

UNISON 2021 National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus Conference

Final agenda

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MOTIONS

* denotes a possible composite

NEGOTIATING**1. SICKNESS POLICY MOTION**

Conference, in light of the disproportionate impact on the LGBT+ community of mental illnesses, chronic illnesses and some forms of disability, we move that employers should include in their sickness policies a specific provision for absences resulting from COVID-19 related illness including 'Long COVID', as well as illnesses and conditions related to lockdown conditions.

LGBT+ people are affected by numerous health inequalities, and the needs of any one individual may vary widely; LGBT+ people experience mental health issues at a significantly higher rate than the general population, and these inequalities are more extreme for trans/non-binary and Black members of the community. LGBT+ women are more likely to experience gender-based violence, with the concomitant health impacts and risks with regard to working from home. Trans/NB (non-binary) people may have experienced delays or difficulties in accessing gender-confirming treatment. LGBT+ people may experience difficulty or reluctance in engaging with healthcare due to discrimination or the avoidance of perceived or potential discrimination.

LGBT+ workers may have been forced to spend more time in harmful living situations, or have had access to community spaces, 'chosen family' or healthcare affected. This has impacts on both mental and physical health which workers have no means to counteract, and as such they must be accommodated. The impact of the pandemic, not only as an illness but as a social phenomenon should be written into sickness policy.

We ask the LGBT+ committee to work towards the following:

1. COVID-19 and lockdown related absences be exempted from criteria that trigger action under sickness policy;
2. These exemptions must be general, avoiding any requirement to reveal LGBT+ identity.

Yorkshire & Humberside region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS**

2. MENTAL HEALTH: A TRADE UNION ISSUE

Conference notes the huge impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, whether on staff working under stressful conditions, people isolated from friends and family by lockdown measures, the physical impact of the virus itself, and the continuing uncertainty due to changing and unreliable government advice and public

health policies.

Conferences notes that many LGBT+ members have come under intense pressure over the last year, whether because they have experienced isolation and separation from chosen families and support networks, have experienced burnout as a result of highly pressured workplaces, or had to spend time in homophobic or transphobic household environments.

Conference notes that the UNISON Equality Survey in August 2020 found that 74.3% of LGBT+ members said their mental health had been “seriously affected by lockdown” or “slightly affected by lockdown”, with 76.2% saying that they experienced “feelings of isolation”.

Conference recognises that mental health is a workplace issue which must be addressed by trade unions, both in negotiations with employers and by direct support for affected workers.

Conference asks the national LGBT+ members’ committee to:

1. Promote UNISON’s updated bargaining advice on mental health;
2. Support LGBT+ members groups in working with their branches to negotiate positive workplace policies addressing and supporting staff mental health;
3. Share examples of best practice and successes in negotiating supportive policies and procedures such as sickness absence policies and policies on reasonable adjustments;
4. Encourage and support LGBT+ members to become health and safety representatives, and promote UNISON’s Be on the safe side campaign to LGBT+ members groups;
5. Work with the national young members’ forum to promote UNISON’s campaigning and bargaining work around mental health to young LGBT+ members.

National young members’ forum

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

Amendment 2.1

In second paragraph after “homophobic” add “, biphobic”.

Add new fifth paragraph “Conference recognises that the disability provisions of the Equality Act 2010 include both physical and mental health conditions and impairments, if they are likely to last or have lasted for 12 months or more and substantially impact on day to day activities. Day to day activities includes work duties. Conference notes that a person falls within the definition of disabled if a condition or impairment is intermittent or recurrent. Where someone is disabled under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, then the employer has a duty to make

reasonable adjustments including for mental health conditions and impairments”.

In action point 1., at end add “, accessibility passports and guide on reasonable adjustments”

Disabled LGBT+ members’ caucus

3. MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE AWARENESS TO SUPPORT LGBT+ MEMBERS FOLLOWING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Conference applauds the national LGBT+ committee for the work undertaken to date to highlight the effects of austerity measures on LGBT+ workers, the services we provide and the knock-on effects of the reduction in those services. Furthermore that a range of governmental bodies, statutory services and other organisations have highlighted evidence that LGBT+ people experience increased levels of mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and stress leading to suicidal ideation and action as a result of the negative impact of their experiences of discrimination and marginalisation.

COVID-19 has had a proven negative impact on mental health. The data now available showing the hidden impact on Mental Health of LGBT+ people is stark and highlights the need for local and national suicide prevention strategies that consider LGBT+ issues in their approaches. National Health Service Trusts are starting to realise the importance of suicide awareness and are beginning to make training mandatory for staff so they can spot the signs that someone may be heading towards crisis point. It is therefore increasingly important that reps can signpost members to agencies that can give them the help they need.

A number of charities and organisations such as Chasing the Stigma, PAPYRUS, The Samaritans and the LGBT Foundation are doing important work to tackle mental health and suicide stigma and encourage additional support, especially for those falling under intersectional categories in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important that the union supports and promotes organisations which are in line with its values.

It is also important that reps use UNISON’s ‘Bargaining on Mental Health Policies’ guide (which has been updated to acknowledge the impact of COVID) to work with the employer to ensure there is sufficient support for staff experiencing mental health problems. All policies, from sickness absence to reorganisation, should be audited to check where they can offer better support. Mental health problems may well mean that the member is protected as a disabled person under the Equality Act 2010 and there should be clear policies around the need to identify and provide reasonable adjustments for such staff.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Continue to publicise UNISON’s ‘Bargaining for Mental Health Policies’ guide;

2. Work with Hub of Hope and There for You to help branches and regions to signpost members towards suitable organisations and charities working in the field of mental health and suicide awareness;
3. Work with service groups to promote and advocate training on mental health awareness and the potential risks of suicide;
4. Consider the provision of materials for pride stalls and other events with information and signposting to support LGBT+ people within the area of mental health and suicide awareness.

North West region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

4. INTRODUCING PRONOUNS INTO THE WORKPLACE

Conference recognises the need for inclusiveness for our LGBT+ members in the workplace. Many transgender and non-binary people feel unsupported by their employers when it comes to gender identity. Colleagues and patients or service users may assume someone's gender identity.

We believe that the regular use of pronouns on name badges, ID cards and email signatures would alleviate the awkward questions that members face on a day to day basis.

The regular use of pronouns within the working environment will lead to a more inclusive workplace encouraging our members to support each other with any alternative LGBT+ issues that may arise.

Employers should therefore promote the use of pronouns on badges, ID badges and email signatures.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

Encourage activists and branches to start the conversation with employers to adopt this issue as policy through collective bargaining, and work with employers to promote inclusion by utilising UNISON's model inclusive workplace policies.

NHS Glasgow Clyde and CVS branch LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

Amendment 4.1

In third paragraph, delete all after "workplace" and insert: ". Conference therefore welcomes the UNISON 'Why pronouns are important' factsheet."

In fourth paragraph, delete "promote the use of" and insert "encourage all staff to include their preferred".

In last paragraph, delete “activists and branches to start the conversation with employers to adopt this issue as policy through collective bargaining, and” and insert:

“branches to promote the UNISON factsheet, urge employers to adopt this policy, and”.

Greater London region LGBT+ group

5. SUPPORTING STONEWALL AND OUR TRANS COMMUNITY

Conference notes that there are groups and individuals who we would normally consider on the left of the political spectrum and, under the guise of ‘gender-critical feminism’, are aligned with a government that they would otherwise denounce. These agitators now agree with Tory ministers that trans people should not have equal rights and, in fact, have too many already.

Equalities minister Liz Truss is pushing all government departments to withdraw from the Stonewall employment scheme promoting LGBT+ acceptance, which counts 250 government departments and public bodies among its 850 members, who are given the tools and training to embed LGBT+ inclusion in their working practices.

No amount of generic #PrideMonth tweets or platitudes about respecting trans people, while in the next breath denying trans women’s identities, can hide this from the unbiased observer.

Many Stonewall co-founders, such as Ian McKellen, Lisa Power, Michael Cashman and others without public platforms stand staunchly by Stonewall and their support for our trans community.

It is convenient for the anti-trans corners of society to ignore the awkwardness and cynicism of their alliances in order to pursue their agenda against the charity, one of the few in Britain standing by trans people despite loud voices misguidedly pitting women against trans people.

The main ‘charge’ against Stonewall is conveniently vague, but can be traced to a report commissioned by the University of Essex that looked at the cancellation of a seminar at which an academic who is seen as ‘gender critical’ was due to speak, as well as another cancelled event.

But it really all comes down to a misinterpretation of Stonewall’s trans inclusion guidance.

Stonewall’s advice is based on the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance, which was itself recently reaffirmed by the High Court. In order to provide clear advice on trans inclusion, Stonewall uses commonly understood language in place of statutory language.

But according to the critics, ‘gender identity’ is a more capacious term than the legally sanctioned ‘gender reassignment’; in other words, they argue the charity is

sneakily trying to expand legal protections for trans people. In reality, the more accessible language that Stonewall uses is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Those who seek to limit or roll back legal protections for trans people, however, want equality law and guidance to only apply to those ‘transsexuals’ they grudgingly approve of.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Denounce the anti-trans position taken by these agitators and support the position of Stonewall;
2. Encourage branches to negotiate with employers to support Stonewall and their position on trans inclusion, by promoting trans inclusive policies through negotiation and bargaining;
3. Encourage branches to engage with staff forums to promote the positive aspects of employers being included in the Stonewall equality index to promote positive staff cultures and the use of inclusive language and policies.

Scotland region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT AND AMEND**

Amendment 5.1

After action point 3. insert action point 4.

- “4. Work with UNISON structures including the national LGBT+ committee networks (trans caucus, women’s caucus, bi+ caucus, disabled LGBT+ caucus, Black LGBT+ caucus), wider UNISON self organised group (SOG) structures, including other SOG national committees, the national young members’ forum, UNISON retired members and the equality unit to ensure intersectional identities are recognised through this work.”

Black LGBT+ members’ caucus

Amendment 5.2

In second paragraph, delete “Stonewall employment scheme promoting LGBT+ acceptance” and insert “trans inclusive Stonewall Diversity Champions scheme.”.

In fourth paragraph, delete all after “by Stonewall” and insert “being trans inclusive.”

In action point 1., delete “Denounce” and insert “Continue to denounce”. Delete “the position of Stonewall” and insert “Stonewall being trans inclusive”.

In action point 2., delete “negotiate with employers to support Stonewall and their position on trans inclusion, by promoting” and insert “urge employers to join the Diversity Champions scheme and to promote”.

In action point 3., delete “included in the Stonewall equality index” and insert “members of the Diversity Champions scheme”.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

6. MAKE CALL CENTRES MORE TRANS FRIENDLY

Many of our trans members and indeed the wider community can often give accounts of occasions whereby they have had to access public services via the telephone and their experiences have been upsetting, anxiety inducing and on occasions, distressful. Interaction with call centres is often an intimidating experience. Most of our public services are initially accessed via their call centres as they are the first point of contact, even more so since the COVID pandemic.

The problem is voice – the first and only thing a call taker hears. Initially from this, it is natural for the brain to form a mental image of the caller. Very often the call taker will reply with “Good Morning Sir/Madam, how can I help” or something similar. This often causes someone who identifies as the opposite gender or is non-binary some distress. The caller’s name and any pronoun can often be missed or in some cases is not always appropriate or a priority for organisations, an example being when taking 999 emergency calls.

However, there are ways we can use language to make the process feel more comfortable and less distressing. An example would be using phrases such as “can I just check how you spell your name?” or “is that the usual spelling of...”. This will sound less challenging than “what did you say your name is?” For someone who is already feeling anxious and then experiencing their gender being challenged, even a well-intentioned enquiry may sound unsympathetic and challenging if not phrased correctly. It’s important that we do what we can to make our call centres more accessible to our trans members to ensure that they are not missing out on vital services by being too anxious or stressed to pick up the phone.

We ask the national LGBT+ committee to work with the trans caucus and trans members to create an advice sheet on the correct and best practice words and phrases for call centre staff to use that are less hostile and confrontational to those that fall under the trans umbrella. This advice can then be taken back to branches by stewards and used to assist in the training of call taking staff to help make our public services more accessible by telephone and less distressing to our trans colleagues.

Eastern region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT AND AMEND**

Amendment 6.1

In second paragraph, delete first, second and third sentences and insert:

“It is natural for call takers to form a mental image of a caller from the sound of their voice. This may prompt a generic reply such as “Good Morning Sir/Madam, how can I help”, based on that assumption.”

