



# Policy Conference 2023

## FINAL AGENDA

7<sup>th</sup> Policy Conference  
Brighton, 11 – 14 July 2023



**JOBS, PAY,  
CONDITIONS**





## **7<sup>th</sup> Policy Conference**

**11 – 14 July 2023**

**Final Agenda**



## **AGENDA FOR CONFERENCE**

1. Chair's opening address
2. Adoption of Standing Orders
3. Standing Orders Committee Report
4. Obituary
5. General Secretary's Keynote Address
6. Executive Council Report to Conference including:
  - i. Report on implementation of proportionality under Rule 11(2)
  - ii. Report on changes to lay members expenses under Rule 21
7. Consideration of general policy motions and composite motions
8. Election of Standing Orders Committee for the 8th Policy Conference 2025
9. Election of the Appeals Committee
10. Political, International and other speakers.



# UNITE 7<sup>th</sup> POLICY CONFERENCE 2023

## MOTIONS & AMENDMENTS

A	Economy & Industry .....	1
B	Pay .....	13
C	Equalities .....	19
D	Global Solidarity, International & Europe .....	32
E	Environment & Energy .....	44
F	Improving Health & Safety .....	62
G	Organising .....	73
H	Pensions & Retirement .....	77
I	Rights for Workers and their Unions .....	83
J	Social Action .....	89
K	Political & Labour party .....	102
L	Union Administration & Membership Services .....	104





## **A Economy & Industry**

### **1. The Future of Manufacturing: Brexit, New Technology & Collective Bargaining**

Conference recognises that manufacturing is facing parallel crises, from the ongoing disruption of Brexit to the transition to low carbon industries.

Across our sectors manufacturing faces a collapse of investment after Brexit, threatened relocation of work, and huge disruptions to supply chains.

There is also no commitment to like-for-like replacements for jobs which are lost as industries adapt or transition, nor that new jobs will have union-recognised pay and conditions. In the automotive industry alone 30% of traditional production jobs may be lost or replaced during the transition to electrification.

There is a total lack of support for the critical component supply chain at all levels, either to overcome new delays and costs after Brexit or to recognise and plan for the long term transition.

The Tory government has no industrial strategy. Instead its focus is on attacking workers by revoking all EU social and employment legislation at the end of 2023, and grasping at poor trade deals which do nothing to address declining trade with our main partner – the EU.

That the government won't acknowledge the problems or do anything to address them comes as no surprise, nor does its disgusting attempts to stoke anti-immigrant and anti-refugee hatred to deflect attention and blame. It is also totally unacceptable that the Labour Party refuses to even acknowledge or talk about these problems, especially Brexit.

Manufacturing needs a credible strategy which protects jobs now and supports the transition so that new jobs are secure, sustainable and delivered through collective bargaining.

This Conference calls for such a manufacturing strategy to include:

- A commitment that every step of the transition to new technologies will be negotiated through collective bargaining;
- A risk register of manufacturing companies most exposed to the transition to new technology and the industrial impact of Brexit.
- Any UK public funding (i.e. in R&D) must come with obligations for UK manufacturing.
- That new jobs, for example in EV battery plants must be like-for-like in quality or better, Unite rejects the 'Tesla' model of levelling down jobs, pay and conditions

- Comprehensive support for workers in the component supply chain: to defend employment, win new investment, win union-recognised upskilling and secure a transition on workers' terms;
- From Brexit to corporate profiteering and the transition, Unite must be honest about the issues these problems are causing for members and demand the Labour Party do likewise.
- Rejection of any plans to tear up workers' rights, social protections or other beneficial legislation which derived from EU law.

#### **Automotive Sector NISC**

## **2. Sourced, Bought and Manufactured Locally**

This Conference calls upon Unite to actively engage with a broad range of stakeholders to promote: - "Sourcing, Buying, and Manufacturing Locally".

Given the manufacturing sector's current crisis following the Covid-19 pandemic, along with global supply chains currently being under great strain, it makes sense to promote a cohesive strategy for local sourcing purchasing and manufacturing, less dependent upon global suppliers, with the associated issues/problems arising from their use.

If companies/organisations and governments at all levels sourced their requirements locally it could lead to greater employment in highly skilled and well paid jobs. It's estimated that for every employee working for a large national employer seven jobs are supported within the local economy. Additionally, it's expected that for every £1 spent up to 36 percent goes back to the treasury in one form of taxation or another. This could be used to fund our NHS and build infrastructure of which we could all be proud.

The economic, social and environmental (ESG) benefits gained are almost limitless and include for example:

- More vibrant and growing communities;
- Increased employment opportunities, with more openings in further education;
- Sustainable, stable supply chains and internal markets;
- Increased revenues and funding for growth and expansion;
- Lower carbon emissions; and
- Increased employment opportunities in other sectors in the UK.

Following on from Motion 7: 'UK Procurement Legislation', passed at our last Policy Conference, this Conference asks Unite to actively engage with educators, employers/organisations and government at all levels to advocate and promote a progressive policy, less dependent upon global supply chains.

#### **Engineering Manufacturing Steel NISC**

### **3. Offshoring & Hostile Takeovers**

Conference notes with sadness that after a strong fight by all concerned, Melrose took the decision to close the GKN plant in Erdington Birmingham ending 140 years of manufacturing and the loss of 550 well paid and skilled jobs.

Conference also recognises that this will potentially have a knock on effect to manufacturing as GKN supplied JLR and could potentially affect other manufacturers who supplied GKN and JLR.

This Conference recognises that GKN was taken over by Melrose in a hostile takeover and was funded by the UK government with taxpayer's money to develop greener technology and once that technology was in place decided to move the production to Eastern Europe.

It is also recognised that there are many other manufacturing companies that have suffered the same fate thus reducing the UK's manufacturing base.

The Labour Party has committed to investing £28 billion in greener technology and creating greener skilled jobs. Once those jobs are in place it is vital they remain here for future generations

This Conference resolves to press the Labour MPs to raise the issue of hostile takeovers and offshoring in Parliament.

Unite and the TUC to campaign to bring in tighter legislation on hostile takeovers and offshoring in order to protect British industry through working with and consulting with the trade unions

To put pressure on the Labour Party to commit to robust and tight legislation in order prevent this from happening in future also introduce stronger redundancy protections for UK workers as part of the manifesto for the next GE, by working with and consulting with the trade unions.

**Birmingham Area Activists Committee, West Midlands**

### **4. Freeports**

We call upon Conference to support the Unite National strategy for industrial organising in and around Freeports. This Conference encourages all Unite Reps, and activists to become actively involved in their respective regions that have been announced as Freeport zones.

