign to ensure equality and respect by:

1. Campaigning vigorously against the discriminatory and derogatory use of shortened and westernised names in the workplace.

### *National Black Members' Committee*

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Not sufficiently clear

#### **Motion Black Members Against racially divisive “Nationality and Borders Bill”**

Conference believes

The ‘Nationality and Borders Bill’ is an appalling, racially divisive piece of legislation that seeks to legitimise and elevate the unpopular, derided racist hostile environment policy. The Bill seeks to criminalise the heroic acts of refugees in carving out routes to safety despite tremendous odds to arrive on Britain’s shores, along with the many thousands of acts within our communities that has played a part in the successive defeats of the Home Office’s most brutal policies.

Action now in all sectors, with the leadership of our Black members, and the wider refugee, asylum seeking and anti-racist communities, is essential to stop the Bill from becoming a workable law.

Conference notes that

The RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution) defied the threat of the Borders Bill to criminalise the act of rescuing people from the sea and responded by asserting their determination not break their ethical code to rescue anyone in distress at sea,

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

without discrimination; (<https://rnli.org/news-and-media/2021/july/28/statement-on-the-humanitarian-work-of-the-rnli-in-the-english-channel>)

The TUC statement of 24th August 2021 calls on the government to "... suspend deportation flights until it has addressed the miscarriages of justice taking place within the immigration system, and to scrap the new Nationality and Borders Bill that would breach international human rights law and increase worker exploitation." (<https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/tuc-calls-deportation-flights-be-suspended>)

Timed to coincide with the launch of the Bill the Home Office organised a 'summer of charter flight' mass deportations and removals to sweep up any 'low hanging fruit' the Home Office could reach. These mass deportations during a continuing pandemic were resisted by Jamaican, Nigerian, Zimbabwean and Vietnamese communities and organisations. Work by immigrant-rights organisation Movement for Justice identified so many miscarriages of justices concerning the Jamaica flight it eventually left with just 7 (Seven) of the 90 (Ninety) people originally targeted.

However, rather than end the injustice, the Nationality and Borders Bill:

- Seeks to create concentration camps of asylum seekers on islands hidden from view, inaccessible and out of the regular jurisdiction.
- Criminalises the most important aspect of seeking asylum – the act of moving across borders to escape danger.
- Perpetuates a view of Black people as outsiders whose status is permanently in question.
- Endorses the Home Secretary - Priti Patel's public attack on the lawyers and organisations who successfully fight oppressive Home Office practices by labelling them as 'do-gooders'.
- Threatens sanctions against countries that don't roll over and accept deportations, such as Jamaica which resisted accepting deportees who were effectively British, had no ties, had been in the UK from childhood, and faced immediate risk on return.

Overall, the Bill seeks to dividing and weaken the working classes and oppressed through inducing and encouraging racism. The stigmatising of new asylum seekers and other immigrants who possess the highest hopes and ambitions for a better, fairer society, denotes a clear threat to everyone who, by association of the colour of their skin, the sound of their accents and the colour of their passport, prove the historic reality that Britain's role in the world brings the world into Britain. The dynamism and hope in our increasingly international community is a threat to any

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

government that seeks to intensify exploitation of the working class and to extend deeper cuts to social welfare and provisions.

Conference therefore

1. Supports the statement against the Nationality and Borders Bill issued by the TUC;

and calls on the National Black Members Committee to:

2. Work with all TUC links that fall within the committee's competence, to explore ways to further the words of the TUC statement against the Nationality and Borders Bill into effective actions that can defeat that Bill and reverse the racist hostile environment measures.

3. Work with Labour Link to strengthen Labour opposition to the Nationality and Borders Bill.

4. Work with Labour Link to support those local authorities / councils that make public pledge that they will resist collaboration with the Home Office on its targeting of immigrants.

5. Work with Regional Black Members Committees to develop a strategy through discussions / liaison with appropriate committees to strongly support the campaign to prevent the Bill from becoming a workable law whilst working in full compliance with UNISON rules.

### ***SOAS UNISON (M)***

#### **Motion Black Members and Black Communities Negative Health and Wellbeing Impact of Covid 19**

Black Members and Black Communities Negative Health and Wellbeing Impact of Covid 19

This motion is as important as it gives Black Members and Black communities a real voice, workplace support and protection in terms of the increased racism and disproportionate impact of Covid 19 on us and our communities.

Introduction

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

The ongoing experience of discrimination at work for Black Members has been heightened and exposed by the ongoing COVID 19 crisis. As the Covid-19 Pandemic collides with the hostile environment, the massively disproportionate and tragic number of Black workers and Black communities deaths has put a spotlight on the effect of government policy.

