

# 2023 National Local Government Service Group Conference Bulletin

December 2022

Conference Team: conferences@unison.co.uk 020 7121 5123

This bulletin contains the timetable and information for  
**2023 Local Government Service Group Conference.**

Please note that both motions and delegations can only be submitted online.  
There are no paper forms.

**Local Government Service Group Conference 2023 will be held at the ACC Liverpool Centre starting 9.30am Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June, ending 5pm Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**

ACC Liverpool  
Kings Dock Street,  
Liverpool  
L3 4FP  
Tel: 0151 475 8888

Website: <https://www.accliverpool.com/>

## Timetable

Deadline for Submission of Motions	12pm	Friday, 17 February 2023
Publication of Preliminary Agenda	-	Friday, 10 March 2023
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	12pm	Thursday, 16 March 2023
Deadline for crèche places	12pm	Thursday, 23 March 2023
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12pm	Wednesday, 12 April 2023
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access	4pm	Thursday, 30 March 2023
Publication of Final Agenda		Friday, 12 May 2023
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for travel	12pm	Thursday, 25 May 2023
Deadline for Emergency Motions	12pm	Thursday, 01 June 2023
Deadline for submitting Change of Delegates online on the OCS	11:59pm	Thursday, 08 June 2023

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2023-national-lg/> are:

- Advice from Standing Orders Committee (page 10)

## **Information on how to submit motions and delegations using UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS)**

**Which branch officers can use the OCS?** Motions and delegations can be submitted at branch level by either the Branch Chair or Branch Secretary. The other will receive e-mail copies of the motion or delegation submission as soon as it is submitted. Branch employed staff are also able to enter motions but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch.

At regional level, the regional head of the service group is authorised to submit the motion/delegation, with the chair of the regional committee receiving an instant e-mail copy. This process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant chairs and secretaries.

**Which members can use the OCS?** When a member is registered as a delegate to a conference, they will receive an e-mail informing them of this as long as their e-mail address is listed on the RMS. They can then also access the OCS to upload their photograph, to make online requests for services such as reasonable adjustments, crèche places and babysitting, which should be made by the deadline stated.

**How will these people access the OCS?** Users access the OCS via the UNISON website at [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk) and clicking on 'My UNISON' - which is located at the top of the front page. Using your UNISON membership number and surname, register once and you will be issued with a password. For subsequent access, simply click on 'My UNISON' and then 'Sign-in now' and you will need your membership number and the password you were issued. Branch employed staff should call their regional contact.

**What if the correct branch people have accessed 'My UNISON' but then cannot access the OCS?** Key to accessing the OCS is ensuring that the data held on UNISON's membership system, the RMS, is correct. It records which members hold the key positions of Branch Secretary and Branch Chair. If this information is incorrect, or if it changes, the branch needs to ensure that the RMS records are updated immediately. Then the individual should call their regional contact.

**What else needs to happen?** It will help the system to function if these key branch people also have an e-mail address stored on their RMS records. Please contact your branch or regional RMS team urgently, to make this happen. Each delegate within a delegation should also have their date of birth stored on the RMS.

**Delegates and Visitors to Conference:** It is important that we collect e-mail addresses for those members wishing to participate in any way in the conference. The e-mail address can be any one that you have easy access to e.g. your personal e-mail, branch e-mail or that of a friend or relative.

- If you already have an e-mail address and access to the UNISON website, the quickest way to update your details is to go to the UNISON website and click 'My UNISON' – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- If you don't have an e-mail address or don't have access to the UNISON webpage, you can contact UNISONdirect on 0800 0857 857 and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON Membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- Or, you can contact your local UNISON branch and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.

