

National Community Conference and Seminar Bulletin

September 2023

Conference Team 020 7121 5123
 Haifa Rashed (policy) h.rashed@unison.co.uk
 Tahreen Dewan (Standing Orders) t.dewan@unison.co.uk

This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2024 National Community Service Group Conference and Seminar
 Please note that both motions and delegations can only be submitted online.
 There are no paper forms.

The Community Service Group Conference and Seminar will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Chester, from 10:30am on Friday 8th March until 4pm on Saturday 9th March 2024. As per the standing orders, a request for conference business to be extended can be made to Standing Orders Committee at Conference to ensure completion of business.

The motions-based conference will take place on Saturday. All delegates are also automatically invited to the annual seminar on Friday.

Crowne Plaza, Chester
 Trinity Street
 Chester
 CH1 2BD
 Tel: 01244 899988

Website: <http://crowne-plaza-chester-hotel.hotel-dir.com/en/>

Timetable

	Time	Dates
Deadline for Submission of Motions on the OCS	12:00pm	Friday, 17 November 2023
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Friday, 08 December 2023
Deadline for Submission of Delegates on the OCS	12:00pm	Thursday, 14 December 2023
Deadline for Amendments to Motions on the OCS	12:00pm	Friday, 12 January 2024
Deadline for babysitting and crèche requests on the OCS	12:00pm	Thursday, 18 January 2024
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access on the OCS	4:00pm	Thursday, 18 January 2024
Publication of Final Agenda		Friday, 09 February 2024
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for travel	12:00pm	Thursday, 22 February 2024
Deadline for Submission of Emergency Motions on the OCS	12:00pm	Friday, 01 March 2024
Deadline for Submitting Change of Delegates on the OCS	11:59pm	Tuesday, 05 March 2024

Enclosed with this Conference Bulletin, and available for download on the conference webpage: <https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2024-community-conference>

- Community SOC Advice

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 will also be able to enter motions but will not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch.

At regional level, the regional head of the service group will be 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 and crèche places, 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 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 anyone 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 0 857 857 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	Yvonne Gilbey	01245 608901	y.gilbey@unison.co.uk
	Viv Wortley	01245 608915	v.wortley@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Colleen Forrest	0115 847 5468	eastmidlandsadminteam@unison.co.uk
	Wendie Taylor	0115 847 5415	
	Jennifer Rimmer	0754 566 0750	
	Donna Franklin	0115 8475 5414	
	Admin team	0115 847 5435	
Greater London	Shelley Davey	0207 535 6648	glrconference@unison.co.uk
	Lorraine Tant		
	Cally Thompson		
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	a.jackson2@unison.co.uk
	Catherine Davison	0191 245 0830	c.davison@unison.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	e.robinson@unison.co.uk
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	k.scott@unison.co.uk
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	g.gorman@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	j.fraser@unison.co.uk
South East	Elizabeth Britton	0796 147 5608	communicationsteam@unison.co.uk
	Bethany Martyn-Jones	0781 372 1902	
	Claire Harvey	0754 566 0341	
South West	Jenn Gollings	01823 285336	sw.events@unison.co.uk
	TJ Milburn	01392 442676	
	Carol Thyer	01823 285301	
Cymru/Wales	Beverley Powell	02920 729475	b.powell@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
	Kate Walker	0121 685 3164	k.walker@unison.co.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 2182333	l.senior@unison.co.uk
	Nicky Miller	0113 2182325	n.miller@unison.co.uk

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 to vote:

- National Self-Organised Groups
- Regional Service Groups
- National Sector Committees
- National Young Members' Forum

Delegates must be members of branches in the Community Service Group.

Branch Representation

Branch representation levels are as defined by the Community Service Group. The requirements for ensuring proportionality and fair representation of branch delegations is in line with the NDC Scheme of Branch Representation which applies to all service groups.

- 1) All delegates to the Community Service Group Conference must be members of the Community Service Group.
 - 2) Branches shall be entitled to one delegate for the first 250 Community service group members within the branch, a second delegate for the next 250 members or part thereof, and one further delegate per subsequent 500 Community service group members or part thereof (based on branch membership at 30 September of the year before the conference).
 - 3) If a branch has only one delegate, that delegate may be female or male, but these branches must consider the gender split of their Community service group membership, and in particular, branches whose community service group membership is more than 50% female should strive to ensure that their one delegate is a woman. The gender make-up of the delegation must be based on the gender make-up of the Community service group membership within the branch.
 - 4) Branches must include Black members in their delegation in proportion to the workforce profile of all the Community employers covered by the branch.
 - 5) Branches with 3 or more delegates must include one low paid, female member in the delegation. Low paid members are those with a basic hourly rate of £11.80 or less (this rate to be amended in line with Rule Q of the UNISON rulebook).
 - 6) Branches with 4 or more delegates must include one young member in the delegation (i.e., Age 30 or under at end of conference).
 - 7) Branches can send two people to share one of the delegate places. However:
 - a. If they are sharing the female low paid seat, both sharers must be female low paid;
 - b. 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.*
- 8) Branches should endeavour to include disabled members and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus) members in the delegation.