As expected, the racist government and right-wing media are trying to blame our diverse communities themselves for this, instead of recognising their own role.

This means as a union and Black members campaigning on this issue, is more important than ever.

Black Workers and the disproportionate deaths from Covid 19

Black Workers, particularly those working in the NHS, Social Care and public transport, are suffering disproportionately from Covid-19.

Communities of such heritage have been made up so far:

- One third of Covid-19 patients who have been in intensive care;
- Two thirds of NHS staff who have died;
- All but one of the Doctors who have died after contracting Covid-19
- Double the average of households who have lost jobs/income

These are the additional statistics:

- 94% of Doctors and Dentists, 71% of nurses and midwives, and 56% of healthcare support workers that have died despite Black workers forming the minority of all these categories.
- Similar statistics are now available for other frontline workers such as bus workers, social care workers etc

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- The letter from NHS improvement's Chief Operating Officer, Amanda Pritchard, was sent to those running NHS care organisations across England. It said: "Emerging UK and international data suggest that people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are also being disproportionately affected by Covid-19."
- Some experts have cited social deprivation and higher rates of cancer, diabetes and heart disease among some Black groups as likely factors, along with the fact that minority ethnic people make up a greater number of those employed in key worker roles who receive greater exposure to the virus.

We call on the National Black Members Committee to request all the data in our union that will enable them to speak to and work closely with the NEC and the National Health Executive Committee.

1. it's essential that immediate action is taken by the National Black Members Committee to protect Black workers in frontline services, by contacting all Regional Convenor Groups to work with UNISON Branches & Regions, to take this matter up with all employers.

2. Identify what workforce data should be collected to aid a better understanding of the impact of Covid-19 and related issues to Black staff

3. Review how organisations can make sure their policies and actions do not contribute to a disproportionately negative impact on frontline workers from Black backgrounds.

4. Promote negotiations that ensure collective or individual Covid 19 risk assessments become mandatory.

5. Work in partnership with relevant National Committees, plus the National Health Executive Committee, National Health and Safety Committee, NEC and Regional Convenors Groups to take actions to ensure, tailored health, well-being and psychological support services by Black staff is proactively supported in terms of take up by Black Workers.

6. Explore the range of resources and support for Black Workers to ensure their health and safety in all workplaces; this should be included in service wide and

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

individual Covid 19 Risk Assessments which provide a variety of options to support their physical as well as mental health well-being.

7. Ensure that our union campaigns with their various employers to have a strong equality, diversity and dignity policy includes zero tolerance for racism. They should seek a commitment from the leadership structures in our Branches and also at the regional and national negotiating levels that as a union UNISON will support all staff that raise concerns about racism and act to protect staffs that are subject to racial abuse in the workplace.

Please support our motion and help UNISON lead the challenge in protecting Black Workers and Black Communities during and after Covid 19.

Thanks for your support

East Midlands

Regional Black Members Committee Meeting

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

#### **Motion Response to racism and LGBT+ phobia in mental health services**

Conference, the recent conviction of a police officer for the manslaughter of Dalian Atkinson highlighted the unacceptable risk of a coercive, often violent racist response faced by Black people when they seek support for mental health issues.

A key research finding is that people from Black communities in the UK, who experience mental health issues also experience higher levels of coercion and poorer long-term outcomes when in contact with mental health services.

Research shows that Taser used increased by 37% last year, 15% of incidents involved a person with a mental health problem. Black people involved in police incidents are five times more likely than white people to experience the use of force against them, including handcuffing and ground restraint, batons, Tasers and firearms.

(Mind response, 29 June 2021)

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

Black LGBT+ people are also vulnerable to additional mental health issues because of their intersectionality, exposing them to a punitive, disproportionate response from the police and mental health services.

Conference, lack of appropriate support services mean that Black LGBT+ people find their experiences are not well understood by mainstream services. In addition, communities with higher rates of mental ill health often get the least effective support.

Conference, young Black LGBT+ people are especially vulnerable. Their mental health has been particularly impacted by pandemic. New research by Just Like Us, surveyed over 3,000 secondary school pupils across the UK, and found Black LGBT+ young people are more likely to be worried for their mental health with 61% worrying about their mental health on a daily basis, compared to 56% of white LGBT+ young people.

Conference, these combined factors mean that people from Black LGBT+ communities are less likely to get access to NHS talking therapy services and less likely to recover if they start treatment. They are many times more likely than white people to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act, to be placed on Community Treatment Orders, continuing the use of coercive powers after they leave hospital, and to have repeated compulsory hospital admissions.