In third paragraph, delete second sentence and insert:

“An example would be using a phrase such as “Just to confirm, I heard that as, is that correct?”

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISING

7. WHY LGBT+ EMPLOYEES SHOULD JOIN UNISON

LGBT+ people have been and are still experiencing verbal and physical bullying from colleagues, customers or service users because of their sexual orientation / identity and some still do not feel confident about reporting homo/bi and transphobic bullying in their workplace.

According to Stonewall more than a third of LGBT staff (35%) have hidden that they are LGBT at work for fear of discrimination. Almost one in five LGBT staff (18%) have been the target of negative comments or conduct from work colleagues because they're LGBT.

Almost one in five LGBT people (18%) who were looking for work said they were discriminated against because of their identity while trying to get a job and one in eight trans people (12%) have been physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the last year.

Almost two in five bi people (38%) aren't out to anyone at work about their sexual orientation, compared to 7% of gay men and 4% of lesbians, while one in four trans people (26%) aren't open with anyone at work about being trans.

Conference, UNISON has long been a supporter of the LGBT+ movement, and stand in solidarity with us today, and equality in employment and employment rights are key UNISON issues. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) report the number of people employed in the United Kingdom (UK) is 32.1 million and of this 5.67 million are employed within the public service sector. UNISON's membership equates to 22.9% of this. UNISON should be the trade union of choice not just for LGBT+ people but for all people.

Conferences requests the LGBT+ committee to:

1. Continue to actively work with and proactively encourage branches and associated partners to promote UNISON membership for LGBT+ employees;
2. Conduct research of members of their experience in seeking employment, as well as their experiences during interview;
3. Then use and provide this research to UNISON branches and LGBT+ groups to help continue to fight discrimination of LGBT+ workers on a national, regional and local level by lobbying Members of UK Parliament, Members of the Senedd, Members of the Scottish Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland and;
4. By lobbying large public service employers, to take a better public stand against LGBT+ discrimination.

CWM Taf Morgannwg health branch LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS**

8. DRIVING LGBT+ EQUALITY FORWARD

The coronavirus pandemic has shone a stark light on the deep and persistent structural inequalities which cut across the United Kingdom, but the impact on LGBT+ people has often been absent from the narrative. This stems from many factors, including failure to capture LGBT+ identities within specific research and national datasets, and has sometimes led to a perception that the pandemic has not had a particular impact on LGBT+ people.

We know that this is untrue. LGBT+ communities already face a wide range of health inequalities throughout their lives so are likely be disproportionately affected by the pandemic in many ways.

We also know that even before COVID, equality was increasingly being seen as a luxury in the workplace, with many employers barely abiding by the law, and there is now a risk of going backwards.

We therefore welcome that 2021 Special Delegate Conference (SDC) endorsed both national LGBT+ committee motions which included calls for UNISON to:

1. Campaign for a public enquiry to examine the impact on all communities covered by the protected characteristics – including the specific needs of LGBT+ communities during and beyond the pandemic, the impact of specialist LGBT+ services and resources for domestic violence, health and mental health having been devastated by austerity, and the need to redress the gaps in information on the needs of LGBT+ people through research;
2. Develop a refreshed, forward looking, equality strategy for UNISON which takes account of developments during the pandemic;
3. Continue to campaign for reform of the Gender Recognition Act, working with

- the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and other organisations as appropriate;
4. Review and refresh UNISON's equality training courses and materials to equip activists with the knowledge and skills to recognise workplace discrimination and the confidence to challenge it;
 5. Develop resources and materials that support members involved in the self-organised groups or young members' forum to engage in wider union activism at all levels of the union;
 6. Provide updated guidance to branches and sectors on reviewing employer equality policies and seeking to build an inclusive bargaining agenda with employers;
 7. Continue work to make UNISON recruitment and organising, advice, negotiations, campaigns, services, communications, and language inclusive of non-binary members.

Conference also welcomes that in July 2021, Christina McAnea signed the TUC open letter to equalities minister Liz Truss expressing concern at government inaction to address the inequality experienced by LGBT+ people. The letter also affirmed support for an immediate ban on all forms of conversion therapy, and for a simplified, free, statutory gender-recognition process, based on self-declaration.

We call on the national LGBT+ committee, working with other parts of the union as appropriate, to pursue implementation of our motions passed at SDC and to:

- A. Contribute to developing a 'refreshed' equality strategy;
- B. Promote, when available, the updated guidance on reviewing employer policies;
- C. Continue working towards UNISON being fully inclusive of non-binary members;
- D. Support TUC campaigns for LGBT+ equality in and out of the workplace.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

9. RECRUITING, SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING YOUNG LGBT+ ACTIVISTS

This conference notes that recruitment of young members to UNISON continues to increase year on year, with over 27,000 new young members joining UNISON in 2020.

This conference notes that young members continue to be under-represented as UNISON stewards, representatives and officers.

Conference notes the survey of UNISON young members in November 2020 which

found that 61.6% of young LGBT+ members said they “don’t often take part in UNISON activities, or never do”. Young disabled members, LGBT+ members, women members and Black members were also more likely to be anxious about taking part in UNISON activities for the first time.

Conference believes that the full participation of young members is vital to the success of the union in developing a sustainable activist base for the future and making sure that the voices of young LGBT+ workers are heard.

Conference asks the national LGBT+ members' committee to:

1. Work with the national young members' forum to develop a strategy to increase the numbers of young LGBT+ activists and young people participating in LGBT+ members groups;
2. Engage with branch and regional LGBT+ members groups to identify barriers for young LGBT+ members in getting more active in UNISON, and to highlight positive measures and success stories in addressing these barriers;
3. Encourage and support LGBT+ members groups to develop mentoring and buddying schemes to support and encourage new young activists, including promoting UNISON's learning and organising service's resources on mentoring.

National young members' forum

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

10. TRANS ALLY TRAINING – A SHOW OF SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT

Conference, since the 2018 consultation on reforming the 2004 Gender Recognition Act we have seen a continuous and sustained escalation of attacks against trans people.

These attacks come from a multitude of sources; mainstream newspapers, television current affairs programmes, educational establishments, religious groups, political parties, high profile celebrities, so called gender critical organisations and social media.

When there are at least two negative and often highly misleading articles published each week in the British press and multiple social media posts each day, cisgender people could almost be forgiven for developing ‘gender critical’ beliefs or views.

Unfortunately holding these views can manifest itself in serious ways. Galop, the LGBT+ anti-violence charity commissioned a report into transphobic hate crime in 2020.

Their report found that recorded transphobic hate crime had doubled in the last three years, that 4 in 5 of respondents to their research had experienced a form of transphobic hate crime, with a quarter of respondents experiencing physical assault

or the threat of physical assault.

More than 5 in every 10 respondents had received transphobic abuse from a stranger and nearly 5 in 10 had received transphobic abuse from a transphobic 'activist', and 2 in 10 had been targeted by a coordinated group.

Nearly 4 in 10 had received transphobic abuse from someone in the LGBT+ community.

There are many more equally disturbing statistics in this report which provides clear evidence of the direction of travel of transphobic hate crime.

Conference, we know that these negative media articles are not based on truth or facts. They are designed to promote fear and mistrust of trans people, much in the same way the media portrayed lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the 1980's during the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (AIDS/HIV) epidemic and the introduction of Section 28.

One way of tackling the spread of misinformation is through education. UNISON's learning and organising services, in conjunction with the national LGBT+ self organised group (SOG) has developed trans ally training. This is designed to remove the myths around trans people, build a greater understanding of the challenges trans people face and help allies to develop ways of supporting trans colleagues and challenging transphobia.

Conference, LGBT+ committee motions to UNISON's 2021 national conference and service group conferences raised trans equality. It is essential that work to promote trans equality is prioritised throughout our union.

Knowing there are allies within our union goes a long way to giving trans members the confidence to be themselves, safe in the knowledge that they are supported.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Continue to promote trans ally training throughout UNISON, specifically including branches, regions, service groups, Labour Link & other SOGs;
2. Show solidarity with, and where appropriate work alongside, the Trades Union Congress and other trade unions on trans equality and trans ally initiatives;
3. Encourage all in our LGBT+ SOG to participate in the trans ally training and promote it throughout the general membership.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

Amendment 10.1

In the final paragraph, in action point (1), after "Labour Link" add:

“Young Members Organisation, Retired Members Organisation”.

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

11. TRANS REPORTING IN THE MEDIA

Conference notes the increased reporting of anti-trans stories in the broadcast and printed media in recent years. Transgender people generally are increasingly written about in negative ways.

The United Kingdom (UK) press wrote over 6,000 articles about trans people in 2018-19. On the surface there appear to have been improvements – some of the more inappropriate and joking uses of language around trans people have reduced since 2012 and there are many more stories around transphobia and inclusivity. However, there are large swathes of the press which write about these topics in order to be critical of trans people and many articles which paint trans people as unreasonable and aggressive. The picture suggests that the conservative press and most of the tabloids have shifted from an openly hostile and ridiculing stance on trans people towards carefully worded but still very negative stance.

Researchers have found a link between negative media representations of transgender people and adverse mental health outcomes among members of the community.

Gender critical and anti-trans posts on social media often quote, or post links to, negative articles in print or broadcast media, whilst such media often use anti-trans social media accounts as the basis for further articles. Launched in 2021, GB News has demonstrated a willingness to espouse right wing views on equality issues.

Research commissioned by the UK’s press regulator concluded trans news stories have grown 400% since 2010 and have become more “strident” and “heated.”

“Anti-trans groups get incredible amount of space in public discourse and the media,” Owl Fisher, a non-binary journalist and trans rights campaigner, said.

Conference is concerned that the recent employment tribunal ruling in the case of Maya Forstater, ruled that gender critical views are a protected belief. Whilst recognised by the tribunal as “profoundly offensive”, it has been decided these views must be “tolerated”. It has also been stated that this “judgment does not mean that those with gender critical beliefs can ‘misgender’ trans persons with impunity.”

Conference further notes that Stonewall is increasingly being targeted by gender critical and anti-trans groups in opposition to Stonewalls’ support of trans rights.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee, working with the trans caucus, to:

1. Liaise with the other UNISON self organised groups to ensure that anti-trans rhetoric has no voice in our union;

2. Continue to promote the inclusive nature of the LGBT+ committee;
3. Continue to support the work of LAOS (learning and organising services) in delivering the ‘How to be a good trans ally’ training package;
4. Continue to promote the work that UNISON does for trans equality.

Transgender members’ caucus

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS AND AMEND**

Amendment 11.1

Add a new third paragraph:

“This negative stance is not confined to the conservative and tabloid press. Conference notes that, in February 2020, UNISON’s presidential team and General Secretary were among those to write to the Morning Star regarding a cartoon it had printed. Their letter also commented that this was not the first time the Star had printed transphobic material, it asked how the newspaper intended to rebuild trust with the trans community and it offered help from UNISON’s LGBT+ members’ group to devise a plan. Conference observes that this appears to have led to little if any change in the Morning Star’s coverage and the initiative remains to be followed up.

In the final paragraph, add a new action point:

- “5. Raise, either with the national executive council or with the union’s principal officers, continuing concerns about the Morning Star’s coverage of trans issues with a view to UNISON making renewed approaches to the paper, possibly in concert with other trade unions.”

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

Amendment 11.2

In seventh paragraph, delete all after “employment” and insert:

“appeal tribunal ruling in the case of Maya Forstater has been widely misrepresented, often deliberately. The only issue considered by the appeal tribunal was whether the original tribunal, which dismissed the case, had been wrong not to consider her ‘gender critical’ views as a philosophical belief protected by the Equality Act. The appeal tribunal ruled that the original tribunal had been wrong on that issue, and that her case would have to be re-heard by a fresh tribunal. Contrary to the claims made by anti-trans campaigners, the ruling does not affect existing equality law, and does not give anyone the right to harass, abuse or discriminate against trans people.”

In action point 1., delete “other UNISON self organised groups” and insert:

“national executive council, and other parts of the union, including the other self

organised groups, as appropriate,”.

In action point 3., delete “package;” and insert “package, and encourage branches and regions to run the training;”.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

12. SUPPORTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Conference welcomes the discussions and work that has already been done in UNISON on the subject of mental health.