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

Representation is based on membership as of **30 September 2023**.

30 September 2023 membership figures will be available from the RMS in early January 2024. At this point the Conference Office will run a check to see if any branches are entitled to more or fewer delegates and action this as necessary.

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 Community Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for Community 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 delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

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 Community 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 Tracey Ayton Harding, Head of Conferences and Designated Health & Safety Manager, in advance of the conference. This information will be treated with confidence.

Appeals

Regions monitor the delegations submitted by branches to ensure compliance with the scheme. Branches have a right of appeal against a decision by their region that their proposed branch delegation is not in line with this scheme.

Please help us to help the environment

We are doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. This year, 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, and on the UNISON website. 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). If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

Language

The language we use is important and reflects deep-rooted and long-standing power structures and beliefs. Racist, disablist, sexist, transphobic, ageist, biphobic or homophobic language will not be tolerated. Generalisations are seldom helpful and seldom true: please avoid making them. Jokes or comments based on sexist, racist, disablist, ageist, homophobic, biphobic or transphobic ideas should not be made. Remember that some of us do not identify on the gender binary, so expressions such as 'sisters and brother' do not include us all.

Conduct of delegates

All delegates, visitors, staff, and facilitators are expected to behave in a courteous manner. Aggressive, offensive, intimidatory, disrespectful or unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. This applies to all aspects of communication, at or in connection with the conference, including postings on social media. Complaints will be treated seriously.

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 asked to consider when booking accommodation for delegates that those delegates with long or difficult journeys or those delegates with access requirements may also need accommodation for the Saturday night.

My Requirements *IMPORTANT INFORMATION*****

Requesting 'Extras' such as Reasonable Adjustments or Personal Assistants on the Online Conference System (OCS) can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Once a delegate is registered, the OCS will automatically send out an e-mail to the person with a web link which they can click on to access the OCS and input the Extras they require. For any assistance, please contact your regional conference contact from the list (page 3) in this bulletin.

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 **4pm, Thursday, 18 January 2024**.

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

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by 12pm Thursday, 22 February 2024

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. Where resources are allocated, this is done on the understanding that the member will use the resources at all times that they are in the conference hall. Failure to do so may result in the resources being reallocated.

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 **4pm, Thursday, 18 January 2024**. We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for the conference venue, 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, 18 January 2024**. Delegates and visitors 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 by **12pm Thursday, 14 December 2023**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **11.59pm, Tuesday, 05 March 2024** no more changes can be made on the 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 **Wednesday, 06 March 2024** and will also be available from the Conference Desk.

No changes to the delegation can be made once Conference starts.

Conference Budget and Expenses

The conference budget covers travel costs for branch delegates and regional and national representatives to conferences only. Branches cover subsistence and accommodation for branch delegates, plus incidental travel. Visitors/sharers 2 expenses and travel are covered solely by the branch.

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 or call [0800 091 4272](tel:08000914272).

Please advise Stewart Corporate Travel if your delegates have railcards.

Travel can also be booked online using the Steward Travel Online Portal at <https://www.gtp-marketplace.com/>

Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates only** will be funded from National Office
- Travel costs for **Visitors/Sharer 2** must be paid for by the branch. 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.

Branches are responsible for funding their delegates' and visitors' attendance at conference. Subsistence should cover the cost of accommodation, meals, childcare, dependent care, and facilitation.

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by **12pm Thursday, 22 February 2024**

Submitting Motions, Amendments, Emergency Motions

Motions should be submitted via UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS). The Preliminary Agenda will be published on **Thursday, 07 December 2023**. The Final Agenda will be published on **Friday, 09 February 2024**.

Annual Report

The Annual Report of the Community Service Group Executive will be published by **Friday, 02 February 2024**. If your branch wishes to raise questions on the Annual Report, these must be submitted in writing and received by 5pm, **Friday, 23 February 2024**. If you have not received an acknowledgement of receipt of your question within 5 working days, you should contact **Gavin Edwards , Senior National Officer**, on 0207 121 5402 or g.edwards@unison.co.uk

If any branches have supplementary questions to their original written question, then it would be helpful if advance written notice could be given of this, so that any additional information requested can be sought prior to the start of Conference. This process should enable Conference to deal with the Annual Report simply and quickly and leave more time for the discussion of motions.