**Key contacts:**

If you have a 'My UNISON' registration issue: UNISONdirect on 0800 0857 857

If you have an OCS issue, please contact your relevant regional contact. Listed below are the Conference contacts for each region, who can also assist with online conference registration:

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Amanda Tickner	01245 608909	<a href="mailto:a.tickner@unison.co.uk">a.tickner@unison.co.uk</a>
East Midlands	Colleen Forrest (Tues & Fri only)	0115 847 5468	<a href="mailto:c.forrest@unison.co.uk">c.forrest@unison.co.uk</a>
	Katrina Grace (Mon & Tues only)	0115 847 5417	<a href="mailto:k.grace@unison.co.uk">k.grace@unison.co.uk</a>
Greater London	Shelley Davey Lorraine Tant Cally Thompson	0207 535 6648	<a href="mailto:glrconference@unison.co.uk">glrconference@unison.co.uk</a>
Northern			
	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	<a href="mailto:a.jackson2@unison.co.uk">a.jackson2@unison.co.uk</a>
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	<a href="mailto:e.robinson@unison.co.uk">e.robinson@unison.co.uk</a>
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	<a href="mailto:k.scott@unison.co.uk">k.scott@unison.co.uk</a>
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	<a href="mailto:g.gorman@unison.co.uk">g.gorman@unison.co.uk</a>
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	<a href="mailto:r.rodgers@unison.co.uk">r.rodgers@unison.co.uk</a>
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	<a href="mailto:j.fraser@unison.co.uk">j.fraser@unison.co.uk</a>
South East	Claire Harvey	07545 660341	<a href="mailto:communicationsteam@unison.co.uk">communicationsteam@unison.co.uk</a>
	Rob Bealey	07545 661652	
South West	Jenn Gollings (Mon – Thurs only)	01823 285336	<a href="mailto:j.gollings@unison.co.uk">j.gollings@unison.co.uk</a>
	TJ Milburn	07903845983	<a href="mailto:t.milburn@unison.co.uk">t.milburn@unison.co.uk</a>
Cymru/Wales	Beverley Powell	02920 729475	<a href="mailto:b.powell@unison.co.uk">b.powell@unison.co.uk</a>
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	<a href="mailto:c.kenny@unison.co.uk">c.kenny@unison.co.uk</a>
	Kate Walker	01216853164	<a href="mailto:k.walker@unison.co.uk">k.walker@unison.co.uk</a>
Yorkshire & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 218 2333	<a href="mailto:l.senior@unison.co.uk">l.senior@unison.co.uk</a>

**Disenfranchised Branches**

Branches are reminded that under Rule D.1.3.3.1 you will be disenfranchised from sending delegates to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, if you did not submit your annual financial returns (Rule G.10.1) to your UNISON regional office by no later than **15 March each year**.

## **National and Regional Representation**

The following bodies are eligible to send two delegates (at least one of whom should be female) who shall be entitled to speak but not vote:

- Regional Service Groups
- Private Contractors National Forum (being members of the Local Government Service Group)
- National Self-Organised Groups
- National Young Members' Forum
- National Sector Committees

## **Branch Representation**

- Branches with up to 1,000 members are entitled to elect one delegate per 500 members or part thereof.
- Branches with over 1,000 members are entitled to elect one additional delegate per 1,000 members or part thereof.

Representation is based on membership as at **30 September 2022**.

## **Proportionality and Fair Representation**

Below are the requirements for ensuring proportionality and fair representation of branch delegations to Local Government Conference.

- 1) If the delegation only comprises one full delegate, then this delegate may be of any gender.
  - 2) The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the proportion of women members in the branch, compared to members who are male or non-binary. If a branch is unable to elect enough women delegates to meet proportionality, then the women's places on the delegation must remain unfilled. This is consistent with the approach to proportionality taken elsewhere in the union.
  - 3) Branches with over 2,000 members must include one low paid woman member in the delegation.
  - 4) Branches with over 3,000 members must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. Age 26 or under at end of conference).
  - 5) Branches can send two people, in any gender combination, to share one of the delegate places. However:
    - a. If the entire delegation entitlement comprises of just the two sharers, then at least one must be female.
    - b. if they are sharing the low paid female seat, both sharers must be low paid females;
    - c. if they are sharing the young members' seat, both sharers must be young members.  
*i.e. sending one sharer to meet either the low paid or young member requirement is not sufficient.*
- When calculating proportionality, each sharer counts as one delegate.
- 7) Branches must include Black members in their delegation in proportion to the workforce profile of the employers covered by the branch.
  - 8) Branches should endeavour to include disabled members and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus) members in the delegation.

- 9) Overall, branches should also consider factors such as the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations and skills.