Mental health is an issue that affects many of us and many of those that we know. The issue disproportionately affects LGBT+ young people, who are three times more likely to self-harm and twice as likely to contemplate suicide than their non-LGBT+ peers, new research by Just Like Us has found.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to recognise and address the increasing issue of mental health among LGBT+ young people by:

1. Signposting materials to provide information and support regarding mental health issues in LGBT+ young people to equality co-ordinators and LGBT+ officers in branches;
2. Working with the young members’ forum to campaign and increase awareness throughout UNISON of the struggle of LGBT+ young people with mental health issues;
3. Calling on branch and regional LGBT+ groups to ensure that they engage with their branches and regions on raising awareness of this issue;
4. Discussing a partnership with Just Like Us and encourage members to work with them to empower young people to champion LGBT+ equality and let all young people know that being LGBT+ is something to be celebrated.

Northern region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

13. UNISON AND THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Conference, there are 1.3 million members in our great union, and if 10% identified as LGBT+, that means that we might expect 130,000 LGBT+ people to participate in our LGBT+ conference. At present our in-person conferences average around 400 people.

We need to capitalise on our newfound virtual skills and develop the way we interact with LGBT+ members. Using these newfound skills will allow more voices to be heard, and more members to contribute their thoughts, demands and opinions.

We must continue to emphasise the collective nature of our movement and our demands, but at the same time we must engage directly with individual members and potential members. We need to bring a collective union identity to members in isolated and fragmented workplaces, as well as nurturing the good relations in less isolated and more organised workplaces.

Over the last eighteen months, LGBT+ members have been Zooming, GoTo-ing, participating in Teams and other virtual media platforms for work, union meetings and socials. We have engaged with existing members, encouraged activism and recruited new members. We recognised the need to develop ways to engage with our members and potential members one to one, collectively, in work and socially all online.

The unprecedented year has shown that we must expand our use of the website, social media and other online UNISON tools, such as the Organising Space. We need to embrace the positives of engaging anywhere, anytime and join the global revolution of virtual participation. Conference recognises that although face to face participation is crucial, virtual platforms are also becoming key to our work in the future.

Conference notes that all UNISON members, including LGBT+ members, are facing unprecedented attacks and challenges including to our pay, terms and conditions, benefits and living standards. We are expected to do more for less, covering unfilled and deleted posts, while services we rely on disappear and housing costs spiral. Conference believes that we must use all tools at our disposal to have our voices heard loudly.

Conference therefore welcomes the introduction and promotion of our excellent LGBT+ digital organising guidelines and calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Continue to advertise and promote safe engagement, including the UNISON digital organising for LGBT+ equality guide;
2. Explore digital approaches to delivering training with UNISON's learning and organising services as an addition to in-person training which could develop the use of web-based tools to assist with our recruiting and engagement;
3. Test out a hybrid form of meetings that will include both in-person and virtual platforms simultaneously;
4. Work with the Black, disabled and women's self-organised groups, young members' forum and retired members to explore alternative ways of meeting, to increase the participation of members in our union;
5. As a matter of urgency, liaise with the national executive council through the equality liaison committee to support the drive to increase members'

participation through hybrid working.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

Amendment 13.1

In the final paragraph, at the end of action point 5., add:

“and to include the retired members organisation (which is not represented on the equality liaison committee) in this drive.”

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

CAMPAIGNING

14. NEXT STEPS IN THE CAMPAIGN FOR TRANS + AND NON-BINARY RIGHTS

Conference notes with concern the rise of the anti-trans movement, some of which is specifically in the lesbian, gay and bisexual community and within elements of the women’s rights movement. Whilst in perspective the movement may be small, it is also vocal and has the ability to quickly alienate trans + and non-binary people from spaces that they may have previously held as being safe for them.

Unfortunately, the attack on trans + and non-binary rights is perpetuated by the current government’s approach which includes abandoning meaningful change to the Gender Recognition Act, stopping work on its lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) action plan and disbanding its LGBT panel.

Conference further notes that the anti-trans movement effectively uses social media tactics to attack and drown out LGBT+ and supportive voices, including regular ‘trolling’, (the mass targeting of social media accounts with negative messages) of positive and LGBT+ inclusive messages posted by public sector organisations.

Conference observes that recent racist social media posts surrounding Euro 2020 have been rightly condemned including via the media and notes the announced government strategy may be to support football banning orders for those identified as making racist social media posts. This is a positive step in changing how people act on social media and Conference believes that a similar approach for homophobic, biphobic and transphobic social media posts should be adopted.

Conference believes that whilst there should be no debate about trans + and non-binary rights because the right for people to exist isn’t a question, it is clear that there is much work to do in order to shift public and media opinion and to make our workplaces, social spaces and communities inclusive and supportive places for trans + and non-binary people.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Continue its campaign for positive reform of the Gender Recognition Act;
2. Continue to promote trans + and non-binary rights as a key theme throughout its work for the next year;
3. Produce updated campaigning materials in support of trans + and non-binary rights;
4. Support campaigns that call for social media companies to do more about and be held accountable for offensive content produced by its users.

North West region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS**

15. CONDEMN THE GENDER CRITICAL MOVEMENT

Conference is appalled by and opposed to the ever-growing right wing anti-trans movement commonly referred to as ‘gender critical’. This movement has become very well organised and very well-funded in recent years and has established itself by forming several pressure groups such as LGB Alliance, who are forming links with members of the government and influencing policy on a United Kingdom (UK) wide scale.

The methodology of these groups is not to promote lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) rights, but rather to cause direct harm to and remove hard won rights from trans people. Dangerous precedents are being set in law to deny trans people access to basic healthcare and legal recognition. It is becoming increasingly clear the attacks on the trans community will be used as a springboard for attacks on the rights of other groups, including LGB and gender-diverse people.

Elements of the gender critical movement have adopted the language of the Section 28/2A period to promote conversion therapy principles and their obsession with the definition of women threatens real harm towards trans people and lesbians.

Conference calls upon the LGBT+ committee to:

1. Condemn this movement at every level in our society, to encourage a show of solidarity towards the trans community, from the trade union movement through the Trades Union Congress;
2. Organise a campaign raising awareness of the danger this movement presents to human rights in the UK;
3. Use education and communication materials to counter misinformation and

intolerant rhetoric.

Scotland region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS AND AMEND**

Amendment 15.1

In second paragraph, delete second sentence.

In action point 1., after “society,” insert “and continue”.

In action point 2., delete “Organise” and insert “Continue to”. Delete “UK;” and insert “UK, working with other parts of the union and other organisations as appropriate;”.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

16. TRANS EQUALITY – LOUDER AND PROUDER!

The toxic debate ignited by the government’s consultation on reforming the Gender Recognition Act underlined the importance of our union supporting and representing trans members effectively.

Attacks on trans people have escalated further over the last year. Groups trying to roll back the rights of trans people are encouraging supporters to lobby public bodies to replace ‘gender’ in their equality policies with ‘sex’ and claim that some have agreed to do so.

There has been a series of press articles about Stonewall having ‘lost its way’ by becoming trans inclusive, and a sustained attack on Stonewall’s Diversity Champions programme. Attacks are being coordinated to undermine support for Stonewall’s work on LGBT+ equality at work.

The tactics being used are almost identical to the tactics seen around the time of Section 28, when gay men were portrayed as sexual predators and a danger to children to spread fear and mistrust.

Conference recognises that recent years have seen a concerted international campaign against trans people, and there is growing evidence of this being linked to the far right.

Conference notes that:

1. The Southern Poverty Law Centre in the United States (US) reported that, in 2017 at an annual right-wing, fundamentalist event called the Values Voter Summit, transphobia was discussed as a tactic to be deployed because rallying against homosexuals was not working any more. One of the far-right panellists said: “Trans and gender identity are a tough sell, so focus on gender identity to divide and conquer...trans activists need the gay rights movement to help

legitimise them...If you separate the T from the alphabet soup, we'll have more success”;

2. The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation’s study on the evolution of extremism in the first 100 days of the Biden Administration found that “Transphobia has long been one of the most major and ubiquitous narratives around which the far right mobilises... transphobia should be recognised as a security concern”;
3. Some anti-trans individuals and groups in the United Kingdom have links with far right and alt right religious groups in the US and elsewhere;
4. Targeting a minority, and spreading false information to provoke hatred and distrust by preying on people’s fears, are classic far right recruitment tactics.

UNISON’s position is clear: trans women are women, trans men are men and non-binary identities are valid. Conference recognises, however, that UNISON now needs to become more visible and more vocal in promoting trans equality.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

- A. Produce a briefing to help members counter the gender critical narrative and provide information on the links with the far right;
- B. Pledge support to appropriate organisations, such as Stonewall and Mermaids, that are being subjected to attacks because of their work on trans inclusion, and explore ways of working together;
- C. Raise the issue of links with the far right with the national executive council and explore ways to increase the visibility of UNISON’s support for trans equality.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

17. POOR PROVISION OF HEALTHCARE FOR TRANS PEOPLE

This Conference notes:

1. That there are extensive long waiting times varying from 2.5 to 5 years for a first appointment at a gender dysphoria clinic for adults in the United Kingdom (UK). This is a devastatingly long and unacceptable time and means people often seek private provision, if they can afford to;
2. That in April 2021, the actions of National Health Service (NHS) commissioners has resulted in a complete removal of lower surgery provision to trans men. This happened because the NHS commissioners didn’t renew the contract with the only surgeons experienced in lower genital surgery for trans men;
3. That the contract has been re-tendered, with NHS commissioners stating they

are now seeking bids from other providers to carry out the surgery, despite no other surgeons being trained in these procedures in the UK;

4. That there are many trans men who are part way through the surgeries, (there are usually three ops involved) and this is leaving them in unbearable limbo. There are others (including some in pain) who need revision surgery;
5. That research demonstrates that trans people who undergo gender-affirming surgery are significantly less likely to seek mental health treatment than trans people who do not access gender-affirming surgery.

This Conference resolves:

To call on the LGBT+ committee to work with the relevant structures in UNISON to:

- A. Highlight this detrimental change in healthcare provision to trans people;
- B. Campaign for improvements in healthcare for trans people, including the training of surgeons within the NHS, and increasing resources for NHS gender identity clinics.

Camden UNISON branch LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

18. BI+ INCLUSION – STRONGER TOGETHER

Conference notes people with an attraction to more than one gender challenge the sometimes binary categories we use to organise the world. To take one example, a bisexual plus (bi+) person's orientation often cannot be determined by their current partner(s). However, the fact that bi+ identities defy assumptions many people have about attraction and relationships can also mean that bi+ people are particularly stigmatised. While biphobia shares common elements with homophobia and transphobia, it has several distinctive elements. Crucially, biphobia can come from two directions – it's expressed by straight people and gay/lesbian people, creating exclusion and prejudice from within and outside the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. This exacerbates the challenges already faced by bi+ communities compounding the shame and prejudice that many bi+ people experience.

Research shows that bi+ people experience numerous, distinct types of discrimination. They are significantly less likely to be out to friends or family because they fear prejudice. However, when they look for support from other members of the LGBT community, they often experience rejection there, too. Bi+ people also reported fear around being open about their orientation when seeking medical help. When they did come out to their healthcare provider, 22% of respondents experienced inappropriate questioning about their sexuality. To improve outcomes for bi+ people, it's vital that we acknowledge that this combination of erasure and harmful stereotypes creates unique problems, and that we need unique solutions to

solve them.

There is a clear need for more research into the experiences of bi+ people, particularly those who face multiple types of discrimination, such as people of colour, people of faith, disabled people, working class people, and trans people.

We must build a conversation about the ongoing and emerging needs of bi+ communities, as well as marking our commitment, as the largest public sector trade union, to investing in work which will create meaningful change for all bi+ people. We are stronger together and we must ALL amplify the voices of bi+ people and challenge bi+ erasure.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee, working with the bi+ caucus, to:

1. Liaise with the other self-organised groups, regions & branches to recognise and challenge biphobia and to create resources to support this work as part of a wider campaign to recognise and challenge biphobia;
2. Uplift and support marginalised bi+ people working with our other self-organised groups. Black bi+ people are doubly underrepresented, erased and discriminated against. Bi+ men face stigma within and outside of the LGBT community. Ace bi people are told they 'cannot' be bi. Bi+ people of faith are often invisible in narratives about LGBT inclusion in faith spaces. Sometimes trans bi+ people are invalidated when people question how their bi identity intersects with their gender identity;
3. Run a campaign highlighting the impact of biphobia on our bi+ members from within the LGBT+ community including an editorial in Out in UNISON promoting the use of inclusive language.

Bisexual members' caucus

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

Amendment 18.1

In the final paragraph, in action point 1. after 'groups' add:

'young members' organisation, retired members' organisation,'.