The impact of racism and LGBT+ phobia people encounter when they experience mental health problems is worsened because it reflects and magnifies experiences of systemic racism in everyday life.

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

1. Work with other Self-Organised Groups, the Equality Unit, the NEC, regions and branches to develop and disseminate the latest information on racism and LGBT+ phobia in mental health responses by police and health services.
2. To address the huge unmet need for support for Black LGBT+ people by producing and promoting work place guidance .

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

3. Support branches to conduct impact assessments of services concerning health equalities.
  
4. Engage with UNISON participation in initiatives to address mental health inequalities e.g. NHS England's Advancing Mental Health Equalities programme.

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

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

This Conference calls upon the National Black Members' Committee to develop a recruitment strategy that engages black community groups

- 1) Historically black members are spread across multiple cities/workplaces and at times can be the only black person in a workplace.
  
- 2) Current UNISON membership benefits e.g. insurance plan, car insurance, home insurance, funeral, lottery, Thompsons etc.
  
- 3) Although currently the strategy is to use stewards in recruitment within high density unionised workplaces, a lot more needs to be done around Black members recruitment.

The Benefits to UNISON



## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

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

We call upon National Black Members Committee to:

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

*Northern Region*

### **Motion Definition of Black**

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NATIONAL BLACK MEMBERS CONFERENCE

#### Background

The Swansea Branch of UNISON has voted to submit the following Motion for consideration at the National Black Members Conference (NBMC), which is to be held between 21 & 23 January 2022.

It is requested that the NBMC considers the motion and if the motion is passed at the NBMC conference then UNISON reviews its definition of Black.

Currently in UNISON, Black is used to indicate people with a shared history. Black with a capital 'B' is used in its broad political and inclusive sense to describe people

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

in Britain that have suffered colonialism and enslavement in the past and continue to experience racism and diminished opportunities in today's society.

The term 'Black' was a democratic decision made by lay members following a Motion which was passed in 2013 at the National Black Members Conference. 'Black' is not a description of the colour of skin or the skin tone, ethnicity, tribe, religion or culture but rather a political description.

### **Proposed Motion**

It is argued that the term and definition of Black excludes many of the people it is trying to be inclusive of. NHS statistics, published in January 2021, show that Asian people made up 10.7% of NHS staff (medical and non-medical) and 30.2% of medical staff, with people from Other ethnic groups making up a further 2.6% of the staff. Black people made up 6.5% of NHS staff.

In Swansea, a high number of the NHS staff are from the Philippines, they do not class themselves as black and do not understand the nuances of the Unison definition, especially as English is often their second language. They would question how they have a shared history with someone from a different continent / ethnic background and question how they have suffered from colonialism and enslavement, as they are defined by the Unison definition of them.

To use an example from the experience of the Swansea Unison Branch. A Facebook page was set up to create awareness of the Black Officer's work and create a safe community, open to all, for friendly discussions around issues affecting minority ethnic workers. This was called the Swansea Unison Branch Minority Ethnic Members Facebook page. This was in line with a recent Welsh Government report that stated the term BAME should not be used, but instead the term Minority Ethnic should be used.

The Facebook page initially had a lot of interaction from NHS staff, from a number of ethnic groups, including colleagues from the Philippines. After discussion it was decided that the name of the page should be changed to be in line with the Unison definition of Black. Since the page has been changed to the Black Member's Facebook page interaction from most of the ethnic groups has dropped to next to nothing.

Language has changed dramatically since 2013, when the term Black was democratically decided upon, with many terms and definitions now being seen as antiquated, not politically correct or even offensive.

In its work to settle on the term Minority Ethnic, rather than BAME, the Welsh Government's report that stated "Getting the terminology accurate when we want to talk about minority groups is something that concerns a lot of people. Some people worry about saying the wrong thing and causing offence, and the people to whom the terminology is addressed may feel it doesn't reflect who they are."

As such, the following, proposed Motion requests that the NBMC determines if the term Black is still the correct one to be using to define all Minority Ethnic Groups:

## 2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

The Swansea Branch of UNISON Motions that the current definition of Black, to describe people from a minority ethnic background, is reviewed to determine if this is an inclusive term to use.

### *Swansea Bay Healthcare*

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Received past the deadline

#### **Motion Black Workers - Zero Hours Contracts and the Impact of Coronavirus**

Conference notes that The Marmot Review 10 Years On, published in 2020, found that Black workers were more likely to be on zero-hours contracts than White workers: one in twenty-four Black workers were on a zero-hours contract compared with one in forty-two White workers.