Conference believes that this Government's Freeport policy along with the rest of its Post Brexit Industrial and economic investment strategy is one that is at best, vague or even purposely shrouded in secrecy. If the reason for these Freeport zones is to attract investment, we believe they will do so by displacing existing investment from already established business.

With 3 large zones focused around already thriving Southern ports and Logistical hubs the policy clearly contradicts Government “LEVELLING UP THE NORTH” Promise.

Conference believes this is a sham and the Freeports have been set up to help government with their programme of slashing Regulation in its Post Brexit dogma. This Dogma is being driven to the detriment of the workers who operate within the Freeport’s and also to the detriment of the local communities they are situated within. We call for any future Labour Government to review this unbridled free market ideology that is the driving force.

- Workers’ rights will not be any further diluted.
- Environmental impact assessments are vigorously undertaken
- Greater Trade Union and workplace representation on the boards of the Freeports
- Clear disclosure of the objectives, of the Freeports’ boards, and employers.
- Clear disclosure of any grants and tax advantages gained by those operating within the zones
- Annual value added reports to local authorities and local stakeholders covered by the zones giving impact statements and updates on the effect they are having both financially and environmentally on the local communities, services and other businesses within, and beyond these zones

**Docks, Rail, Ferries and Waterways RISC, North West**

## **5. The Threat of Automation and Self-Service**

Conference recognises that new ways of working are inevitable and unavoidable in the workplace. Some will enhance the workplace but at the same time be detrimental to the workforce and we must protect our members against this.

The push of self-service at the expense of workers within customer service businesses such as retail and finance is becoming more and more apparent. Due to the increase of automation these jobs are becoming scarce, with very little recruitment in an industry that is predominantly women workers.

Conference calls upon Unite to stand with these workers and fight this onslaught of automation, to give our members within customer service related employment the support and backing which they need.

Conference asks that Unite campaign with other unions against the forced use of automation, particularly in retail where workers are being put out of jobs, and where no new jobs are rejuvenated because machines are doing the work instead of our members. Companies are pushing customers to do our members’ jobs for themselves which increases their profits without workers sharing in the benefits.

Within a campaign we ask for social media support along with leaflets at Unite events and on every campaign stall to:

- Highlight the damage automation is having on jobs and in particular for women workers
- Inform which companies are forcing their job killing automation agenda onto people
- Advising members and non-members to support workers by forgoing self-service and demanding the choice of service by a human being on a checkout
- Raise awareness of the risks self-service automation poses to the elderly and disabled
- Work with other unions to resist the race to the bottom within retail caused by automation
- Jointly promote a petition by customers against the major companies and organisations who are spearheading the replacement of workers with self-service and automation.

### **Food, Drink and Agriculture RISC, North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **6. Impact of AI and Automated Systems on Human Work**

This Conference notes the increasing impact of Automation and Artificial Intelligence in the social workplace.

Jobs are already being lost due to such developments and all the indications are that this will extend into more areas of human employment. The introduction of Natural Language Processing will make it more difficult to identify on a remote basis whether we are dealing with algorithmic systems or human workers.

As these automated systems develop in sophistication and speed of processing the ability to capture and transfer human work activities will utilise more capital investment and address skill shortages.

Where workers are already engaged with such systems the enhancement of those same systems to monitor and perform surveillance activity is already at levels far beyond the understanding of most workers. Much is done covertly without worker awareness. They have the facility of observing and recording activities associated with union organising be it in the workplace or in the homeworking model.

Ironically, at the same time digitalisation has increased the number of working hours by employees very little of which is paid. Platform workers are less likely to be offered a contract of employment rather than a contract of service with no or little access to rights.

Digital technologies recognise no geographical or employment law boundaries as employment teams include workers from global centres.

Unions in the UK bargain about pay, hours and holidays. Unite now needs to campaign to extend collective bargaining rights to include data. It is the data of workers that is being used against our own interests.

This Conference calls upon the Executive Council to establish a cross sector body to evaluate the impact of automation in each industrial sector and be aware of developments around the corner. We need to train our reps on what to bargain over and what information is required. We need to be aware of best practice and what caused job losses in comparative settings both in the UK and across the world.

The Future World of Work is happening now and Unite needs to be in the forefront of evolving a strategy to defend, develop and safeguard our members' interests.

**GPM & IT RISC, London and Eastern**

### **Amendment**

In eighth paragraph, line 3, delete:

"We need to train our reps on what to bargain over and what information is required. We need to be aware of best practice and what caused job losses in comparative settings both in the UK and across the world."

And insert:

"Other unions have developed good guidance and tools for reps and we now need to provide that same guidance and training to our reps on what to bargain over and what information is required. This training must include using Data Protection Impact Assessments to secure the information on how the data is being collected, saved and used."

**GPM & IT NISC**

## **7. Defence Manufacturing Matters**

Conference notes:

- Exciting power generation projects such as Small Modular Reactors and Novel Nuclear applications show that diversification can be done successfully alongside existing naval programmes, where there is an economic/environmental need, a sound business case, government support and a strong (Unite) unionised workforce
- The renaissance across the Nuclear industries, combined with ongoing skills shortages, has resulted in the creation of a new Rolls-Royce Nuclear Academy that will provide at least 2000 highly skilled apprenticeships over the next 10 years
- Lack of governmental industrial strategy continues to encourage boom and bust – seriously affecting investment in all manufacturing sectors across the UK

Conference therefore resolves to:

- Safeguard, strengthen and expand sovereign British industries, not just in Nuclear or Defence, but across all manufacturing sectors

- Do everything within our collective power to ensure the maximum amount of work on the AUKUS programme is undertaken in the UK
- Campaign for the replication (wherever economically and logistically possible) the establishment of sector specific apprentice academies - therefore helping to ensure the skills of tomorrow are met organically

**Rolls Royce Nuclear Power Branch, (EM/DE13), East Midlands**

## **8. Smart Motorway Safety**

Smart motorways (SM) were first introduced on the M42 in 2006, 1 year later a planned extension onto the M6 followed at a cost of £150 million. In 2010 at the cost of £2 billion the following motorways were upgraded M1 M4 M5 M25 M6 M60 and M62.

The idea behind SM is to increase traffic flow during peak periods of traffic, using the hard shoulder as another lane.

The difference between SM (intelligent transport system) and ATM (Active Traffic Management) motorways is that SM motorways still have a hard shoulder in use until peak periods. ATM motorways have dynamic 4 lanes active 24-7. ATM motorways have vehicle refuge bays every mile, instead of a hard shoulder.