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

19. A HUB OF HOPE

Conference notes the difficulties we've all faced during the pandemic and subsequent lockdown restrictions, especially on our mental health. For many, this meant isolation, anxiety, and fear, restricted in a 'hostile home' or environment, unable to be their authentic selves, struggling with their sexuality or gender identity, unable to access support network or peers.

Even before the pandemic, bisexual plus (bi+) people were often stigmatised with biphobia from both straight people and by gay/lesbian people. At the same time bi+ people's experiences of discrimination are often undermined or ignored altogether.

Stonewall's 'LGBT in Britain – Bi Report', published in 2020 showed bi people experience numerous, distinct types of discrimination. It highlighted 31% of respondents had been insulted, pestered, intimidated, or harassed in the year prior to being surveyed, and of these, 75% had not reported it to the police because they feared it would not be taken seriously.

Bi+ people are less likely to be out to friends or family because they fear prejudice. Compared with almost 75% of gay and lesbian being open about the sexuality, this figure falls to 36% for being out to friends and even lower at 20% to family. And when they look for support from other members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, they often experience rejection there too.

Bi people also reported fear around being open about their orientation when seeking medical help. When they did come out to their healthcare provider, 22% of respondents experienced inappropriate questioning about their sexuality. A quote from the report read "My girlfriend was heavily advised to get an HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) test because I'm bisexual... The assumption was that I was promiscuous, with the doctor speaking to my girlfriend as if she couldn't trust me and treating me notably differently once she knew my sexuality."

To improve outcomes for bi+ people, it's vital we acknowledge that this combination of erasure and harmful stereotypes creates unique problems, and that we need unique solutions to solve them.

One such solution is the 'Hub of Hope', a completely free and confidential national mental health database. It brings together organisations and charities, large and small, across our nations who offer mental health advice and support, together in one place you can find with the click of a button, accessed via any browser or app.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee, working with the bi+ caucus, to:

1. Liaise with the other self-organised groups, regions & branches to raise the issue of positive mental health and to promote the resources available to support mental health wellbeing including UNISON's guide on bargaining for mental health policies;
2. Continue to promote the inclusive environment of our LGBT+ self-organised group and to reiterate a zero-tolerance approach to biphobia within UNISON;
3. Run a campaign highlighting the impact of biphobia on our bi+ members from within the LGBT+ community including an editorial in Out in UNISON.

Bisexual members' caucus

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

20. RAISING BI+ VISIBILITY AND SUPPORTING BI+ PRIDE

Conference can celebrate how far we've come as a LGBT+ community, but sometimes the bisexual plus (bi+) community feels isolated.

Bisexual erasure is a pervasive problem where the existence or legitimacy of bisexuality is questioned or denied outright. Bi+ people can face 'double discrimination': facing discrimination and abuse from straight people, and lesbian and gay people.

Lesbians and gay men sometimes oppose bi+ inclusion, and this can involve being refused entry to LGBT+ spaces or inappropriate treatment by LGBT+ services. Bi+ people regularly feel pressured to pass as gay or lesbian to avoid biphobia when accessing LGBT+ related services. Those who do come out often face inappropriate assumptions, questions, and stereotyping. Bi+ identity is not always visible so biphobic abuse can be concentrated in settings where target and perpetrator know each other, further driving feelings of isolation.

Stonewall's research ('LGBT in Britain - Bi+ report (2020)' September 2020) found only one in five bi+ people (20%) are out to all their family compared to three in five gay men and lesbians (63%). One third of bi+ people (33%) hide their sexual orientation from their family. Two in five bi+ people (42%) have hidden or disguised their bi+ identity at work for fear of discrimination.

The research shows how biphobic discrimination and rejection from family and friends significantly increase the risk of poor mental health. Nearly three in five bi+ people (59%) experienced depression, compared to just under half of gay and lesbian people (46%).

Stonewall's Chief Executive said: "For the first time we have research specifically looking at what life is like for bi people in Britain... we've found...that across the board biphobic stereotypes and prejudices are making life harder for bi people and, too often, their experiences of discrimination are either undermined or ignored altogether.

We want every LGBT person to thrive and be confident about who they are. Accepting bi people without exception is essential to creating a world where everyone, everywhere is free to be themselves."

Conference, we should collaborate with organisations already working in this area. Brenda Howard, the mother of 'Pride' was an out bi+ woman. Although many prides appear to have forgotten their bi+ origins, Bi+ Pride UK is still working hard with established prides, and smaller events to ensure that bi+ awareness is raised and stays on the agenda. They are creating safe bi+ spaces, providing training and resources, and speaking up. As an LGBT+ community we all benefit, demonstrating tolerance, inclusivity and acceptance.

Conference therefore instructs the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Work with Bi+ Pride UK to increase bi+ visibility at pride events supported by

UNISON;

2. Develop a bi+ ally fact sheet, and combatting bi+ erasure and biphobia resources, for circulation to branches and regional LGBT+ self-organised groups (SOGs);
3. Provide support to branches and regional SOGs for Bi+ Visibility day on the 23rd September;
4. Increase representation through bi+ articles in The Activist and Out in UNISON.

South East region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

21. CONVERSION THERAPY

Conference notes with regret that conversion therapy which includes medical, psychiatric, psychological, religious, cultural or any other interventions that seek to erase, repress or change the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of a person remains completely permissible under law in the United Kingdom (UK).

Conference acknowledges the damage this practice has had on generations of LGBT+ young people and adults which especially targets them when they are at their most vulnerable with many experiencing self-harm, eating disorders, mental ill-health, and attempted suicide as a result.

Stonewall's 'Unhealthy Attitudes' report (2015) found 10% of health and care staff had witnessed colleagues expressing that lesbian, gay and bi people can be 'cured' of their sexual orientation. In their 2018 report 'LGBT in Britain – Health Report', they found that one in twenty lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people (5%) have been pressured to access services to question or change their sexual orientation when accessing healthcare services.

We acknowledge the Memorandum of Understanding that National Health Service (NHS) England and NHS Scotland co-signed along with many other organisations which states "that the practice of conversion therapy, whether in relation to sexual orientation or gender identity, is unethical and potentially harmful."

This abusive practice must be brought to an end. It is a significant public health and a human rights violation. Therefore a total legal ban and criminalisation of those who undertake conversion therapy are immediately called for. There is no place for conversion therapy in the UK. Such practices are discriminatory and harmful to the mental health and wellbeing of LGBT+ people.

We call on the UK government, as a priority in this session of parliament, to introduce legislation that would ban conversion therapy in the UK. If the UK government does not take action to ban conversion therapy, we call on the devolved governments/administrations to bring forward their own legislation as far as it is

possible within the powers of their respective governments/administrations.

We must campaign to ensure there is appropriate support for survivors, including access to counselling, as well as safeguarding and awareness training for healthcare and religious organisations.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Support end conversion therapy campaigns, including Stonewall's and End Conversion Therapy Scotland;
2. Work with the NEC (national executive council), service groups and branches to raise awareness of the damage that conversion therapy does and encourage them to support end conversion therapy campaigns;
3. Lobby the UK government and devolved governments and administrations to criminalise and ban conversion therapy;
4. Work with the health service group to seek that healthcare regulators and education providers ensure that LGBT+ healthcare needs are included in all accredited education/training programmes.

Scotland region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 21

Action point 3.

Remove and replace with:

- “3. Call on Labour Link to lobby the Labour Party to apply pressure on the UK government, devolved governments and administrations to ban conversion therapy.”

Add new action point 5.

- “5. Call on the health service group executive to work with all UNISON branches that operate within mental health care NHS trusts, to apply pressure on their trusts to denounce this practice, as it is not ‘therapeutic’ in any way and in fact causes significant harm to those they exist to care for.”

North Cumbria Northumberland & Tyne & Wear health branch LGBT+ group

22. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

Conference notes that there has been a reported rise in public sector organisations receiving a range of freedom of information (FOI) requests relating to a number of LGBT+ related issues, which have included requests about memberships and costs associated with Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme, costs and permissions

for flying rainbow flags and lighting buildings up in rainbow colours and costs and time spent on attending Pride events, to name a few.

Conference believes that some of these requests come from organisations and individuals who are not interested in progressing LGBT+ rights and the results usually end up on the front page of a newspaper alongside some questionable use of statistics. This has an impact on the health and wellbeing of our members involved in workplace LGBT+ groups who often come under unfair scrutiny about their actions and activities, many of which are done in spare time on a shoestring budget. This can affect the commitment of people to participate and be involved in the important work of LGBT+ groups.

Conference also notes that the Freedom of Information Act has been used to obtain documents that have been used in a wide range of positive campaigns, including by UNISON and when used properly is a valuable tool to hold public sector organisations to account.

Conference believes that campaigns that attack LGBT+ rights which use freedom of information requests as a tool need to be called out and challenged, that staff who are the subject of freedom of information requests need to be supported and that organisations who are subjected to these campaigns should put out positive messages affirming their commitment to LGBT+ rights.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Publicise and criticise the rise of the use of freedom of information requests to attack LGBT+ rights;
2. Consider and if appropriate produce guidance for UNISON activists on negotiating about responding to freedom of information requests, highlighting topics such as what vexatious requests look like and sharing some best practice responses;
3. Produce an activists briefing on how we and the organisations we work for can set the scene and proactively share messages of solidarity and support when we become aware of another FOI (freedom of information) campaign that targets LGBT+ rights.

North West region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

23. CLIMATE CHANGE IS A LGBT+ ISSUE

Conference applauds the motion adopted at this year's Special Delegate Conference (SDC) 'Tackling climate change and COP26' where a UNISON Scotland delegate told SDC: "The growing crisis of climate is one we can no longer put aside, either as a society or as a union. The threat of climate chaos is going to drive massive social change. We no longer have a choice about that." He went on to tell conference that

UNISON had to ensure that its members' voices were also heard on public services and public sector jobs.

We are at a defining moment when it comes to climate change. Its impacts are global in scope and unparalleled. Climate change is going to affect every one of us on the planet, but its effects will not be the same for all.

Greta Thunberg's school strikes and climate strikes supported by the trade union movement are seen as major reasons why the issue is still alive. There is a tendency to present the use and development of green technologies as a miracle solution. It is not just global warming that we are dealing with, but global warming in an unequal and unjust world. Without equality and equity, we cannot effectively fight climate change.

Based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it is evident that people who are already most vulnerable and marginalised will experience the greatest impacts of climate change. The IPCC identifies LGBT+ communities as one such group, which, because of its social vulnerability, is a hidden victim of climate change.

The vulnerability of LGBT+ people to climate change is worsened by poverty and discrimination. Around the world LGBT+ people are vulnerable to homelessness as they are often forced to leave their homes due to conflict with the family, violence or abuse. The precarious economic and physical conditions of homeless persons may lead individuals to choose sex work, despite the risk of criminal prosecution, so that they can meet their basic needs. It is often difficult for LGBT+ people to access services, particularly in countries which criminalise same sex relationships and where discrimination against trans people is widespread.

Homeless people and those with inadequate housing will be affected strongly by any natural calamity and are clear victims of temperature rise and polluted air.

In climate related emergencies, LGBT+ people face discrimination in emergency provision such as shelters.

There is now a general recognition that you could hardly fight what is the most prominent environmental threat to humanity while you ignore issues of equality and social justice.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to

1. Work to raise awareness of climate change amongst LGBT+ members and its impacts on marginalised communities;
2. Work with the international section to raise wider awareness of the adverse effects of climate change on LGBT+ communities;
3. Encourage branch and regional groups and caucuses to consider action on

climate change in conjunction with LGBT+ activism.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

INTERNATIONAL

24. TRANS RIGHTS IN EUROPE

Conference congratulates Transgender Europe (TGEU) for their work in promoting trans rights in Europe. However, 2021's Trans Rights Map published by TGEU, documents an alarming loss in rights when compared to 2020. While progressive countries in Europe have slowed down in increasing protections for trans people, moderate countries have often stalled progress altogether. Worse yet, a growing number of countries have been aggressively removing rights from trans people.

Conference is concerned that some countries still require a person to be sterilised in order to have their gender legally recognised. Amongst those, five are European Union (EU) member states: Czech Republic, Finland, Latvia, Romania and Slovakia. Alarmingly, one EU member, Hungary, has banned legal gender recognition.

Conference notes that on the positive side, eight European states now allow a person to adapt key documents based on self-determination, with procedures that are human rights compliant. Still, recognition for non-binary people is only possible in two states: Iceland and Malta. Considering that the Fundamental Rights Agency found that 62% of trans respondents to the European Union Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) II Survey (2019) did not identify exclusively as one gender, the absence of non-binary recognition fails the majority of the trans community.