Conference notes that on 20 March, the Chancellor announced the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The Government would cover 80% of worker's wages up to £2,500 per month. The eligibility guidance for the Government's furlough scheme stated that zero-hours contract workers could be furloughed. As a part of the Scheme, employers could decide which employees to furlough.

Conference is concerned that there is evidence that Black workers on zero-hours contracts were being refused furlough by their employers.

Being denied furlough, and also not being offered work, led to a loss of income. Being over-represented amongst zero-hours contract workers, Black workers were at particular risk of experiencing this.

Conference is also concerned to note that where work was available, pay in temporary and zero-hours jobs is typically a third less per hour than for those on permanent contracts. This placed many Black workers and their families under significant financial stress and constrained the choices that these workers had during the pandemic around whether they could afford not to attend work.

Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) was available to those who needed to self-isolate or were unable to work due to sickness. However, Black workers on zero-hours contracts faced problems claiming SSP. Some Black workers on zero-hours contracts found that they earned less than the lower earnings limit. Some Black workers relied on more than one job to supplement their incomes. This often brought them above the lower earnings limit, but they remained ineligible for SSP.

Conference notes that the coronavirus pandemic has sharpened the focus on the systemic issues with zero-hours contracts, and conference is deeply concerned by the impact of zero-hours contracts on Black workers throughout the course of the pandemic.

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

This conference calls upon the National Black Members' Committee to:

- 1) Work with Regional Black Members Committees to raise awareness of this issue.
- 2) To liaise with other sections of the union to put pressure on the Government to ban zero-hours contracts.

### ***Scotland Region***

#### **Motion Stop Charging Fees for Quarantining in Hotels**

This Conference notes that the Government is making money by charging huge fees of £2 300 out of Black Workers who are travelling to their birth countries, to attend funerals or to see their loved ones who are sick. People are asked to pay such an amount to stay in a 3 star hotel for 10 days when coming from a red zone Covid 19 country.

The conference condemns the way this is carried out. It looks like it's a business. The amount is too much considering that most Black workers are in low paid jobs plus they are not travelling for holidays but for circumstances beyond their control. The government is treating the Black peoples' sorrow, grief and desire to be like a business

Most of the countries that are classified as red zone countries are poor and can't afford vaccines to keep up with the need or to go in the same pace as Great Britain is doing.

1. Conference calls on the National Black Members Committee to work with the NEC so that these countries can be helped with more vaccines so that they can join the green zone.
2. Conference also calls the NBMC to remind the Government that Black Workers' families are equally as important as every other family in Great Britain.( Black Lives Matter).
3. Conference also wants to know the criteria that are used to classify these countries as green, amber and red zone and whether they have statics for these countries.
4. Charging of such an amount should stop and it also seems as if the Government pick and choose the rules. People who contracted Covid in work places have never been offered to stay in hotels and they were going home to spread it to their families.

# 2022 National Black Members' Conference

## UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

*Scotland Region*

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Referred to other bodies in the Union

### **Motion The disproportionate and continuing impact of Covid-19 on our Black Members and their mental health**

Conference notes with concern the disproportionate impact Covid-19 has on our Black Members and the ongoing impact this has on our mental health. Not only are many of our members working on the front line supporting communities, providing health care and keeping our country going but they are doing so in the knowledge that should they catch Covid, even if vaccinated the impact on them and their families could be catastrophic. They are turning up to work, day in day out putting themselves and their families at risk in order to provide vital services to all our communities.

At a time when mental health services are stretched to breaking point through years of crippling underfunding by the Tory Government there is a risk that too many of our hard working members will slip through the cracks and not receive the support they need.

In the Race Equality Foundation 2019 report "Racial disparities in mental health" the evidence shows black communities are less likely to access mental health support in primary care through their GP and more likely to end up crisis care and it is well-documented that black communities face inequalities in their experiences and outcomes in mental health services.

Conference calls on all branches to;

- Be doing their utmost to support these individuals by ensuring robust and appropriate risk assessments are being carried out in workplaces.
  
- To ensure all NHS employers are having meaningful Wellbeing Conversations with their Black staff in line with the recommendations of the NHS People Plan.
  
- To work with employers to ensure timely referrals to occupational health services for our Black Members when they need support.

Conference calls on the National Black Members' Committee to:

## **2022 National Black Members' Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

- Provide branches with specific toolkits and checklists that they can use to ensure our members are as safe as possible in the workplace and that their mental health as well as their physical health is being looked after.

- Work with the National Health Team to encourage Trusts to examine the different pathways to care, access to home treatments and inpatient provision to determine any ethnic bias and action to address this.

***Northern Region***

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