At present all work on SM has been stopped by the government and is doing an intensive research into all safety aspects.

A recent survey showed that before SM where in place there was 72 near misses a year recorded. In 5 years of SM 1485 (293) near misses were recorded and 38 deaths alone on the M25. Also it was taking 17 minutes to report a breakdown and a further 17 minutes for Highways Agency vehicles to attend. Motoring organisations claim that most of these could have been avoided.

Conference calls on Unite to ask the government to:

- Introduce safety refuge areas every half mile on future SM.
- Put more Highway Agency and Police vehicles on to reduce bad driving.
- Give drivers a better awareness of how to drive on SM.
- Better signage and more cameras to cover breakdowns.
- Widen lanes 1 and 2 as they are so narrow LGV's are having to straddle lanes to avoid hitting each other's mirrors.

**Manchester Road Transport & Logistics (NW/72) Branch, North West**

## **9. In the interest of the UK Economy**

This Conference believes that HM Governments when using borrowed money and taxes should as much as possible be used in the best interest of our UK based workers. Many contracts and projects are unnecessarily being given and built outside the UK and by foreign companies. For example, shipbuilding and major industrial construction projects such as Energy from Waste/Recycling Plants.

By allowing ships to be built abroad it is doing reprehensible damage to the UK economy with the loss of skilled jobs, workers paying tax and National Insurance payments helping towards and benefiting our UK citizens. Working class coastal communities are losing specialist skilled workers and future apprenticeships required to sustain what should be a world class shipping industry.

We also have a similar situation within the construction industry with foreign companies being given contracts to build our recycling/energy from waste plants. In lots of cases the unions are kept at arm's length from contacting workers from other countries. Leaving unions unable to gain information regarding term and conditions of employment on such projects. Once again, we have a situation of the damage done to our UK economy losing skills, low intake of apprenticeships leading to de-skilling of the industries and little or no union influence or union agreements.

Conference calls on our union to support the policy and a campaign backed by workers and politicians across the UK to deliver real value for our taxpayers by committing to procurement rules that will highlight the value of recycling taxpayer monies through Government contracts that will allow investment in the future of the local communities the UK and its citizens.

**Liverpool Construction Branch (NW/0541), North West**

## **10. We Need a Wealth Tax**

This Conference notes:

- a. The desperate financial position, hardship and insecurity that the working class find themselves forced into.
- b. The UK faces major economic challenges, with soaring living costs and a warning from the Bank of England that the country is facing its longest recession since records began.
- c. The disastrous mini budget of former Tory Prime Minister Liz Truss and her then chancellor, Kwasi Kwarteng, that led to market turmoil and cost £30bn.
- d. Households face the biggest drop in living standards since records began.
- e. This Tory government plan further cuts to public spending of around £28bn.
- f. That against this backdrop the UK now has a record number of billionaires with 177, according to the latest Sunday Times Rich List. That's up six from 2021 - and the combined wealth of the UK's billionaires stands at £653bn, up more than £55bn (9.4%) on the total wealth of the billionaires in last year's Rich List.



This Conference believes that:

- a. There is wealth, but it is all in the wrong hands.
- b. The working class cannot suffer any further burden.
- c. The burden should be borne by those most able to bear it, especially those whose standard of living would not change whatsoever.
- d. To drive the economy, we need investment that will create jobs of the future, reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and drive spending, tax and NI through wages.

This Conference calls upon Unite the Union to campaign for:

- a. A wealth tax to be introduced to stabilise the economy in the short term and grow it in the long term.
- b. The government to take steps to plug tax loopholes.
- c. The government to aggressively pursue all tax due and bring an end to sweetheart deals.

**Bolton & District Branch, (NW/0121), North West**

## **11. Campaign for a Shorter Working Week**

This Conference recognises that a good work life balance is beneficial to the health and wellbeing of all workers. Post the pandemic we have seen the growth in hybrid working for office based members but it has led to a divided workforce.

More now needs to be done to facilitate a flexible work pattern for shift workers and those in a 24/7 environment who are required to be on site at all times to carry out their role. Evidence shows that working permanent nights or shifts has a detrimental impact on our member's health.

We ask that the union support a campaign for a shorter working week, with no loss of pay and to promote this directly in areas where unsocial working hours are prevalent."

**GPM & IT RISC, North West**

### **Amendment #1**

At the end of the second paragraph, line 4, after "on our members' health." *add:*

"A shorter, more flexible working week has equalities benefits also. Women still provide the vast majority of unpaid care and domestic work which often forces them into part-time roles or out of work entirely, limiting career opportunities and increasing the pay gap."

At the end of the third paragraph, line 2, after "working hours are prevalent." *add:*

“Specifically including:

- Compiling examples of how flexible working and reduced working hours have been implemented in various sectors and distributing this to reps and activists.
- Applying pressure to political parties for stronger regulations over working time and minimum wages.
- Cooperating with other organisations already campaigning nationally for a shorter working week.”

**CYW&NFP RISC, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **Amendment #2**

After first sentence in paragraph 1, line 2, insert”

“The TUC research published in February 2023 showed:

- £26 billion of free labour in 2022 from UK workers doing unpaid overtime.
- 3.5 million UK workers did an average of 7.4 hours per week resulting in 26 million hours of unpaid work.

A lot of unpaid work does not get recorded due to the ease at which it can occur as a result of current working methods involving smart phones, emails and laptops so a Shorter Working Week Campaign must encompass the Right to Disconnect.”

**GPM&IT RISC, London & Eastern**

## **12. Apprenticeship Strategy**

This Conference notes that high-quality apprenticeships are critical to the skills economy, and that apprenticeships and apprentices must therefore be fully resourced. We also note that young people are deterred from pursuing apprenticeships by exploitative practices at enterprise and sectoral level, and by government policies which fail to value apprentices. This conference commends the ‘Apprentices Unite’ campaign and charter in the ROI, and we call on the Executive Council, Regional Committees and other constitutional committees to:

- Campaign in all nations to ensure that all apprenticeships offer decent pay, terms and conditions, and that training modules are transferrable, fully accredited and internationally recognised, while also providing clear pathways for career progression;
- Campaign to eliminate discrimination between apprentices and other third-level students;
- Campaign to ensure that apprentices are paid the applicable Living Wage;
- Develop and deliver a Unite Apprentices programme including:
  - The production of ‘Join Unite’ and ‘Know your Rights’ information for apprentices in all nations; including information for reps in relevant workplaces;
  - Develop, resource and deliver an organising strategy focused on apprentices;

- Develop and deliver 'Charters for Apprentices' for all nations, and campaign politically for implementation of the charters;
- Develop bespoke guidance for both reps and apprentices to better inform them of their rights in relation to industrial action;

**GPM & IT RISC, Ireland**

### **13. Fair Work**

With the economic outlook gloomy, there is a strong risk that, without action, on fair work those in insecure work bear the brunt of job losses and worsening pay.