Conference further notes that in July 2021, the Spanish government approved a legal gender recognition bill based on self-determination, and started its legislative process. If approved without changes, the law will guarantee that trans people over the age of 16 are able to change their registered gender; it will be enough to fill out a form. A psychiatric diagnosis and proof of medical treatment will no longer be required. Youth aged 14-16 must have parental approval and all applicants will need to confirm their decision three months later though non-binary individuals will not be able to access legal gender recognition. Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee, working with the trans caucus, to:

1. Continue to support TGEU and their work promoting trans rights;
2. Work with UNISON international and other appropriate bodies within UNISON towards possible affiliation to TGEU;
3. Encourage regional LGBT+ networks to seek affiliation to TGEU;

4. Promote the work of TGEU within UNISON.

Transgender members' caucus

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

25. DEFENDING INTERNATIONAL LGBT + RIGHTS

Conference notes that it is not a good time to be LGBT+ internationally. The rise of anti LGBT rhetoric in government agendas from Brazil to Poland has led to a rise in hate crime towards LGBT+ citizens of these countries and has made these parts of the world unsafe for LGBT+ people.

This is coupled with the continued variance of Commonwealth countries in relation to LGBT+ rights. For example, 35 of the 54 Commonwealth member states continue to criminalise same-sex intimacy.

Next year the Commonwealth games come to the UK with Birmingham hosting the 2022 games.

Conference sees this as the perfect time to continue to raise and highlight the continued abuses of LGBT+ people in these countries as well as highlighting support for LGBT+ friendly spaces at international sports events such as the forthcoming Pride House in the city during the games. During international events such as this, many athletes claim asylum due to them being too scared to return home due to the anti LGBT+ sentiment and legislation in the country they represent.

All countries should be safe for all people regardless of their gender identity or sexuality.

Decisive action against the rising tide of LGBT+ phobic hate must be taken.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Work with UNISON international committee to lobby government to intensify efforts to end abuses of LGBT+ people internationally;
2. Work with and support national and international organisations such as ILGA to put pressure on these countries to abolish these anti LGBT+ laws;
3. Highlight and work with local branches of UNISON in the Birmingham area during the Commonwealth games to support them to highlight the inequality in LGBT+ rights in participating countries;
4. Support the Pride House movement in Birmingham and raise awareness of this as a safe space for LGBT+ people during the games.

Scotland region LGBT+ group

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT WITH QUALIFICATIONS AND AMEND**

26. JUSTICE FOR PALESTINE

Conference notes that UNISON statements issued in May in response to the situation in East Jerusalem, Gaza, the West Bank and Israel said that:

1. UNISON will continue to call on the United Kingdom (UK) government to:
 - A. Suspend the UK's arms trade with the government of Israel and support calls for a United Nation's (UN) arms embargo;
 - B. Prohibit trade with illegal settlements and suspend the UK Israel Association Agreement until the Israeli government complies with its human rights clauses; and,
 - C. Demand a halt to the planned evictions of families in Sheikh Jarrah and other communities, the destruction of Palestinian homes and other property, and the building of illegal settlements, which violate fundamental human rights, are illegal under international law and undermine the prospects of a viable Palestinian state alongside Israel.
2. The continued oppression of Palestinians seen in recent weeks further demonstrates why UNISON, human rights organisations including Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem and UN special rapporteurs, recognise that the systematic discrimination faced by the Palestinian people constitutes the crime of apartheid under international law;
3. UNISON will continue to support Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) as a legitimate and practical way to persuade the Israeli government to end its repression of the Palestinian people and contribute towards the building of peace.

Conference further notes that updated research released by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) in April shows that Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) funds continue to hold at least £4.4 billion in companies involved in the illegal Israeli settlements in Palestine and the violation of Palestinian human rights. 85% of the LGPS funds analysed have holdings in companies included in the UN Human Rights Office's list of 112 business enterprises active in Israel's illegal settlements in the West Bank.

Conference instructs the national LGBT+ committee, working with the national executive council and international department as appropriate, to:

- I. Continue to encourage LGBT+ members, branch and regional groups to take up actions in support of Palestinian rights;
- II. Promote UNISON's guide 'Palestine: Is your pension invested in the occupation?' which provides scheme members with a range of actions they can take to encourage their fund to put pressure on companies involved in the occupation of Palestinian land, and begin the process of divestment from companies listed on the UN Human Rights office's list of business enterprises

- active in Israel's illegal settlements;
- III. Continue to raise LGBT+ people's awareness why not to go on holiday or make cultural or sporting visits to Israel;
 - IV. Continue to publicise the work of PSC, and urge LGBT+ members to join and get their branches and regions to affiliate;
 - V. Explore with PSC and LGBT+ groups in selected trade unions the potential for setting up a new LGBT+ Palestine network to maintain a consistent focus on LGBT+ solidarity with the Palestinian people and engage LGBT+ trade unionists in its work, in line with the decision of 2018 LGBT Conference.

National LGBT+ committee

National LGBT+ committee position: **SUPPORT**

27. PALESTINE

Conference notes that LGBT+ communities remain a major target of the 'Brand Israel' campaign which aims to change Israel's image abroad from a land of war and occupation to one of a modern and liberal tourist destination, thereby seeking to undermine LGBT+ communities' support for the Palestinian people.

Conference, however, believes there can be no Pride in a state where LGBT+ Palestinians, like all Palestinians, live under occupation, under siege, under systematic discrimination or in exile.

Conference also notes that UNISON is a longstanding supporter of the Palestinian people and was one of the first to respond to their call for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS). But the United Kingdom (UK) government plans to introduce new regulations to "stop public institutions from imposing their own approach or views about international relations through preventing BDS campaigns against foreign countries and those who trade with them."

Conference is concerned that this will undermine local democracy, restricting the ability of public bodies to purchase, procure and invest ethically, in the interest of workers and the communities they represent.

Conference instructs the national LGBT+ committee, seeking the support of the national executive council as need be, to:

1. Continue to promote UNISON's publication, 'Palestine: Is Your Pension Fund Investing in the Occupation?' and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign's (PSC's) LGPS (Local Government Pension Scheme) Divest Campaign;
2. Take all appropriate steps to defend PSC's victory in the Supreme Court in April 2020 and to oppose the UK government's intention to introduce new legislation to stop local government pension funds deciding not to invest in companies complicit in Israel's breaches of international law and Palestinian

rights;

3. Step up its campaigning work to raise LGBT+ people's awareness why they should not be going on holiday to Israel, going to Tel Aviv Pride or sitting on a beach only an hour's drive from Palestinians living under siege in Gaza or resisting eviction in Jerusalem;
4. Urge and assist regional LGBT+ groups to investigate Pride events with which they are involved with a view to challenging any sponsors which are subject to BDS campaigns;
5. Continue to develop links with Palestinian LGBT+ groups;
6. Publicise PSC's work, encourage LGBT+ UNISON members to join PSC and get their branches and regions to affiliate; and,
7. Seek to work with the Trades Union Congress LGBT+ Committee, with LGBT+ groups of other trade unions, and with PSC on the above campaigns with a view to sustaining a consistent focus on LGBT+ solidarity with Palestine.

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

28. NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY: SMOKE AND MIRRORS

Conference notes the Government's Disability Strategy which was published on 27 July. Disappointingly, despite a public consultation, the Government failed to properly engage with Disabled People's Organisations (DPO's), which is currently subject to legal challenge. Consequently, the strategy has been criticised and described as "tokenistic", and a "tick box exercise".

The strategy distinguishes between the different legislative framework of pointing out different approaches between the United Kingdom (UK), Welsh and Scottish governments, and the Northern Ireland Executive. It states that "Underlying the approaches of devolved administrations is the Social Model of Disability" suggesting that this might not be the approach underlying Westminster Government's thinking. The social model of disability is the framework in which UNISON, including LGBT+ members, organise, recognising that people are disabled by barriers, environments, discrimination and attitudes and not by their impairments or conditions.

The strategy outlines areas disabled people are experiencing discrimination, crime and barriers including:

1. Participation in public life;
2. Inaccessible public transport and housing;
3. Lack of reasonable adjustments and lower pay in employment;
4. Limited choice and additional expense for goods and services;
5. Inaccessible, unresponsive and fragmented public services;

6. Exclusion from leisure and socialising;
7. High levels of hate crime and domestic abuse;
8. Unequal impact of Covid-19 pandemic.

In response to the UK Disability Survey, over 50% of disabled people in employment stated that the employer is inflexible or fails to make reasonable adjustments. Nearly 75% reported promotion opportunities were different from their colleagues. Also highlighted was the detrimental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with Disabled people being more likely to have had earnings reduced, faced redundancy, hours decreased, or been furloughed.

The Government's proposals lack ambition and weight. The majority are voluntary and lacking sanctions for employers who fail to incorporate the measures:

- A. Access to Work Adjustments Passport;
- B. Encouraging employers to recruit, retain and progress disabled employees;
- C. Promoting the Voluntary Reporting Framework;
- D. Scale up supported employment services;
- E. Encouraging flexible working and introducing unpaid carers' leave;
- F. Improving access to advice on employment rights for disabled people and employers;
- G. Transforming Access to Work;
- H. Reviewing and strengthening levels 2 and 3 of Disability Confident.

Conference asserts the Disability National Strategy is "smoke and mirrors". It does not go far enough while giving the impression that the Government is meeting its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ members' committee:

- I. Seek the views of disabled LGBT+ members on barriers in the workplace in relation to multiple discrimination due to disability, sexual orientation and gender identity;
- II. Raise awareness of issues and publicise resources relating to the intersectionality of being LGBT+ and disabled and other identity factors;
- III. Liaise with the national disabled members' committee to ensure that factors relating to being LGBT+ and disabled are included in any work or campaigns they carry out in relation to the strategy.

Disabled LGBT+ members' caucus

29. THE UK POLICING BILL: AN INFRINGEMENT OF LGBT+ RIGHTS

On 5th July 2021, the third reading of The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (PCSC Bill) was agreed by the House of Commons. The Bill has been condemned as ‘draconian’ by charities, unions, faith groups and human rights organisations. The Bill has been widely criticised as it will drastically curb civil liberties in the United Kingdom, allowing the police to end protests that are deemed to cause disturbance or annoyance.

Under the Bill, UNISON members exercising their right to protest could potentially face arrest if they fail to follow restrictions imposed.

LGBT+, disabled, Black and women members and activists have a rich history and culture of using protest to highlight inequalities, discrimination and oppression and to campaign for human rights. LGBT+ disabled trade union activists were at the forefront of campaigns to embed the social model of disability, opposing medicalisation and pathologising of disabled and trans members and being involved in protests against inaccessible transport and buildings. LGBT+ Pride events also have their roots in protest and conference continues to affirm that Pride is a protest but is rightly concerned that this Bill puts our protests under threat. Conference is also concerned that trade union members may consequently face disciplinary action in the workplace as a result of this Bill.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee:

1. To liaise with Labour Link raising issues about the potential impact of the Bill on trade union members in particularly LGBT+, disabled, Black and women members;
2. Support and publicise any campaign that UNISON is involved in;
3. To keep LGBT+ members updated on the progress of the Bill and any subsequent guidance that is available.

Disabled LGBT+ members’ caucus

30. THE FUTURE OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE FOR LGBT+ PEOPLE

Conference notes the Tory government, has broken manifesto pledges by raising National Insurance contributions and suspending the ‘triple lock’ on pension increases. On 7th September 2021, it published ‘Build Back Better: Our plan for health and social care’ announcing an impending White Paper on the future provision of adult social care in England.

Conference acknowledges that there is roughly a fifty/fifty split in the numbers of adults receiving social care between those who are retired and those of working age. There will be a significant number of LGBT+ people who need or will need access to adult social care. Some will be disabled and/or retired LGBT+ UNISON members.

Conference recalls that the 2017 national LGBT conference passed motion 34 (Care

of older LGBT people) which noted a lack of LGBT awareness within the care sector and called on the national LGBT committee to engage with regions and service groups to identify what care provisions existed for older LGBT people in their areas.

Motion 34 made specific reference to the Equality Act 2010 requirements for service providers of social care not to discriminate against service users on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. These provisions apply equally to disabled LGBT+ users of adult social care of working age.