### **Transgender Members**

UNISON applies strict rules on proportionality in branch conference delegations, to ensure proper representation of women. Members who are in the process of transitioning gender may not yet have changed their UNISON membership details. For example, a member may wish to attend the Local Government Service Group Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for the Local Government Service Group Conference as the gender in which they will attend the Conference, irrespective of their gender recorded on the RMS.

To ensure that branch delegations including transgender members are not rejected on grounds of proportionality, please contact the Conference Office on 020 7121 5123 with information on any online delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

### **Monitoring for Fair Representation and Proportionality**

All delegates will be asked to complete an online form which enables the Conference to be monitored in order that UNISON can check on progress towards its objectives of fair representation and proportionality at all levels of the union. This exercise is conducted at all UNISON conferences and at regional level.

Please assist us by completing the online form before the end of conference.

### **Appeals**

**Any appeals concerning the composition of branch delegations shall be considered at regional level via a regional appeals panel convened by the regional secretary. Late delegate registrations will not be approved. There will be no exceptions to this. The appeals mechanism in the regions is for the composition of delegations, not for late submissions. Regions have to apply the deadlines strictly.**

### **Fitness to Attend Conference**

With the introduction of Fitness to Work sick notes are slightly different now. Members who are off sick from work may have an illness/condition which means they can't perform some tasks but can perform others. They may have a fitness to work certificate which means they return to work with certain caveats – e.g. places limits on the types of tasks they can perform at work and duration.

So if a member is not at work and off sick and wants to attend the Local Government Conference they need to ask for a note from their GP indicating they are fit to attend the conference (travel/sitting for long periods). We also advise them to get a note from their employer agreeing to their attendance at conference, as this may be a different activity from those at work which they are not able to do.

Members should send a copy of the Fitness to Attend note to the UNISON Conference Office, in advance of the conference. This information will be treated with confidentiality.

## **Please help us to help the environment**

We're doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. We are providing all delegates with the chance to opt out of being sent paper copies of our conference materials as part of the delegates' despatch. All these documents will be available online via the conference app. You can then download them onto your laptop or tablet to view online while you are at conference. If you wish to opt out please indicate this on the 'Extras' screen options on the Online Conference System (OCS). This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted by **Thursday, 30 March 2023**.

For any reasonable adjustments required, please complete the request online by the stated deadline. This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Authorisation for personal assistance/facilitation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

## **Please remember that BSL Interpreters will only be available if requested in advance.**

While we work within the context of the social model of disability this does not mean that UNISON can automatically provide all resources that are requested as adjustments. We have to consider the finite resources available both in terms of space and finances in order that we can balance our commitment to the social model with the resources available, and channel them to where they are needed most.

Members requesting seating, tables, footrests, which impact on the space available on the floor of conference, will be asked what barriers they face that require this adjustment for their participation.

While not requesting detailed personal information, UNISON will require sufficient information in order to understand the barriers faced to get the right resources to the right people for this Conference. This will assist us in making adjustments that are meaningful and appropriate to the individual.

The union will determine the allocation of limited resources. If necessary, this may include reserving the right to seek additional information.

We will apply a necessary cut off point for requests, as close as possible to the conference while not impacting on the requirements to produce regional seating plans in good time for advance circulation. The deadline is **Thursday, 30 March 2023**.

We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by **12pm, Thursday, 25 May 2023**

## **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for the conference, please ask them to indicate this with their online request.

## **Crèche and Babysitting**

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to (and including) the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the request online by **12pm, Thursday, 23 March 2023**. This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Delegates are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

## **Change of Delegate**

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates on **Thursday, 16 March 2023**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **11:59pm on Thursday, 08 June 2023**, no change of delegate can be made on OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date then an Emergency Change of Delegate form will need to be completed.

This form will be available on the UNISON website from **Friday, 09 December 2022** and will also be available at the regional pre-conference delegates meeting for Local Government Conference. The form will also be available from the conference desk at Brighton Centre

For Local Government Conference, the regional head of local government or the regional secretary must sign the form to approve the changes.