All organisations are adapting to changes in demographics, working patterns, skills needs and technological trends. We understand that this places pressure on employers to reduce costs and deliver more.

Workers are in a rapidly changing labour market where detailed advice on the transferability of their skills will be vital. We need alignment between local and national employment and skills initiatives that drive engagement to committed and adaptable workers driving up productivity and maximising opportunity for workers at all levels

Conference wants the Union to be at the forefront of economic success, promoting wellbeing and prosperity of our people, communities and businesses by sharing best practice and promoting genuine partnerships with ALL sectors that promote investment in everyone for everyone.

Conference seeks a robust policy on how new ways of working aligns to workers' rights. Breaking down and removing barriers to opportunity and promoting financial security with fair work and work-life balance

We seek to balance the rights of workers with a formal Action Plan on progressing and delivering sustainable Fair work supporting workers on facilitating dialogue between key employers and trade unions implementing Fair Work practices, including establishing collective agreements that consider diverse and inclusive workforce.

Conference calls upon Unite to focus on communities and social action, fighting for Fair work for workers in terms of equality of opportunity, pay equality, learning and skills acquisition and occupational health and safety in a sustainable way that reflects the new ways of working.

**Finance and Legal RISC, Scotland**

### **14. Local Authority/Fair Employment Charters**

This Conference believes that work procured by Local and Combined Authorities along with private investment projects which require planning permission must meet the requirements of Local/Combined Authority Charters.

Such charters have been widely adopted by many Local/Combined Authorities across the UK and should be extended where possible to those Authorities who have yet to adopt one.

Conference believes all charters should as a minimum contain:

- Provisions for directly employed labour.
- Recognition of Trade Unions and their representatives.
- Adoption of Local and National agreements relating to terms & conditions.
- A full and comprehensive training and apprentice scheme.
- Preference to local labour regarding recruitment.
- Agreed policy of no blacklisting or victimisation of employees.
- Regular monitoring/auditing to ensure charters are being implemented appropriately.

Conference calls upon Unite to continue to promote such charters and ensure that they are being adhered to by all parties and not just a toothless document which is of no benefit to our members.

**Construction RISC, North West**

## **B Pay**

### **15. Unite's Public Services Minimum Wage**

This Conference calls on the Executive Council to work with the public service RISCs and NISCs to create a Unite the Union public service pay policy, calling for a minimum of £15ph with the appropriate gradient pay scales depending on the sector and terms and conditions.

By introducing a Unite public sector pay policy we would hope to ensure that Governments, negotiating bodies and pay review bodies will be unable to play one sector against another. By creating a £15ph minimum wage level will ensure our public services can compete in a volatile recruitment market. We would hope to see filling in the gaps in all services that create pressures on service providers and service users this would also ensure staff retention within public services and hopefully lead to an increase in UNITE membership.

We also call on all UK Governments to ensure that through ethical procurement and fair work policies that all providers' contracts include a minimum of £15ph wage in line with our pay policy. This will ensure that it becomes less profitable to outsource public services.

**Health RISC, Scotland**

### **16. Fair Wages for All Ages**

This Conference notes the consistent discrimination and struggle young workers face in 2023 and things are just getting worse not better. Covid-19 saw young workers disproportionately impacted and now the cost of living crisis is hitting us hard. Crippling student debts, generation rent and our futures prospects at further risk in the face of a Tory led UK Government. Being paid less for the same work simply isn't good enough anymore. The age differentials associated with the minimum wage rates and the National Living Wage has had its time. Young Workers in our union and beyond deserves a rate of pay that is equal to their counterparts doing the same work. Our bills and our basic right to survive doesn't cost us less because of our age.

This Conference calls on Unite to

- Relaunch our young members campaign calling for Fair Wages for All Ages
- Work with our National Young Members National Committee, Sector and supportive organisations to campaign for fair wages for all ages
- Where we have collective bargaining negotiate agreements that ensure young workers are paid fair wages and protected
- Create resources that highlight good practice from workplaces and the benefit of investing in young workers by paying them a fair wage
- Look into the impact the current minimum wage differentials has on young workers and their socio-economic background

**Wales Young Members Committee**

## **17. For Genuine Wage Rise**

This Conference notes that:

- The working class is being hit with a cost-of-living crisis, including rising bills and soaring inflation
- In the face of no, or below-inflation, pay rises, this crisis has sparked a surge in disputes over pay with over 450 being fought by Unite in the space of one year alone
- At the same time, between 2020 and 2021 average pay for the highest paid directors of the UK's biggest listed companies went up by 29%

This Conference believes that:

- Given inflation remains high, above 10%, then workers' wages should reflect this. Any attempt to offer no, or below-inflation, pay rises are in effect pay cuts
- In addition, one-off pay rises will be eroded by inflation and force the union back into dispute
- Given the enormous profits made by the companies our members work for, as well as the pay rises and bonuses being awarded to bosses, there is clearly enough money for workers to be paid above inflation, consistently

This Conference resolves to:

- Commit Unite to fight for pay deals that deliver wages that are tied to rise in line with inflation in a rising sliding scale in all pay disputes
- To demand that any employer which refuses this demand to open their books to prove they can't afford it, and if this is genuinely the case to demand for said companies to be nationalised and placed under the control of the workforce
- To launch a cross-union campaign to fight collectively across the movement for these demands and to coordinate action with sister unions against any employer that refuses to grant this

**Education RISC, London and Eastern**

## **18. Raising Pay for Everyone**

This Conference recognises that in the fourteen years since the 2008 financial crash wages have fallen behind inflation by 2.4% per year. This cannot continue we need a plan to reverse this situation.

The TUC has produced a plan ("Raising Pay For Everyone. A plan for a high wage economy and a £15 minimum wage"). Conference calls on Unite to fully support this plan. Furthermore, Conference demands Unite the Union uses its influence on the TUC General Council to persuade all Unions in the TUC to adopt this plan. Also Conference calls on the TUC General Council to apply pressure to the Labour Party and the wider Labour movement to give its full support to implement this plan immediately.