Conference notes Opening Doors London's research into the housing and care needs of LGBT+ people which found a preference for LGBT+ organisations or LGBT+ accredited organisations to provide accommodation, care and support.

Opening Doors London runs the Pride in Care® quality standard awarded to United Kingdom organisations assessed as providing quality care and support to older LGBT+ people. Championed by Care England and with training endorsed by Skills for Care, the registered quality mark is an externally verified seal of approval publicly demonstrating commitment to the continuous improvement of LGBT+ inclusion.

Conference notes UNISON's ethical care charter and the campaign for a national care service and believes these provide opportunities to bargain and campaign for LGBT+ inclusive care provision.

Conference believes that UNISON's response to the forthcoming White Paper on the future of adult social care should reflect the needs of LGBT+ disabled and older people.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Liaise with the regional LGBT+ committees in Northern Ireland, Cymru/Wales and Scotland to identify aspects of best practice in the provision of adult social care to LGBT+ people;
2. Engage with appropriate UNISON structures to raise awareness of the needs of LGBT+ disabled and older social care users requesting that these are included in any UNISON response to the White Paper on the future of adult social care in England;
3. Raise awareness among LGBT+ members of the ethical care charter and UNISON's campaign for a national care service.

Disabled LGBT+ Members' Caucus

31. WORKING FROM HOME IS A REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT

Conference acknowledges that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in some members working from home. Research carried out by various organisations including UNISON, Ernst and Young, Universities of Strathclyde and Manchester and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reveal that following the pandemic, the majority of people would prefer to return to work flexibly including

homeworking, agile and hybrid working. A number of reasons are given for this including safety, flexibility, caring responsibilities, work life balance, disability or simply easier ways of working.

Conference welcomes the fact that UNISON has been campaigning for the option to work from home for disabled members as a reasonable adjustment. Conference recognises that there has been a detrimental impact on people's mental health overall due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that this can be exacerbated by working in isolation. Conference believes that where hybrid or homeworking is in place then employers need to provide appropriate support for the mental health and well being of their workers. Isolation, bullying, harassment and discrimination in the workplace, domestic abuse, poverty, trying to work at home with caring responsibilities, hate crime, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, not having disclosed sexual orientation or gender identity either at home or in the workplace – may have an impact on people and the boundaries between home and work can become blurred as a result of homeworking.

The capability to enable working from home existed prior to the onset of the pandemic but often was not generally available to workers due to employers refusing to accommodate this even as a reasonable adjustment for disabled members and where it would have clear benefits to the worker's mental health and wellbeing, quality of life and productivity, accessibility, or discrimination. LGBT+ workers may experience discrimination in their working environments, and different sections of the LGBT+ community including disabled and Black LGBT+ workers, experience structural inequalities in employment, education, economically and environmentally. Consequently, where employers do introduce home or hybrid working policies, then a full equality impact assessment should be carried out.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Promote and publicise UNISON's guidance and draft model policy on hybrid working;
2. Consider the benefits and detriments that working from home or hybrid working may have for LGBT+ members including disabled and Black LGBT+ workers and provide feedback to the national disabled members committee;
3. Provide information on reasonable adjustments to LGBT+ members;
4. Support the national disabled member's campaign for homeworking to be considered a reasonable adjustment.

Disabled LGBT+ members' caucus

32. 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 and foreign secretary to bring queer Afghans to safety.

The United Kingdom 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 LGBT+ committee, working with the national executive council 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.

Black LGBT+ members' caucus

33. SUPPORT FOR LGBT+ MUSLIMS; SUPPORT FOR HIDAYAH LGBT

Conference notes that for many years Muslim communities in the United Kingdom have suffered anti-Muslim incidents. Tell Mama organisation defines Islamophobia or anti-Muslim prejudice as a dread, fear, dislike and hatred of Muslims which can fuel racist exclusion and discrimination.

Conference notes that anti-Muslim prejudice can include opinions such as that Islam has no common values with other cultures, is inferior to the 'West,' and is a violent political ideology rather than a religion. An example of this in action is the spike in incidents after Boris Johnson referred to Muslim women as 'letter boxes', toxic Islamophobic incidents increasing by 375% the week following his news column.

When the 'No Outsiders' programme was introduced in a Birmingham primary school, which included LGBT+ families, right-wing protesters from a variety of communities targeted the school. This in turn fuelled anti-Muslim prejudice seeking to falsely isolate Islam as a threatening 'other'. Black LGBT+ Muslims found themselves in a vulnerable position of challenging LGBT+ prejudice from within their community and from Islamophobic attacks from the right.

Hidayah LGBT is a secular organisation which supports LGBT+ Muslims. It promotes equality and diversity, particularly on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Hidayah LGBT offers a range of services including monthly events, 'Walk With Me' mentoring programme, educational workshops, talks, conferences, emotional well-being support and articles.

Conference calls on the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. To promote the work of Hidayah LGBT;
2. Consider affiliating to Hidayah LGBT;
3. Encourage regional groups to work with local Hidayah LGBT groups;
4. Support Hidayah LGBT attendance in local LGBT+ Prides.

Black LGBT+ members' caucus

34. INCREASING BLACK LGBT+ ACTIVISM

Conference is concerned at the low level of Black LGBT+ activism within UNISON structures at branch, regional and national level. Recruitment and training can play a crucial role in increasing Black LGBT+ participation. Black LGBT+ members have vital contributions to make to ensuring that UNISON remains truly diverse and inclusive in all aspects of trade unionism.

Not all members need to become stewards to be active. There are many roles that are open to Black LGBT+ members that do not require unrealistic commitments of time or energy. We all have skills that can be utilised strategically.

Conference therefore calls on the national LGBT+ committee to work with the other

self-organised groups (SOG) and young members' forum to:

1. Work together to encourage Black LGBT+ participation at all levels of the union, as branch officers, service group reps and regional committees;
2. Have Black LGBT+ issues as standing items on agendas;
3. Hold joint SOG and young members' events whenever possible;
4. Advertise Black LGBT+ events on branch websites and in branch, regional and national newsletters;
5. Encourage Black LGBT+ lay tutors;
6. Use UNISON recruitment events to encourage Black LGBT+ participation by using images that reflect UNISON's diversity;
7. Invite Black LGBT+ speakers or hold workshops where appropriate on Black LGBT+ issues;
8. Consider promoting Black LGBT+ activism on social media platforms;
9. Encourage Black LGBT+ activists to stand as regional representatives on national committees and young members' forum.

Black LGBT+ members' caucus

35. RESPONSE TO RACISM AND LGBT+ PHOBIA IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

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 United Kingdom (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 use 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)

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.

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.

These combined factors mean that people from Black LGBT+ communities are less likely to get access to national health service (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 LGBT+ committee to:

1. Work with UNISON's self-organised groups, equality team, the NEC (national executive council), 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. Address the huge unmet need for support for Black LGBT+ people by producing and promoting workplace guidance;
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.

Black LGBT+ members' caucus

MOTIONS TO NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2022

NDC 1. TRANS EQUALITY – LOUDER AND PROUDER!

The toxic debate ignited by the government's consultation on reforming the Gender Recognition Act underlined the importance of our union supporting and representing trans members effectively.

Attacks on trans people have escalated further over the last year. Groups trying to roll back the rights of trans people are encouraging supporters to lobby public bodies to replace 'gender' in their equality policies with 'sex' and claim that some have agreed to do so.

There has been a series of press articles about Stonewall having ‘lost its way’ by becoming trans inclusive, and a sustained attack on Stonewall’s Diversity Champions programme. Attacks are being coordinated to undermine support for Stonewall’s work on LGBT+ equality at work.

The tactics being used are almost identical to the tactics seen around the time of Section 28, when gay men were portrayed as sexual predators and a danger to children to spread fear and mistrust.

Conference recognises that recent years have seen a concerted international campaign against trans people, and there is growing evidence of this being linked to the far right.

Conference notes that:

1. The Southern Poverty Law Centre in the United States (US) reported that in 2017, at an annual right-wing, fundamentalist event called the Values Voter Summit, transphobia was discussed as a tactic to be deployed, because rallying against homosexuals was not working any more. One of the far-right panellists said: “Trans and gender identity are a tough sell, so focus on gender identity to divide and conquer...trans activists need the gay rights movement to help legitimize them...If you separate the T from the alphabet soup, we’ll have more success”;
2. The International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation’s study on the evolution of extremism in the first 100 days of the Biden administration found that “Transphobia has long been one of the most major and ubiquitous narratives around which the far right mobilises... Transphobia should be recognised as a security concern.”;
3. Some anti-trans individuals and groups in the United Kingdom have links with far right and alt right religious groups in the US and elsewhere
4. Targeting a minority, and spreading false information to provoke hatred and distrust by preying on people’s fears, are classic far right recruitment tactics.

UNISON’s position is clear: trans women are women, trans men are men and non-binary identities are valid. Conference recognises, however, that UNISON now needs to become more visible and more vocal in promoting trans equality.

Conference therefore calls on the national executive council to work with the national LGBT+ committee and other appropriate bodies within the union to:

1. Produce a briefing to help members counter the gender critical narrative and provide information on the links with the far right;
2. Pledge support to appropriate organisations, such as Stonewall and Mermaids, that are being subjected to attacks because of their work on trans inclusion, and explore ways of working together;
3. Raise the issue of links with the far right with the national executive council

and explore ways to increase the visibility of UNISON's support for trans equality.

National LGBT+ committee

NDC 2. DECRIMINALISATION FOR SAFETY

Conference notes that UNISON's policy on sex work, adopted in 2010, is to support decriminalising the selling of sexual services while introducing a 'sex buyers' law' criminalising those who purchase those services.

Conference recognises that the great majority of sex workers are women.

Conference also recognises a significant number of women sex workers identify as LGBT+, and there are many gay, bisexual and trans sex workers who do not identify as women.

Conference notes that national LGBT+ conference policy:

1. Recognises that criminalisation of any kind, including of buyers, increases the risks for sex workers;
2. Opposes the introduction of a sex buyers law;
3. Recognises sex workers as workers who should have the same rights and protections as workers in other industries.

Conference further notes:

- A. Significant developments since 2010 include Amnesty International's 2016 policy on sex workers, which includes advocating for the decriminalisation of all aspects of consensual adult sex work;
- B. Full decriminalisation is supported by many other organisations including the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Royal College of Nursing, trade unions, the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, Anti Slavery International, and sex workers' organisations;
- C. The rejection by 2018 UNISON women's conference of the motion "Nordic Model Now!" which called for it to affirm its policy of supporting the Nordic Model, a legal model based on decriminalising the selling of sexual services while introducing a 'sex buyers' law';
- D. Poverty, benefit cuts and sanctions have led to an increase in the number of women working in the sex industry, and long waits for Universal Credit payments have led to some turning to 'survival' sex work to pay rent and put food on the table.

Conference further notes New Zealand decriminalised sex work in 2003. The legislation recognises sex work as work, and therefore covered by employment law. The law treats sex workers consent as crucial and gives them the legal right to refuse any client for any reason at any point.

The ‘New Zealand model’ has been praised by women’s rights organisations and international bodies including the WHO as the best legal approach to protect the safety, rights, and health, of people who sell sex.

Conference recognises that decriminalisation is not about ‘encouraging’ sex work – it’s about the safety of people who sell sex. No legal model anywhere in the world has been shown to increase, or decrease, the number of people who sell sex. All that laws can change is whether people do sex work in dangerous conditions or in safer conditions.

Conference believes that UNISON should not call for laws that put sex workers, including women and LGBT+ sex workers, at greater risk.

Conference therefore resolves that UNISON should not call for the introduction of a ‘sex buyers’ law’, and instructs the national executive council to begin a dialogue with the national LGBT+ committee, national women’s committee and other appropriate bodies within the union with a view to reviewing and advancing UNISON policy in this area.

National LGBT+ committee

ITEMS NOT ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA

WORKING FROM HOME MOTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many workers into the situation of working from home. This has had mixed effects on individuals, and for many individuals their experience of working from home is shaped by their social position, including sexuality and gender identity, disability, socio-economic status and other co-related factors. This may mean that working from home has proved to be an improvement compared to their previous working arrangements, or that working from home has presented particular difficulties.

As well as considering working from home from the perspective of the continuing pandemic situation, we must consider that the capability to enable working from home has existed for some time prior to the onset of the pandemic. The option has not been generally available to workers due to businesses advising it wasn’t possible, even in cases in which it would have clear benefits to the worker’s quality of life and productivity, and potentially counter issues of accessibility or discrimination. Moving forward, the evident fact that WFH (working from home) is now a practical option for many must be carried forwards and realised.