*Branches are reminded that changes to a delegation can only be made up to the start of a conference. There are no exceptions to this rule.*

## **Travel Arrangements**

Please consider the impact on the environment when making your decision on how to travel to Conference. Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel via email at [unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com](mailto:unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com) or call [0800 091 4272](tel:08000914272). Please advise Stewart Corporate Travel if your delegates have railcards.

Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates and Sharer 1's only** will be funded from National Office.
- Travel costs for **Visitors and Sharer 2's** must be paid for by the branch. **This is in line with Rule D.I.6 on shared delegates.** *Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.*

Conference Travel should be booked by the cheapest possible means.

Driving is discouraged for conference unless delegates are travelling together or as a reasonable adjustment. Total reclaimable will be the cost of standard tickets or cost of car travel – whichever is the lesser.

The 250 mile / upgraded or 1st Class travel rule is not applicable for conference travel

All travel requests (including upgraded or 1st Class Travel) as a reasonable adjustment must be reviewed and authorised by the Head of Conferences.

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by **12pm, Thursday, 25 May 2023**

### **Accommodation**

Booking accommodation – please book any accommodation required with a reputable provider with a generous cancellation policy.

Please ensure that members have written confirmation of any booked and paid for accommodation.

Branches are encouraged to arrange accommodation through Visit Liverpool accommodation Booking Service. Using the Booking Service supports the work of our members in local government and ensures our continuing ability, as a not-for-profit organisation, to secure preferential rates for our conference venues. For full details of current availability and for bookings please go to:

Link: <https://book.passkey.com/go/UNISON2023>

Email: [accommodation@marketingliverpool.co.uk](mailto:accommodation@marketingliverpool.co.uk)

Phone: 01512335921

### **Advice on Submission of Motions**

Please refer to the advice from the Standing Orders Committee about submission of motions, enclosed with this Conference Bulletin.

The Preliminary Agenda will be published on **Friday, 10 March 2023**. The Final Agenda will be published in newspaper format and online on **Friday, 12 May 2023**. The motions and amendments will also be included in the conference documents which are sent to all delegates in May 2023.

### **Prepaid Cards**

Union Income Ltd have agreed to provide a corporate version of its prepaid card still with the UNISON branding. If your branch requires a prepaid card then this is the card that is the preferred option above others generally available.

An application will normally take about 14 working days to turnaround and you can request an information pack and application form by contacting:

UNISON Prepaid Plus Customer Services, 39-51 Highgate Road. London NW5 1RT or email [customerservices@unisonprepaid.com](mailto:customerservices@unisonprepaid.com)



## **Credit Cards**

If your branch does not specifically require a prepaid card the other best option is a credit card from Unity Trust Bank called Unity Corporate MultiPay Card. It is more flexible and is linked to branch current account. Details of the Corporate MultiPay card and further information on how to apply are available from their website at [www.unity.co.uk/multipay](http://www.unity.co.uk/multipay). To help branches switch to this Unity Trust credit card, the bank has agreed to waive the one off administration fee of £50 for all current ALTO card customers who apply for a MultiPay card.

## **Data Protection**

The information you provide via the OCS, in addition to your information held on UNISON's membership database, will be used for the organisation and administration of Conference. It may also be used for statistical purposes as this helps us plan future conferences. We will process your personal data in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). You can find out more about how UNISON processes your personal data by going to [unison.org.uk/privacy-policy](http://unison.org.uk/privacy-policy) or emailing [dataprotection@unison.co.uk](mailto:dataprotection@unison.co.uk).

# National Local Government Service Group Conference 2023: Advice from Standing Orders Committee

This advice is to assist branches and other bodies submitting motions and amendments for 2023 local government conference. It outlines the criteria used by the standing orders committee in considering whether motions and amendments will be admitted to the conference agenda – whether they are ‘competent’.

In brief, motions must be:

- From a body entitled to submit motions to local government conference
- About a matter relevant to the local government service group
- Clear, and including specific proposals for action, making sure local government conference has the power to call upon the specified body, and that body has the power to undertake the action.
- Submitted via the online conference system (OCS)
- Within the specified deadlines: 12.00 noon Friday 17 February for motions and 12.00 noon Wednesday 12 April for amendments
- In line with UNISON rules.