**Kent Surrey & Sussex Rural & Agriculture Branch, (SE/6144), South East**

## **19. Compensate Homeworkers Fairly**

Conference believes the compensation for Home Working is outdated and inadequate.

Conference believes the cost savings associated with home working should be transferred to employees working from home.

Conference is calling for home workers to be compensated by either receiving a regular monthly payment of £100 or a one-off grant of £6000 for the installation of solar panels to offset the real cost of homeworking.

Conference calls on the union to:

- A. Contact all homeworkers as soon as possible to:
  - Raise awareness
  - Get feedback of the impact of being moved to homeworking (a combination of online survey and in-person consultations)
  - Build solidarity to improve the conditions for homeworkers
- B. Campaign with all companies in this sector we are recognised at to achieve this within a year of this motion being passed

Currently employees can only claim £6 a week tax relief and whatever the company offers. This current tax relief is inadequate given that inflation is forecasted to rise by an average 10.5%, with energy costs of real concern

If those individuals who worked from home were lucky to receive such compensation to work from home from the private sector, the amount remunerated to the individual is now based on figures which are outdated (established when homeworking was unusual and additional energy costs minimal).

Many companies have made real savings in capital and operational costs, as workers no longer work in the office. Hence, it would be reasonable to transfer the cost savings to the individual employee.

Many members are struggling to make ends meet as the “cost of living” crisis bites. It is unacceptable to have to pay to work.

**Stoke-on-Trent Local Branch, (WM/6110) West Midlands**

## **20. A New Strategy to Deliver Coordinated Industrial Action**

This Conference notes that there is currently a tidal wave of industrial action by working people determined to win pay improvements, defend hard-won terms and conditions, jobs and skills, and to defeat the threat of privatisation.

Conference further notes that Unite members and reps have been at the forefront of this historic fightback, winning approximately 80% of disputes and in many cases securing double-digit pay increases, and that this fightback has been driven by our General Secretary, Sharon Graham, and her focus on the workplace and on our members' jobs, pay and conditions.

The current wave of industrial action has been fuelled by growing social and economic inequality combined with political attacks on workers. While the richest in our society have seen their wealth grow further, the cost-of-living crisis has disproportionately impacted on working people, with many finding that one job is insufficient to provide even a basic standard of living.

We must therefore deepen and extend our collective actions to focus on the fundamental social and economic change needed to deliver lasting advances for our members. This will require strategic industrial coordination between trade unions.

The need for such coordination is being increasingly recognised by a growing number of workers and their unions. This Conference calls for Unite to take the lead in developing, championing and implementing a new coordination strategy. While seeking the greatest possible degree of cooperation and coordination between trade unions, Unite members must also retain the freedom to act as circumstances dictate in pursuit of our objectives.

Coordinated industrial action is one of the most powerful weapons in the arsenal of the trade union movement, and has the potential to improve pay and conditions for workers while also defending public services from privatisation. The power of workers acting together can also be a bulwark against political attempts to limit workers' rights.

Therefore, this Conference mandates the Executive Council to ensure that, as appropriate, Unite takes the lead in engaging with other trade unions to develop a new strategy and implement coordinated industrial actions to deliver the real and lasting changes our members need.

**Ireland Executive Committee**



## **21. Co-ordination of Strike Action**

Conference recognises the renewed upsurge in industrial struggle that has occurred over the past year. Hundreds of thousands of workers have taken strike action - including significant disputes in health, transport, communications and education.

This is no surprise as the ongoing pressure on workers' pockets continues to mount as high inflation and interest rates hit working-class people. Following decades of falling real-terms wages, the tide is turning and working class people are refusing to accept attacks on our living standards.

The Tory government and the bosses have responded in turn with vicious attacks on the trade union movement. As they have illustrated in the health service and rail disputes, they are intent on an ideological crusade to maximise profit and curb workers' rights to organise. They are gearing up for a protracted period of attacks on workers' living standards and hope to score an early victory against the unions.

There is an urgent need to coordinate the strike action. Bringing workers across sectors out at the same time would drastically increase the pressure on the government and the bosses they represent. It would also crucially assist the individual disputes in securing victories by strengthening the effectiveness of each action. We are stronger when we strike together.

Conference recognises that some trade union leaders have made the call for a 24 hour general strike. We believe that Unite can play a key role in concretising these calls and strengthening the working class as a whole.

Conference calls on Unite to aim to maximise coordination across unions in dispute. Part of this should be initiating cross-union action forums where they are not present, as well as strike committees across workplaces and sectors in struggle to deal with pressing questions such as unified demands, joint strike dates and strategies to broaden the strikes.

**NI Hospitality Branch (NI/B0053), Ireland**

## **22. Report into Obstacles to Workers Taking Industrial Action in the Republic of Ireland and Possible Solutions**

This Conference notes that there has been a steady decline in the number and extent of industrial actions in the Republic of Ireland since the 1980s, with the strike frequency having been at its highest during the period 1972-1976. Since the autumn of 2021, there has been a marked and growing disparity between the infrequency of industrial disputes in the ROI and the frequency of such disputes in Northern Ireland and Britain. We further note that the improvements to pay and conditions secured by workers following a withdrawal of labour may be superior to the improvements secured by utilising the state's dispute resolution mechanisms, and that workers may be more determined to consolidate and build on improvements secured through industrial action than those secured through bureaucratic procedures.

Conference notes that, in addition to legislative restrictions on the right to strike, especially those contained in the 1990 Industrial Relations Act, securing a collective agreement may entail a commitment to the use of what are often cumbersome and lengthy mandatory dispute resolution procedures.

This Conference therefore calls on the Union to commission a report into:

- The structural, legislative, institutional, economic, social and other obstacles to workers taking industrial action in the ROI;
- The consequences of those obstacles, and of the resulting low levels of industrial action, for workers organising collectively at a sectoral and workplace level;
- The legislative and other steps which need to be taken to remedy the above.

This report should be presented to the Executive Council and should then inform Unite's industrial and political strategy in the ROI.