Any questions on the Annual Report should be addressed to **Gavin Edwards, Senior National Officer**, UNISON, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY, or emailed to g.edwards@unison.co.uk

Arrangements for Distribution of Card Voting Booklet

Your branch will be issued with your voting booklet at the venue. The card vote collection point will be located near the conference enquiry desk in the venue.

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

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. 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 or emailing dataprotection@unison.co.uk.

Dear Colleague,

Community Service Group Conference 2024- Advice from the Standing Orders Committee

This circular sets out advice from the Community Service Group Standing Orders Committee on the submission of competent motions, amendments and emergency motions to the Community Service Group Conference.

Please assist in the preparation of Conference by submitting motions and amendments in good time and well within the specified deadlines.

General Advice on Competency of Motions

Branches are often disappointed when motions are ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee because of a technicality, for example where the motion has been drafted in a way which conflicts with the UNISON Rule Book.

Members of the Standing Orders Committee will be happy to offer general guidance and assistance on procedures and standing orders.

i. Who can submit motions?

Rule P 1.3.5 sets out Standing Orders advice on those bodies which are eligible to submit motions. The bodies which can submit motions and amendments to the Community Service Conference are: Branches that organise Community members; the Community Service Group Executive; and Regional Community Committees. Self-Organised Groups at national level and the National Young Members' Forum may submit a total of two motions and two amendments to the Conference.

ii. Subject Matter — Service Group Issues

All motions, amendments and emergency motions submitted to the agenda for Community Conference must be relevant to the Community Service Group. Motions may instruct the Community 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. For example a Service Group Conference cannot set policy in relation to the use of Political Funds as this is a matter for National Delegate Conference.

iii. What constitutes a Service Group Issue?

Rule D.3.1.4 sets out the remit of the Service Group and the issues upon 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.

The Standing Orders Committee will only accept motions that are relevant to the areas of activity defined for Service Groups within Rule D.3.1.4.

iv. Citizenship Issues

Some issues, which initially may be relevant to the Community Service Group, may also be "citizenship" issues, i.e. of relevance to the whole Union because members experience them as workers and as members of the public. Such motions when submitted to National Delegate Conference can instruct the whole union to adopt a policy or campaign. A good example is the funding and provision of services such as social housing or social care — these issues affect all our members rather than just those employed in the community and voluntary sector and need to be debated by the union as a whole. This can be a difficult area and bodies which do not have submission rights to National Delegate Conference may particularly need to take advice as their motions will be ruled out of order rather than being referred to National Delegate Conference.

If you do submit a motion on a citizenship issue as defined above — this must only have relevance to Community Service Group workers.

An increasing number of motions are ruled out of UNISON conferences each year on these grounds and you should seek advice if in doubt.

v. Staffing Issues

Motions dealing with UNISON staffing matters are not appropriate for Conference debate. The National Executive Council and the General Secretary have responsibility for the employment of staff, under Rule D.2.10.1 and Rule D 2.10.2.

vi. Industrial Action

Rule O - Industrial Action gives exclusive power to the National Executive Council to authorise industrial action. To be lawful, industrial action must be in relation to a current trade dispute between an individual group of employees and their employer. Therefore any motions relating to industrial action must not contravene Rule O or Rule B.4.5 Aims and Objectives "to perform such other duties and engage in such other business as a trade union may lawfully undertake."

vii. Political Fund

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 properly dealt with by the Affiliated Political Fund through its own structures, not Community Conference. The rules governing the Political Fund include both the Affiliated and the General Political Funds.

viii Legal Reasons

Motions may also be ruled out of order due to a number of legal reasons:

Legal Jeopardy - a motion which places the union at risk of legal action from a third party. The Standing Orders Committee do not enter into protracted legal arguments on whether or not this third party would have a strong case, but rather will take the decision not to place

the union at risk. Legal jeopardy will also apply when the motion refers to or is relevant to current legal proceedings against UNISON or individuals acting in a UNISON capacity.

Other legal reasons might be due to the motion being in breach of UNISON rules - for example, it may breach our values outlined in Rule B or our rules on legal representation in Rule K.

ix. Legal Proceedings

The principle applied by the SOC is that the Conference cannot compromise existing or potential legal proceedings for either party in a case. Proceedings include potential, past or current disciplinary issues.

If there is a possibility that a motion may prejudice proceedings, the SOC will seek legal advice. If the advice is that a motion either directly or indirectly refers or could lead to reference to a particular case either expressly or by implication, or if a decision at Conference could be used in a case by any party, the SOC will rule the motion out of order. So on some very limited occasions it may be necessary to rule a motion out of order, not because of its content, but because it would be impossible to debate the motion without the details of a particular legal case arising.