## Who can submit motions?

UNISON rule P.1.3.5 sets out the bodies eligible to submit motions to service group conferences. For local government conference, these are branches within local government, the local government service group executive, regional local government committees and national local government sector committees. In addition, national self-organised groups, the national young members’ forum and the national private contractors’ forum may submit up to two motions and two amendments.

## Submitting motions using the OCS

There is advice in the conference bulletin on how to submit motions using UNISON’s online conference system (OCS). Only the branch chair or branch secretary have OCS permission to submit motions. Branch employed staff can enter motions on the OCS but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch. Please make sure motions are entered onto the OCS and submitted in plenty of time before the deadline.

For branches, only the texts of motions which have been considered by a branch meeting, or a branch committee meeting, are eligible for conference. Local branch rules that delegate powers to other bodies will not be taken into account - the national rule requirements apply for conference.

The date of the meeting where it was agreed to submit the item must be recorded on the OCS, together with the type of meeting. Meetings must be quorate. This may be checked, particularly in relation to emergency motions.

## Subject matter – service group issues

Motions, amendments and emergency motions submitted to the agenda for local government conference **must** be relevant to the local government service group.

Motions may instruct the local government service group executive but may not commit the union nationally to a particular policy or campaign. Motions that are relevant to the union as a whole should be sent to national delegate conference.

Rule D.3.1.4 sets out the remit of the service group and the issues on which it has autonomy to act on behalf of its members. These are to:

- Determine the service group's general policy;
- Negotiate:
  - pay and conditions of service
  - professional and occupational rules, standards, conditions and policy
  - industrial and other relations with employers to represent its members and participate in any joint negotiating machinery with powers in these matters
  - the settlement of any disputes arising from the employment of its members.

### **Citizenship issues**

Some issues which appear relevant to the local government service group may actually be 'citizenship' issues, of relevance to the whole union. This is because members experience the issues as workers **and** as members of the public or as service users.

Motions to local government conference must only have relevance to local government service group workers as workers. For example, a motion on school meals could call for a campaign to improve the pay and conditions or training opportunities for school meals staff. It may not call for a campaign on the provision of school meals as such - this would be a national delegate conference matter.

A number of motions are ruled out each year on these grounds. If in doubt - seek advice.

### **Staffing issues**

Motions which deal directly or indirectly with staffing matters will need to bear in mind that the National Executive Council and the General Secretary have responsibility for the employment and terms and conditions of UNISON staff, including legal obligations under employment law (Rules D 2.12.1 and D 2.12.2).

### **Industrial action**

Rule O gives the National Executive Council exclusive powers to authorise industrial action. To be lawful, the industrial action must be taken in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute which relates wholly (or mainly) to one or more matters listed under s.218 & s.244 of the Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

Motions calling for industrial action over privatisation or cuts to services do not fall within the legal definition of a trade dispute and so must not be debated as this would put the union in legal jeopardy.

Motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O on industrial action or Rule B 4.5, which requires the union to act lawfully.

Motions or amendments must not describe previous or current trade disputes as being 'against privatisation' or similar such words, as this could leave the union open to legal challenge. If in doubt, please see advice.

Before any call for industrial action, the union must have the majority support of a properly organised ballot and the union must comply with a number of procedural requirements.

### **Affiliated political fund/Labour Link**

Matters relating to the Labour Party, both in relation to internal issues and in respect of matters to be pursued at Labour Party conference, are dealt with by Labour Link through its own structures, not local government conference.

### **Legal Proceedings –**

Motions may be ruled out of order for a number of legal reasons. These include legal jeopardy – where a motion places the union at risk of legal action from a third party.

Further, conference cannot compromise existing or potential legal proceedings for either party in a case. Proceedings include potential, past or current disciplinary issues.

A motion will be ruled out if is considered to be in breach of UNISON rules. For example, it may breach our values as set out in Rule B or our rules on legal representation in Rule K.

Motions can only call for actions or activities that the union can lawfully undertake. Motions that call on the union to break the law are not competent.

### **Calls vs instructs**

The standing orders committee draws a distinction between motions that **call on** another body or part of the union to do something and one which **instructs** them. When using 'instruct', submitters of motions should be clear that local government conference does indeed have the power to instruct this body and that the body being instructed has the power to undertake the action.