**English Language Teachers (RI/B5010), Ireland**

## C Equalities

### 23. Women's Health and Safety

This Conference reminds and reaffirms women's human rights, which include the right *without discrimination* to: equality, dignity, autonomy, information, bodily integrity, respect for private life, the highest attainable standard of health including sexual and reproductive health, and freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The right of a woman or girl to make autonomous decisions about her own body is at the core of her basic rights to equality

This Conference notes that issues affecting women's health and safety need to be highlighted and addressed by launching a specific campaign on Women's health, safety and wellbeing taking into account that:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious health and safety concern for women yet there is no specific duty under health and safety legislation and although the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a role in making sure that workplaces have practices that keep people safe from violence at work, this does not include sexual harassment—the most common form of violence against women.
- Despite the increased level of menopause awareness amongst employers and what support they should be offering, statistics show that one in four employees, mainly women, will be considering leaving the workforce due to lack of support and understanding. Women already disadvantaged by pay inequality cannot be driven from employment or forced to reduce hours due what is a natural stage of life.
- Absence of period dignity is still sadly a global issue affecting those who do not have access to safe, hygienic and affordable menstrual product. In some cases, limited access to these products leads to prolonged use of the same tampons or pads which can cause infection.
- Equality in reproductive health includes access, without discrimination, to affordable, quality contraception including emergency contraception. The decision as to whether to continue a pregnancy or terminate it has a crucial impact on women's enjoyment of other human rights and it should therefore remain fundamentally and primarily the woman's decision.

Conference therefore calls on the union to:

- Continue to lobby the government on issues affecting women's health and safety
- Start a campaign to call for the HSE to have enforcement powers in terms of sexual harassment
- Request that union Health and Safety reps are tabling these issues on any Health and Safety agenda and discussing collectively within their companies
- Ensure that Women's health and safety is covered as part of any Health and Safety union reps courses

- Provide a standalone guide for women members, health and safety reps and shop stewards/workplace reps on body mapping and include practical ways to raise these issues
- Provide all Unite reps with the current union policy and resources on the issues below and ask them to not only raise awareness with their members but also to negotiate policies and procedures that can improve the working lives of their women members.
  - Sexual harassment
  - Menopause
  - Period dignity
  - A woman's right to choose and access to safe and legal abortions

## **National Women's Committee**

### **24. Safety for Women Travelling to and from the Workplace**

Conference calls upon Unite to extend the ongoing work around the 'Get me Home Safely' Campaign.

This Campaign went a long way to establish that women in particular, are at risk when travelling to and from the workplace during anti-social times.

Currently, statistics show that women who travel during anti-social hours are more likely to be assaulted than any other demographic.

Conference asks that information be gathered from all sectors and not just from the hospitality sector.

Conference further calls upon Unite to work with affiliates and sister unions of the TUC to ensure that women feel safe when travelling to and from their place of work.

We ask that this is put in motion as soon as possible and that Unite promote this through campaigning in all constitutional committees by making this a regular agenda item.

## **Passenger RISC, South West**

### **Amendment**

At the end of the third paragraph, line 2, after "any other demographic" add:

"As the Campaign has developed we have taken an intersectional approach to including workers from all vulnerable groups (protected characteristics) and within this we also highlight BAEM, LGBT+ and disabled workers."

In fifth paragraph, line 1, after "calls upon Unite to work with" and before "affiliates" insert "Global Trade Union Federations"

In fifth paragraph, line 2, after "from their place of work" insert:

“to actively campaign against any proposed transport as these directly impact women and low paid workers who are more likely to use public transport.”

In the sixth paragraph, line 2, after “by making this a regular agenda item” insert:

“working jointly across sectors.”

**Service Industries NISC**

## **25. We Need to Be Heard in Collective Bargaining and Have a Seat at the Negotiating Table**

This Conference notes that equality is at the heart of our union and centre of everything we do industrially. The expertise, lived experiences and talents of our women reps and members should be recognised, embraced and included at every level. There should be no more conversations and decisions about us at the negotiating table without us. It is time our voices were heard and respected. Our union is built on the diversity of its membership and we want our union to reflect that at every level. We are stronger together and want to ensure every woman has a voice in our union and are involved in the discussions that impact on them. Time for action not words.

This Conference calls on Unite to

- Monitor the progress made to increase the representation of women at every level of the union
- Encourage more women reps to attend Unite Women’s Week and relevant courses in the Nations/ Regions
- Work with our Education and Equalities departments to develop bespoke training where it is needed to build involvement and confidence
- Share examples of good practice where women reps are involved in leading negotiations and campaigns in our sectors
- Increase the visibility of our women reps and activists on all our social media platforms
- Develop support for Women reps via the Women’s Networks in Regions and Nations

**Wales Women’s Committee**

## **26. International Labour Organisation Convention 190**

Conference recognises we have all been subject to, or have heard statements made by our employers, colleagues or our clients/customers which have been unacceptable, in some industrials it has now become the norm to be verbally abused and “don’t take it personally their taking it out on the uniform not you” is totally unacceptable.

The little tap on the rear and the comments “oh I guess I shouldn’t of done that, but its only you!”

Conference knows the line between violence and harassment is often blurred and its impacts can also be subjective, C190 takes a practical approach and defines violence and harassment as " a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices that aim at, result in or likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm".

EVERYONE in the world has the right to work free from violence and harassment, C190 does exactly that. It also recognises and defines the specification of gender-based violence and harassment.

C190 makes it clear that the world of work goes beyond the physical workplace and includes for example work related communications, sanitary facilities, the commute to and from work and also violence and harassment from 3rd parties such as client's customers or service providers.

Everything we need to make the world of work and beyond to be violent and harassment free is already in place, C190 provides a clear framework for action to ensure that employment is based on safe and decent work. Together with Recommendation 206 - which provides guidelines on how the Convention can be applied.

Conference calls on Unite

- To ensure C190 is included in Unites education programme, to educate and organise our members
- We would like Sectors to look at integrating C190 language in workplace agreements.
- Activate members around the issues to end violence and harassment in the world of work by leading on a national campaign and supporting any committee highlighting the campaign for their own sector.

Conference also calls for the representatives from different Sectors to work with Unite's National Women's committee in highlighting this campaign

Lastly, Conference calls on Unite to put Pressure on governments to make C190 part of their national laws, the UK government has ratified ILO C190, but now we need to make the government fully implement the convention and we want Unite to lead the way in pressurise the global governments as well as the UK government by supporting the ILO C190.

**Passenger RISC, South East**

## **27. Extending the Leave for Domestic Abuse Victims in ROI**

Domestic violence is a workplace issue.

Recent surveys in Ireland have shown that more than 1 in 3 working people surveyed across multiple industries and at varying levels of seniority have experienced domestic abuse.

In September 2022 the Irish Government approved the publication of a bill to introduce paid leave for victims of domestic violence.

IBEC (a business lobby group in ROI) in October argued that employers should be allowed ask for “proof” that an employee was a victim of domestic abuse. The Tanaiste has rejected that suggestion with others given by IBEC.