Motions that call on the union to break the law are not competent. The SOC takes legal advice on the content of motions, particularly where there appears to be libel or the content is or would lead to breaches of the law and/ or rules. Motions are considered on a case by case basis.

x. Rule P1.3.6

This rule gives the Standing Orders Committee the power to recommend to Conference that, as a result of certain motions only affecting devolved bargaining groups – i.e. Scotland, Northern Ireland, England and Wales – voting may be restricted to those groups. It would be helpful if this could be noted when drafting motions so that it is clear whether the motion will apply to the whole Service Group or only certain groups.

The Standing Orders Committee is keen to avoid the situation whereby a motion may apply in part to the whole union and in part to a particular pay bargaining group. This can cause confusion at Conference as delegates may be able to vote in part of the debate and not others, We are considering how best to facilitate discussion of specific pay agreements and claims can be discussed at Conference and submitting bodies may wish to consider whether their motion is intended to apply to a specific group or set general policy.

xi. Amendments

Amendments are subject to the same rules as motions as set out above. They should not be used to promote essentially alternative motions or as merely a substitute for voting against a motion. Therefore 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.

xii. Guidelines on procedures for submitting motions, amendments to motion and emergency motions

Attached is a set of guidelines produced by the Standing Orders Committee on procedures for submitting motions, amendments, and emergency motions. Branches are asked to read them carefully prior to completion on the Online Conference System (OCS).

xiii. Emergency Motions

The criteria that the Standing Orders Committee applies to emergency motions are included in the attached guidelines, to assist branches and other submitting bodies when judging whether or not to submit an emergency motion. Your attention is drawn to the final point in paragraph 7 of the guidelines: The Branch will have to show that the subject of the emergency motion cannot be dealt with through normal channels, other than at Community Service Group Conference, for its aims to be achieved. For example, many motions can be dealt with by the Region, Branch or Service Group Executive and do not require a Conference decision to be actioned.

The strict application of these criteria will ensure that only matters of a genuine emergency to the Community Service Group will be admitted on to the agenda as emergency motions. The Standing Orders Committee will then timetable approved emergency motions for debate. It should be noted that only branches or the Service Group Executive can submit emergency motions.

The Standing Orders Committee hope that these guidelines will be useful in assisting Branches, Regions and National Committees in preparing motions for Conference and will reduce the number ruled out of order. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Tahreen

**Tahreen Dewan
Secretary
Standing Orders Committee
Community Service Group**

Standing Orders Committee Guidelines for Submission of Motions, Amendments and Emergency Motions to Community Service Group Conference

1. These guidelines have been prepared by the Standing Orders Committee, in light of experience, in order to assist submitting bodies.
2. For the purpose of these guidelines submitting bodies are those bodies within the Union which have the right under Rule P.1. 3. 5 to submit items for the agenda of a Service Group Conference.
3. Motions etc should be submitted online via the OCS.
4. The date of the meeting which decided to submit the item should be recorded, together with the type of meeting. The Standing Orders Committee has reaffirmed that, for branches, only the texts of motions which have been considered by a branch meeting, or a branch committee meeting, are eligible for submission to Conference. Local branch rules that may include the delegation of powers to other bodies will not be taken into account when applying the national rule requirements for Conference. Therefore branches must state clearly the type of meeting at which their motion was agreed. Meetings must be quorate and this may be checked, particularly for emergency motions.
5. It is the responsibility of the submitting body to ensure that the online motion is properly completed. If you need help or advice contact a member of the Standing Orders Committee, or an SOC Officer.
6. All agenda items must be submitted prior to deadlines determined by the Rules. The dates will be notified by circular. It would be helpful to the SOC if submitting bodies could submit items as early as possible. The SOC advises submitting bodies not to schedule meetings too close to the deadline.
7. An emergency motion should be submitted, in accordance with Rule P.11.2 and paragraphs 4 and 5 above, via the OCS.

The same requirements apply to emergency motions as for motions, even those referring to events which take place after the deadline for emergency motions. The Standing Orders Committee will not take into account delegated powers within particular branches. The motion must be considered by a meeting of the branch or branch committee.

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 criteria that the Standing Orders Committee applies to emergency motions are published below, to assist branches when judging whether or not to submit an emergency motion. Attention is drawn to the final point – that the subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels, other than at Community Service Group Conference, for its aims to be achieved. The submitting body will have to show:

- The matter couldn't 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 to motions. (It is not sufficient that the branch was not aware of the facts until after the closing date).
- The subject cannot be dealt with through normal channels other than Community Service Group Conference.

The motion should be accompanied by an explanation of the reasons for the item not being submitted in accordance with the normal procedures and deadlines.