Where motions call on a union body to 'ensure' an action takes place, the SOC will check that it is within their power to do so. If in doubt, branches should use the phrase 'seek to ensure'. Even when using 'call on', submitters should check local government conference has the power to call on this body and the body has the power to undertake the action.

### **Pension schemes**

Individual occupational pension schemes are normally debated as bargaining issues at service group conferences, but submitters are reminded that the local government pension scheme has membership across more than one UNISON service group.

### **Trade Union Act 2016**

Submitters are requested to take the matters raised in the Act into consideration when considering submissions to local government conference. The Act is wide reaching covering, amongst other things, industrial action and political fund, if in doubt please seek advice.

### **Rule P.1.3.6**

Rule P.1.3.6 gives the standing orders committee the power to recommend to conference that if a motion only affects the devolved bargaining groups of Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales, voting on that motion may be restricted to delegates from those groups.

The standing orders committee is keen to avoid the situation where part of a motion applies to the whole service group and part to a particular pay bargaining group. An example would be where a motion on general pay policy is amended to refer solely to the NJC pay agreement. This can cause confusion at conference, as delegates may be able to vote in one part of the debate and not another.

Please bear this in mind when drafting motions and amendments so it is clear whether it applies to the whole service group or only certain bargaining groups.

### **Amendments to motions**

Amendments are subject to the same rules as motions. In addition, they should not be used to introduce an entirely new matter or as a substitute for voting against a motion. Amendments are likely to be out of order as wrecking amendments if they:

- Introduce a direct negative into the motion
- Reduce the motion to a mere re-statement of existing policy
- Seek to change fundamentally the purpose of the motion.

### **Emergency motions**

Only matters of a genuine emergency to the local government group will be admitted on to the agenda as emergency motions.

The submitting body must show:

- The matter could not be raised in debate on the agenda
- The action called for is not covered by another motion, amendment or composite
- The facts giving rise to the subject matter have occurred since the closing date for the submission of amendments: it is not enough that the branch was unaware of the facts until after the closing date
- The subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels other than local government conference.

The motion should be accompanied by an explanation of why it was not submitted in accordance with the normal procedures and deadlines. Submitters should bear in mind that many matters can be dealt with by the region, branch, or service group executive and do not require a conference decision to be actioned.

The same requirements in relation to branch meetings apply to the agreement of emergency motions. Details of the quorate meeting at which it was agreed must be provided. Branches which submit emergency motions during conference will have to provide the standing orders committee with details of their branch rules covering advance notice for convening meetings and branch quorum. The SOC will not take into account delegated powers within branches.

## **Challenges to SOC decisions**

If the SOC rules your motion or amendment out of order, you will receive notification including the reasons why, via the online conference system (OCS). If you are not happy with the decision and want the SOC to reconsider, you must appeal in writing **via the OCS**. Please remember it is not possible to reword a motion after the deadline, to make it competent.

**Appeals cannot be started at Conference or from the Conference floor, a written appeal must be made in advance of the Conference by the following deadlines:**

Deadlines for appeals against motions ruled out of order:  
**12.00 noon Wednesday 12 April 2023**

Deadlines for appeals against amendments ruled out of order:  
**12 noon Wednesday 24 May 2023**

## **Best practice on writing motions and rule amendments**

Submitters are encouraged to write clear, succinct motions that include specific proposals for action.

General advice is available from SOC members on:

- \* drafting motions and rule amendments, prior to deadlines;
- \* guidance and assistance on procedures and standing orders.

However, receiving advice from individual committee members does not guarantee acceptance on to the agenda.

Wording should avoid language which may cause offence.

Each motion and amendment to motions is considered by the whole committee and decisions are made collectively.

## **Further advice**

If you have any queries, please seek advice from your regional local government standing orders committee rep or contact:

Karen Westwood  
Secretary, Local Government Conference SOC  
[k.westwood@unison.co.uk](mailto:k.westwood@unison.co.uk)

Helen Raymond  
Administrator, Local Government Conference SOC  
[h.raymond@unison.co.uk](mailto:h.raymond@unison.co.uk)

Local Government, Police and Justice section, UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road,  
London NW1 2AY

November 2023