Conference calls on Unite to commit to lobbying the Government to extend this leave to 10 days instead of 5 days.

**Dungarvan Branch (RI/87), Ireland**

## **28. Action Committees on Gender Violence and Transphobia**

Conference recognises the “shadow pandemic” of gender violence which has been on the rise in recent years. According to a 2021 WHO report, one in three women experience physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner, making intimate violence the most prevalent form of violence. Violence against the transgender community has also increased substantially, rising 56% in England and Wales in 2022.

Linked to this is the rise in misogyny and anti-trans bigotry in the media and online recently which is having a broader impact on society. In the face of this it is crucial that the trade union movement takes this issue up more sharply with education and action on misogyny/transphobia in society.

The only way we can challenge this rise in gender violence is through mass campaigns of working class people. At our 2021 Policy Conference we recognised that gender violence was a workplace issue and called for a high profile Unite campaign on domestic abuse.

Conference calls on the EC to initiate cross-union, industrial and political campaigns within the community aimed at challenging sexism, misogyny and transphobia in all of their forms. Part of this should be through a prominent and well-resourced online education campaign, as well as through initiating cross-union action committees aimed at supporting initiatives in workplaces and protests in working class communities.

**Ireland Young Members Committee**

## **29. Continuing the Fight against Racism**

Conference recognises Unite's continued effort to fight for the rights of their members, in an increasingly hostile environment for workers and Trade Unionists.

However, Black and Asian Ethnic Minority members continue to experience racism at work; and experience the additional pressure of increasingly racist and regressive policies from the Government, as well as an increasingly racist media.

Black and Asian Ethnic Minority workers in the NHS, statutory and essential services, are experiencing racism from patients, their colleagues, managers and other professionals. This has an impact on pay, progression, mental health and conditions at work.

It is imperative that Unite keeps the fight against racism at the core of its work, otherwise BAEM members are at risk of multiple marginalisation at an increasingly difficult time.

Conference calls on Unite to:

- Highlight Unite's commitment to keep the fight against racism as part of the core of the Union's work.
- Take an actively anti-racist stance and set this as the standard for all members.
- Support BAEM workers in the NHS, statutory and essential roles, by fighting the additional burden that racism places on workers.
- Speak out against racist news and policies which act as a tool to divide workers.
- Push for mandatory ethnicity pay gap reporting for employers to ensure parity in pay.
- Ensure that all training around anti-racism is BAEM-led.

**Scotland BAEM Committee**

## **30. BAEM Autistic People**

This Conference notes that the historic picture of a person with autism is usually one of a white person with limited or repetitive speech and movements but often with encyclopaedic knowledge of certain topics.

As a monetised "condition", great resources were spent on "treatments" to make autistic people "indistinguishable from their peers". Even now, there are various attempts to find the genetic causes of autism so that a "cure" can be found, and "therapies" are used in a detrimental way towards autistic people.

This 'medical model' focuses on the person's impairment rather than the barriers that society creates whereas the "social model" of disability suggests that it is not a person's impairment or condition but it is society's reaction to it that limits their lives and opportunities.

In reality, autistic people are an everyday part of humanity across all races, ethnicities, sexes, ages, sexual orientations and genders identities.



Many Black and Asian Ethnic Minority (BAEM) people with autism experience difficulties accessing the right support because:

- They do not fit the stereotypical picture of an autistic person when the diagnostic criteria is based on Eurocentric standards
- Some BAEM people have less knowledge of autism and may not recognise it in their family members
- BAEM autistic people experience systemic racism as well as disability discrimination

Conference calls on the Executive Council to work closely with both the National BAEM Committee and National Disabled Members Committee to:

- Raise Awareness and develop campaigns on Autism, highlighting that being autistic is not a deficit, rather it is a different way of experiencing the world
- Provide Autism Acceptance training for BAEM members and reps, with a focus on race and disability
- Help change the stereotypical picture of an autistic person, involve BAEM members and members with autism in all training and policies which affect them
- Join the growing movement to speak up against “therapies” such as Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)
- Reach out to community organisations to raise awareness of the need for Autism Acceptance training

**National BAEM Committee**

### **31. Supporting the Introduction of Anti-Racism Education in our Schools Curriculum**

This Conference notes:

The ongoing attempts by the Far Right to sow division in our society and in working class communities in particular.

Conference recognises:

1. That anti-racism education is key to combating racism in our society.
2. The excellent work carried out by Show Racism the Red Card (STtRC) in taking the message of anti-racism into various settings – and its collaborative work with trade unions including Unite.

Conference resolves:

To support STtRC’s campaign to seek pledges from Parliamentary candidates to lobby the next government about introducing antiracism onto the National Curriculum and for adequate funding to be made available to train teachers and other school staff.

To explore establishing a joint forum with SRtRC to assist with the development of materials about our own union's history of fighting against racism, which could be incorporated into our Unite schools' programme.

**Go Ahead - London Central (Staff) (LE/1254) Branch, London and Eastern**

### **32. Barriers to Race Discrimination Cases**

This Conference notes the lack of Race Discrimination cases that are taken forward successfully. We are calling on the Legal Directorate to act now on the ongoing concerns and disappointments by the BAEM members on why race cases were often not legally supported.

A previous regional report indicated that 23 out of 28 race discrimination cases were denied legal support, also a national report indicated that 97% of race discrimination cases were denied legal support.

It is evident that that there is no reliable process or practice to address race discrimination cases. Furthermore, there is no process of monitoring or reviewing race discrimination cases.

This Conference believes that action needs to be urgently taken to support all BAEM members who have a race discrimination case to be offered a second opportunity for independent legal advice.

This Conference calls on the Executive Council, General Secretary, AGS-Equalities, National Equality Officers, Legal Director, Regional Secretaries, RWEOS and BAEM Committee Chairpersons to:

- Establish appropriate policies, procedures and processes for all legal assistance required for Race Discrimination Cases.
- Establish regional panels for race discrimination cases to include the Legal Department, RWEOS, Regional Officer, BAEM Committee Chairpersons to build structures for best practice.
- Reviewing and monitoring of race discrimination cases that are rejected on the grounds of not having 'reasonable prospect of success.'
- Establish a quarterly reporting system to provide data on all race discrimination cases to the Executive Council, AGS – Equalities, Legal Director, National Equality Officers, Regional Secretaries and RWEOS without the infringement on individual GDPR.
- We must ensure that specialist solicitor services are up to standard with race discrimination and all equality cases.