LGBT+ workers experience discrimination in their working environments, and different sections of the LGBT+ community are subject to a variety of health inequalities. The experience of home life is also affected - from the likelihood of experiencing intimate partner violence to their living space.

We instruct the LGBT+ committee to work with UNISON and employers to set out WFH policies with the following key elements:

1. Adoption of WFH assessments, available on request, so that workers can be evaluated transparently, to a fair and accountable standard if wanting to work from home;
2. Allow workers to opt out of WFH wherever possible, without having to give reason;
3. WFH should be considered as a potential 'reasonable adjustment' with regard to disability and accessibility issues.

Yorkshire & Humberside region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear.

SELF-ORGANISATION IN A POST-COVID WORLD

Conference notes the very significant challenges in our workplaces throughout the pandemic, and expresses deep gratitude for the sacrifices and efforts made by UNISON members in all our regions. Many of our workplaces are now changed forever, with talk of adopting hybrid approaches to work locations, or permanent homeworking arrangements.

This scattering of the workforce presents UNISON and our members many challenges. Self-organisation and its agenda for equality are not immune to those challenges.

Conference, at this crucial time in our history, which feels like something of a tipping point, with an emboldened movement of populism, of far-right governments, and social media literally awash with hateful, vitriolic trolls, this is no time to rest on our laurels. Our future depends on the work of this union, to never relent to the onslaught of hatred, prejudice and discrimination and to continue to make strides forward, in the pursuit of our common goals.

There has been a sustained, national increase year on year in hate crime reporting. Our members are being victimised in their workplaces and on the streets and in their homes, and we must do more. Self-organisation is at the heart of this union, offering a lifeline to members in need of support; we are also here to act, in these deeply challenging times. The message is clear: we cannot stand still, we will not relent in the face of adversity, and we must overcome the new challenges of fragmented and scattered workforces.

Conference calls upon the national LGBT+ committee to:

1. Lobby the UNISON leadership and seek a renewed commitment to the future of the self-organised groups and the equality agenda, and its continued place at the heart of the union;

2. Working with national officers, seek to secure updates to the published UNISON resources, such as the guide on equality, organising for equality, and other training resources;
3. Draft and distribute guidance for branch and regional self-organised groups to support them in overcoming the challenges of organising in the post-COVID workplace;
4. Promote and encourage the adoption of the model policy for employers, on tackling hate crime and hate incidents in the workplace;
5. Develop the guidance notes and briefings for all workplace representatives, on equalities, discrimination and hate crime.

Northern region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear.

WE CAN'T BE LGBT+ ON A DEAD PLANET

Conference recognises the increasing threat of climate change, the disproportionate difficulties the impact of the climate emergency will cause on LGBT+ people across the planet as minority and marginalised groups will always be disproportionately affected in crises.

Conference appreciates the direction in education and information that has begun within UNISON already, with the increase of lobbying and promotion of Green UNISON. Conference also recognises that currently the green agenda is voluntary at every level, with not all self-organised groups (SOGs) / individuals aware of Green UNISON and the work already being promoted and undertaken.

Also there is no clear mechanism for members to become involved in Green UNISON at the branch and other levels. There is currently no auditing and feedback mechanism so the work that may be going on currently could be lost and not be being shared amongst branch and members.

LGBT+ UNISON members are uniquely placed to promote the green campaign, bringing it to the attention of branches, local SOGs and regional committees for further action. We are seeking to enable members to be active and organised, such as by supporting local, regional and international campaigns or supporting and informing their workplaces on becoming more sustainable and environmentally aware. We also have a role to play in holding our employers to account where they have committed to actions on preventing and mitigating further climate change.

Conference calls for:

1. National LGBT+ SOG to work with other SOG committees to make standard practice the recruitment of environmental officers at every level, including branch, regional and national;

2. A standing agenda item for all LGBT+ SOG meetings 'environmental/sustainability updates' to collect and discuss local and regional environmental impact intelligence from members and enable this to be minuted and fed back to branches etc;
3. To ask national executive committee to provide training for environmental officers;
4. To provide opportunity for discussions at LGBT+ conference and meetings to promote collective work on campaigning, such as online meetings and forums to allow fast lobbying and mobilisation of members in response to local, national and international climate issues;
5. Bring branches into the campaign – promoting UNISON's green campaign through online roadshows for LGBT+ SOGs and regional meetings;
6. For LGBT+ SOGs to consider CO2 (Carbon dioxide) footprint when organising events and meetings, using digital and/or car sharing/public transport where this will be the mode with least environmental impact;
7. For LGBT+ SOGs to consider environmental impact of printed materials, moving where possible the majority of information online for access. Where printing is needed to make sure this is non-glossy and fully recyclable where possible;
8. Ensure that Pride through procurement is conscientious about purchasing items for LGBT+ SOGs and Pride events that are sustainable, fair trade, reusable, and recyclable where possible;
9. Representation and a strong voice for UNISON LGBT+ members alongside all members at all COPs (Conference of the Parties) moving forward.

Eastern region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as the action called for is beyond the remit of the national LGBT+ committee.

THE UK POLICING BILL: AN INFRINGEMENT OF LGBT+ RIGHTS

On 5th July 2021, the third reading of The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill was agreed by the House of Commons. The Bill has been condemned as 'draconian' by charities, unions, faith groups and human rights organisations. The Bill has been widely criticised as it will drastically curb civil liberties in the United Kingdom (UK), allowing the police to end protests that are deemed to cause disturbance or annoyance.

Under the Bill, UNISON members exercising their right to protest could potentially face arrest if they fail to follow restrictions imposed.

The LGBT+ community has a rich history and culture of using protest to highlight inequalities and to argue for the right to live and love as one pleases. Whereas this

Bill could have been an opportunity to safeguard LGBT+ members' rights by strengthening our right to protest, free from the threat of violence and other hate crimes, it instead gives the government new powers to silence us and new avenues for the prejudiced to seek to criminalise us.

Conference asks for literature to be produced for members outlining their rights under this legislation.

Conference believes that members who find themselves arrested under this legislation should not face disciplinary action in the workplace as a result and that this position be clear in UNISON conversations with employers.

Conference suggests that members who identify as belonging to a protected group should be entitled to free legal support through UNISON, if they find themselves unfairly affected by this Bill.

This conference condemns the UK Policing Bill and calls for its repeal. Conference calls on the national executive council to lobby for the same and also to publish literature encouraging, supporting, and advising members to contact their local Members of Parliament on this issue.

Eastern region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it is in breach of Rule K.

SURVIVING PARTNERS' PENSIONS

Conference notes that:

1. Public service pension schemes pay pensions to widows of male scheme members in respect of contributions since 1972;
2. As a result of a Supreme Court decision in 2017, scheme members' surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners, irrespective of gender, are treated the same as opposite-sex widows; but,
3. Widowers of female scheme members continue to be paid pensions only in respect of contributions since 1988.

Conference understands that a recent court decision may have affected the unequal treatment of opposite-sex widowers by public service pension schemes but is concerned schemes appear slow to amend their regulations and members have not been alerted to any new entitlements.

Conference instructs the national LGBT+ committee, seeking the support of the national executive council and service group executives as need be, to:

- A. Seek to secure the equal treatment of opposite-sex widowers as soon as possible;
- B. Seek to ensure that appropriate advice is issued to UNISON members on widowers' entitlements and how to claim, and that this advice has due regard

to the circumstances of transgender members and other gender identities members amongst our membership; and,

- C. Continue to campaign for new primary legislation to restore legal certainty by replacing provisions of the Equality Act 2010 set aside by the courts.

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it is not sufficiently clear.

LGB ALLIANCE “CHARITABLE STATUS”

Wording not printed on legal advice.

South East region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it is not competent.

MORNING STAR

Wording not printed on legal advice.

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

This motion was ruled out of order as it could place the union in legal jeopardy.

AMENDMENTS NOT ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 1

Insert new second paragraph:

“Conference notes that long term mental and physical health conditions will fall within the disability provisions of the Equality Act 2010 if they have a substantial impact on daily living activities which includes work duties and that employers must consider reasonable adjustments. These can include making provision in sickness absence policies that provide for absence associated with disability to be discounted. Some employers will have specific disability leave policies. Conference notes that Long Covid could in some circumstances come within the disability definition of the Equality Act 2010 and welcomes UNISON guidance on Covid and Long Covid. Conference also notes UNISON’s model disability leave policy.”

In original third paragraph, delete sentence “The impact of the pandemic, not only as an illness but as a social phenomenon should be written into sickness policy.”

Replace action points 1. and 2. with “Publicise UNISON’s bargaining guidance and model policies on Covid, Long Covid and Disability Leave which can support branches negotiating with employers on sickness absence and disability issues.”

Delete first paragraph and replace with:

“Conference notes that a study by Stonewall found that in the last 12 months 50% of the LGBT+ people who responded, reported that they had experienced depression and 3 in 5 had experienced anxiety. MIND reports that LGBT+ people are between 2–3 times more likely than heterosexual cisgender people to report having a mental health problem in England. An EU-funded programme called Health4LGBTI which included project partners ILGA-Europe and the University of Brighton, found that LGBT+ people face significant mental and physical health inequalities and evidence of physical health conditions which was higher dependent on age, socioeconomic status, gender and geographical location.”

Greater London region LGBT+ group

This amendment was ruled out of order as it exceeded the word count in SO 3.5.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 25

At the end of third paragraph add:

“and UNISON members involved in numerous ways. UNISON is in dispute with Sandwell Leisure Trust, prospective proprietor of one of the games’ venues. The trust, while most of its staff were furloughed during the pandemic, fired them, rehiring them on worse terms and conditions.”

In final paragraph, at the end of action point 3., add:

“and to mobilise public support for the fired and rehired UNISON members in dispute with Sandwell Leisure Trust.”

West Midlands region LGBT+ group

This amendment was ruled out of order as it introduces substantial new subject matter.

AMENDMENT TO MOTION 25

In first paragraph, first sentence, after “internationally”, insert “and in the United Kingdom (UK)”. Replace second sentence with: “The rise of anti LGBT+ rhetoric in government agendas has led to a rise in hate crime towards LGBT+ people and made parts of the world more unsafe for LGBT+ people”.

In third paragraph replace “Birmingham” with “West Midlands”.

In fourth paragraph delete “in these countries”.

After existing sixth paragraph, insert new paragraphs:

“Conference welcomes UNISON becoming a member of the UK Alliance for Global Equality (UKAGE), a coalition of UK based civil society organisations working to promote and support progress of LGBT+ rights globally. Conference believes that the work carried out by UKAGE complements our LGBT+ international work and that

we should listen to the voices of LGBT+ people globally to inform our campaigns.

Conference notes that work is already being carried out by The Commonwealth Equality Network (TCEN) in respect of LGBT+ equality in Commonwealth countries which feeds in to the bi-annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which was due to take place in Rwanda this year but was postponed due to the pandemic.”

Replace action points 1- 3 with:

- “1. Continue to work with UNISON’s International Committee to raise awareness about global LGBT+ issues;
2. Continue to work with national and international organisations including ILGA World, ILGA Europe and UKAGE on global LGBT+ issues;
3. Work with West Midlands region to encourage branches to highlight global LGBT+ issues during the Commonwealth Games.”

National LGBT+ committee

This amendment was ruled out of order as it was not competent.

UNISON 2021 National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and
Transgender Plus Conference

Standing Orders

as amended by 2015 Conference
and rule change at
2019 National Delegate Conference

SO1 Application of standing orders

- 1.1 These standing orders shall apply to UNISON's national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference.
- 1.2 The standing orders may be changed by conference approving, with a two-thirds majority of those people present and voting, a motion which has appeared on both the preliminary and final conference agendas, except for motions from the Black and disabled members' caucuses or bisexual members' caucus or transgender members' caucus, which may only appear on the final conference agenda. All such motions may be amended in the normal way by simple majority. Standing orders may not be changed by an emergency motion, but they may be temporarily suspended under SO19.

SO2 Standing orders committee

- 2.1 A standing orders committee shall be formed to assist conference in the running of business. The standing orders committee shall be independent of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee and shall be accountable to conference.
- 2.2 Members of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee shall not be members of the standing orders committee. Six members of the standing orders committee shall be elected by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference. Two members shall be elected by the disabled members' caucus. Two members shall be elected by the Black members' caucus. An equal number of reserve standing orders committee members shall also be elected. At least 50% of places shall be held by women.
- 2.3 Members of the standing orders committee shall hold office from the end of the conference at which they are elected until the end of the next conference.
- 2.4 If a member of the standing orders committee does not attend two consecutive meetings of the standing orders committee then at the following meeting the standing orders committee shall decide whether that member's membership of the committee should be terminated.
- 2.5 If a member of the standing orders committee elected by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference resigns or ceases to be qualified to be a member or has their membership terminated under SO2.4 then the standing orders committee shall invite the reserve member who received the highest number of votes to become a member, unless this would mean that less than 50% of places would be held by women, in which case, the standing orders committee shall invite the woman reserve member who received the highest number of votes to become a member.

- 2.6 In the absence of reserve members being elected at the conference, the standing orders committee will have the power to co-opt members to fill any vacancies for the six general seats.
- 2.7 At its first meeting the standing orders committee shall elect two co-chairs, at least one of whom shall be a woman, from amongst its members.
- 2.8 The functions of the standing orders committee, subject to these standing orders, shall be to:
 - 2.8.1 ensure that UNISON's rules and these standing orders (relating to the business of the conference in plenary session) are observed, and notify the presiding conference chair of any violation that may be brought to the committee's notice;
 - 2.8.2 draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of business to be dealt with at the conference plenary sessions, to be circulated in accordance with the timetable agreed by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee;
 - 2.8.3 determine the order in which motions shall be dealt with at the plenary sessions (the 'order of business'), subject to the approval of conference;
 - 2.8.4 consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by conference and, for the purpose of enabling conference to transact its business effectively, the standing orders committee shall:
 - i) decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with these standing orders;
 - ii) group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered, and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially;
 - iii) make such minor wording changes of a technical nature as the committee may consider necessary;
 - iv) prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which in the opinion of the committee best express the subject of motions and amendments;
 - v) refer to another representative body within UNISON a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the committee should properly be considered there: the mover of the motion or amendment shall be informed of the reason for so doing;
 - vi) have power to do such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these standing orders.

- 2.9 Any decisions of the standing orders committee which are to be reported to conference shall be announced by one of the co-chairs of the committee and shall be subject to ratification by conference.
- 2.10 The standing orders committee may, from time to time, issue guidelines in order to assist with the smooth running of conference. Such guidelines shall be consistent with these standing orders.

SO3 Motions and amendments

- 3.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for conference by branch or regional lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus groups; by the disabled members' or Black members' caucuses, bisexual members' caucus or transgender members' caucus; by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee and by the national young members' forum.
- 3.2 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business shall be sent to the designated member of UNISON staff, in order that the standing orders committee may consider them for inclusion in the agenda. The date and time by which motions and amendments shall be received by the designated staff member shall be stated in the timetable published by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee.
- 3.3
- 3.3.1 A motion or amendment should normally be moved by a representative of the group proposing that motion or amendment;
- 3.3.2 In the absence of a representative of the group, the motion or amendment may be moved by another member attending the conference only where prior notification has been given to the standing orders committee, but may not be moved formally from the chair;
- 3.3.3 In the event of 3.3.2, the presiding conference chair should advise conference of the procedure;
- 3.3.4 If there is no other delegate to move the motion, then the motion and any amendments to it, falls. If there is no other delegate to move the amendment, then the amendment falls.
- 3.4 Caucuses have the right to self-define in their motions the issues that affect them.
- 3.5 Each motion shall contain no more than 500 words (except composites) and each amendment shall contain no more than 250 words.

SO4 Public and private sessions

The plenary sessions of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference shall meet in public session except that by resolution of conference the whole or any part of a conference may be held in private. In addition to delegates, members of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee and members of the standing orders committee, the only people permitted to attend a private session of conference shall be:

- i) such members of staff as have been authorised by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee or the UNISON general secretary to attend conference;
- ii) such other people as the conference chair shall determine.

SO5 Speakers at conference

Only delegates and those people who have the right to attend the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference shall have the right to speak in plenary sessions. No other person shall be able to speak in plenary sessions unless prior approval has been sought from the standing orders committee. Full time officers shall not be able to speak in debate on motions or amendments.

SO6 Presiding conference chair

- 6.1 The conference shall be chaired at any one time by one of two co-chairs who shall be members of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee or any other member of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee as delegated and agreed by the co-chairs of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee.
- 6.2 Any procedural motions or points of order raised during conference shall be decided by the presiding conference chair, if necessary in consultation with the co-chairs of the standing orders committee. The ruling of the presiding conference chair shall be final and binding.
- 6.3 The presiding conference chair may at any time call conference's attention to irrelevance, offensive language, or any breach of order on the part of a member. The presiding conference chair shall have the power to call any person to order who is causing a disturbance in conference. If that person rejects the presiding conference chair's ruling, the presiding conference chair shall have the right to 'name' the person. Conference shall immediately vote on whether or not that person should be named. If conference agrees that the person should be named, the named person shall leave the conference hall for a period determined by the presiding conference chair.

- 6.4 The presiding conference chair may at any time propose that conference be adjourned to a specified time. Conference shall immediately vote on whether or not conference should stand adjourned.

SO7 Voting

- 7.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of hands of those people present who are delegates to conference. Members of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee and members of the standing orders committee shall not vote. The presiding conference chair shall declare the result or shall call for a count.
- 7.2 A count may also be called if, after a presiding conference chair's declaration of a result, at least twenty members present indicate that they want a count.
- 7.3 When a count has been called:
- 7.3.1 No other conference business may proceed until the count has been completed.
- 7.3.2 The presiding conference chair shall immediately instruct the tellers to close the doors. Any person may leave the conference during the time that the doors are closed. Members of the standing orders committee and UNISON staff may enter the conference, should they deem their business to be such that it cannot wait until the count is completed, whilst the doors are closed.
- 7.3.3 The presiding conference chair shall instruct the tellers to do a count of those in favour, those against, and those not voting, and shall declare the result. Once the result has been declared the presiding conference chair shall instruct the tellers to re-open the doors.

SO8 Tellers

Conference shall appoint tellers from amongst those people who are attending the conference. Tellers shall not be members of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee or members of the standing orders committee.

SO9 Withdrawals

- 9.1 A mover of a motion or amendment who wishes to withdraw their motion or amendment shall inform the standing orders committee. The standing orders committee shall report this request to conference. Conference shall decide whether or not the motion or amendment may be withdrawn.
- 9.2 If a motion be withdrawn with the consent of conference and there is an amendment to that motion which appeared as a motion in the preliminary agenda then that amendment shall become the motion.

SO10 Motions and amendments not on the final agenda (emergency motions)

- 10.1 A motion or amendment which is not shown on the final agenda (an 'emergency motion') may not be considered by conference without the prior approval of the standing orders committee and the consent of conference, which shall be governed by standing orders 10.2 to 10.4 inclusive.
- 10.2 An emergency motion shall be in writing, signed on behalf of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee or the branch, region or caucus on whose behalf it is submitted, and sent to the designated member of UNISON staff, so that the standing orders committee may consider it. The date and time by which the emergency motion shall be received by the designated staff member shall be stated in the timetable published by the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee. The emergency motion shall state at which meeting of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee, branch, region or caucus it was debated and adopted.
- 10.3 If the standing orders committee gives its approval to the emergency motion being considered by conference, copies of the emergency motion shall be made available to participants in the conference at least one hour before conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the emergency motion being added to the conference agenda: this decision shall be made under SO2.8.
- 10.4 An emergency motion will not be given a higher place in the order of business over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the standing orders committee decides that the purpose of the emergency motion would be frustrated if it were not dealt with earlier in the conference.

SO11 Procedural motions

- 11.1 Subject to standing orders 11.2 and 15.3, the following procedural motions may be moved at any time and without previous notice on the agenda:
- 11.1.1 'That the question be now put', provided that:
- i) the presiding conference chair may advise conference not to accept this motion if in their opinion the matter had not been sufficiently discussed; and
 - ii) if the motion is carried it shall take immediate effect subject only to any right of reply under these standing orders.
- 11.1.2 'That the conference proceed to next business' (if the motion is carried the matter being discussed shall immediately fall from the agenda and conference shall proceed to the next item on the order of business);
- 11.1.3 'That the debate be adjourned';
- 11.1.4 'That the conference (or part of conference) be held in private session';

- 11.1.5 'That precedence be given to any particular business set forth on the agenda subject to the provisions of Standing Order 10';
- 11.1.6 'That the chair be challenged' (the presiding conference chair shall stand down and the motion shall be heard by the alternate presiding conference chair: the mover of this motion shall speak for no more than three minutes, and the challenged conference chair shall then have the right to speak for no more than three minutes; the procedural motion shall then be put to the vote without discussion and no amendment shall be allowed. If the procedural motion is approved by conference then the challenged conference chair shall stand down and the alternate presiding conference chair shall remain in the chair);
- 11.1.7 'That leave be given to amend a motion or an amendment with the prior approval of the standing orders committee';
- 11.1.8 That the time limits for speakers be amended.
- 11.2 A procedural motion moved under standing orders 11.1.1, 11.1.2, 11.1.3 or 11.1.5 shall be immediately put to the vote without discussion and no amendment shall be allowed.
- 11.3 The presiding conference chair may at their discretion allow discussion of a procedural motion moved under standing order 11.1.4, and may at their discretion allow amendments to be put.
- 11.4 A person who has already spoken on the motion or amendment in question shall not move a procedural motion under standing orders 11.1.1, 11.1.2 and 11.1.3.
- 11.5 A representative who moves a procedural motion under standing order 11.1.5 shall not speak on any motion or amendment debated as a result of that procedural motion.

SO12 Amendments

- 12.1 When an amendment to a motion is moved no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, subject to standing order 15.
- 12.2 When an amendment is defeated a further amendment may be moved to the motion.
- 12.3 When an amendment to a motion is carried the motion, as amended, shall become the substantive motion. A further amendment can then be moved to the substantive motion.
- 12.4 A person shall not move more than one amendment to any one motion. The mover of a motion shall not move an amendment to their motion.
- 12.5 The mover of a motion may not 'formally' accept an amendment to the motion. Each amendment must be moved separately and voted upon.

SO13 Time limits

- 13.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment shall speak for no more than five minutes, and each subsequent speaker shall speak for no more than three minutes.
- 13.2 No person shall speak more than once on a question, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes. No new material may be introduced during a right of reply.
- 13.3 These time limits may be amended where prior approval has been sought from the standing orders committee or where a procedural motion under standing order 11 sub-paragraph 11.1.8 has been moved.
- 13.4 The chair shall, at their discretion, extend a particular speaker's time limit if their access requirements have an impact on speaking time.

SO14 Points of order

- 14.1 A point of order may be raised at any stage during conference if it is considered that business is not being conducted in accordance with UNISON's rules or the conference's standing orders.
- 14.2 The point of order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs, or at the earliest practicable moment.
- 14.3 The point of order shall not be debated or amended, and the presiding conference chair shall make an immediate ruling on the point of order under SO6.2.

SO15 Grouped debates

- 15.1 Where in the opinion of the standing orders committee separate debates on specified motions or amendments dealing with the same subject matter would lead to undue repetition, the standing orders committee shall group debates and/or decide on sequential voting.
- 15.2 A grouped debate shall be run in this order:
- i) The presiding conference chair shall advise conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others;
 - ii) All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved;
 - iii) The general debate shall take place;
 - iv) The presiding conference chair shall again state the order of voting and shall advise conference which, if any, motions and amendments will fall if others are carried;

- v) Voting shall take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.

15.3 A grouped debate may not be adjourned until all the motions and amendments have been moved.

SO16 Reports by national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee

16.1 After the opening of the conference's first plenary session the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee shall present its report for the past year.

16.2 If the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee presents a report to conference which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by conference, the committee shall submit the proposals or recommendations as ordinary motions seeking such approval and adoption.

16.3 The committee report shall be circulated prior to conference.

SO17 Indication and announcement of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee's policy

The final agenda shall include an indication of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee's recommendation on motions on the preliminary agenda, and immediately before each motion is called, the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee shall announce that recommendation through the chairperson of the conference.

SO18 Reference

If at the end of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus conference the business of the conference has not been concluded all motions and amendments then outstanding shall stand referred to the national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus committee, which shall in due course report to members its decisions on these matters.

SO19 Suspension of standing orders

Any one or more of these standing orders may be suspended by a resolution of conference in relation to a specific item of business before the conference or to the proceedings of conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the people present and voting shall vote for the resolution.