**BAEM Committee, London and Eastern**

### **33. Closing the Disability Employment Gap**

This Conference is appalled by the Disability Employment Gap of 29%. The employment rate of disabled people is 53% compared to 82% of nondisabled people.

Approximately 21% of the working age population are disabled and 33% of the working age population report having a long term health condition.

Only 17% of disabled people are born with their impairments. 83% of disabled people acquire their impairments, many whilst they are in work. Too many disabled workers leave employment due to the lack of appropriate reasonable adjustments.

More disabled workers need to be recruited, retained and retrained for us to have truly inclusive workplaces and society.

This Conference calls for Unite to:

- Update Disability Equality at Work – Unite Negotiators’ Guide, encourage, support and monitor workplace branches adoption and implementation.
- Campaign for measures and support to increase disabled people’s employment and the elimination of the Disability Employment Gap
- Campaign for equity of employment outcomes for disabled workers.
- Campaign for mandatory disabled workforce reporting.
- Create a Reasonable Adjustments Toolkit for Unite Reps.
- Raise awareness and understanding of the Disability Employment Gap with reps and officers.

**Disabled Members Committee, Wales**

### **34. Making Unite Accessible**

This Conference notes that although there is increasing understanding of the need to provide accessibility for disabled workers yet, this does not always apply to neurodiverse workers. Neurodiverse workers include people with autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), among others.

Understanding and accepting that people interact in different ways and that it is the barriers placed by the dominant social culture that hinder disabled people’s full participation in society is vital.

This Conference also notes that Unite’s use of a system similar to Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passports will prevent the repetition of reasonable adjustments requests made by members to take part in union’s activities. The Passport is a documented record of a member’s individual needs and reasonable adjustments which also captures up to date information about their impairment(s).

This Conference confirms Unite's commitment to the Social model of disability and therefore, the need to ensure full involvement and inclusion of ALL our disabled members in Unite by improving disability access.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the Executive Council to make sure that:

- Unite is more inclusive of neurodiverse members and members with learning disabilities
- publications, resources and course materials are provided in accessible formats
- all staff and officers are trained enabling them to support members with learning disabilities and neurodiverse members
- a practical and effective system - an internal Unite document similar to Reasonable Adjustments Disability Passports - is established allowing a member's reasonable adjustment request to be cascaded to all regional and national meetings, conferences, and courses.

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

### **35. Ensuring Unite Education Material is Fully Accessible to Neurodivergent Reps**

In extension of the policy decision made in 2021, to ensure that "all training courses incorporate the Social Model of Disability (SMD)". Both training material and delivery of Unite education should consider neurodivergent Workplace Reps.

The action is necessary to ensure that neurodivergent reps who attend training are able to engage and process the training materials in a way that appreciates their preferred learning styles and their alternate way of processing information. Unite in its commitment to the SMD, should act as an ally for neurodivergent Workplace Reps, and not place the onus of 'disclosure' onto the rep, and instead, have in the design, presentation, and delivery of Unite education, an inclusive model of learning.

This Conference calls on Unite to set up a schedule and time-plan to review Unite education, design, presentation, and delivery, to ensure the education programme is neuro-inclusive. It is important for Unite to lead on equality and diversity in both theory and practice, education is a central part of equipping and developing Unite reps, without a suitable education programme neurodivergent reps could feel undervalued and under pressure if they are unable to keep up with the pace of the current Unite training material.

This Conference calls upon Unites Executive Council to instruct the Education Department to commit to a review to start no later than September 2023.

**Clerkenwell and St Pancras Branch, (LE/0694M ) London and Eastern**

### **36. Disarm the Right**

There has been an alarming trend in the UK over the last decade, the right have been capitalising on the misery a decade of tory austerity has brought. Communities have been slowly fragmenting, people are becoming increasingly isolated and lacking a sense of community. The rising cost of living coupled with falling incomes have left many people angry and feeling helpless. This has provided an opportunity for charismatic leaders in ultra-right wing organisations to capitalise on. Supported by the mainstream media, the right have provided scapegoats for people to direct their anger at, diverting attention from those who are truly to blame.

The trans community has been the most recent scapegoat the right have set their sights on. An already vulnerable minority has been thrust into the spotlight with the reform to the Gender Recognition Bill. A small and largely unimportant piece of legislation intended to simplify a basic administration process suddenly became a battle ground in a David and Goliath style fight. A minority community within a minority community were faced with the deep pockets and celebrity endorsements of the “gender critical” movement. The legal challenges of this movement threaten the rights and protections of us all, they won’t stop at trans people.

Conference calls on the Executive Council to:

- work with the TUC to implement a policy of restoring and rebuilding strong communities, tackling the issues of isolation and vulnerability that leads to violent radicalisation.
- further strengthen Unite’s Unity over Division campaign by including work to challenge myths around LGBT+ rights which would sit alongside and complement our narrative on immigration, migration, the welfare state, NHS, education and women’s rights.

**LGBT+ Committee, Scotland**

### **37. Calling ‘Time’ on Work-Related Stress, Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace.**

It’s time to call ‘Time’ on the causes of work-related stress.

For the sake of clarity, and to avoid misunderstanding, the causes under consideration are:

- Harassment - unwanted actions or comments that are demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient
- Bullying - offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- Gaslighting - manipulation by another person by using psychological means with a view to achieving control to make one doubt one’s own perspective of reality, a very subtle form of manipulation which can destroy a victim’s confidence.

Conference acknowledges Unite's efforts regarding work related stress and its causes. This 'silent epidemic', the subject of Unite Research's report on the 2021 Unite All Members' Survey, relates:

- *"Work related stress was by far the most cited issue experienced at work"*
- *"Nearly one in five respondents reported experiencing bullying at work"*

Conference calls on Unite and the Executive Council to:

- At the earliest opportunity conduct a survey via an appropriately worded member's questionnaire to accurately assess the extent of workplace bullying, harassment, gaslighting and work related stress.
- Commit resources where mistreatment of workers results in work related stress in individuals giving rise to a medical diagnosis which qualifies as a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act or gives grounds to pursue legal action for Mental Health Industrial Injury, are not let off the hook by out of court settlements.
- Resource a dedicated anti-bullying and harassment on-line reporting tool with the appropriate confidentiality and data protections to be used by members and which can be used to pinpoint employers with high incidences of reporting of occurrences of bullying and harassment.

Conference believes that such actions are essential if our trade union is to be true to its commitment to improve working conditions as espoused under Rule 2.1.2.

**Aerospace and Shipbuilding RISC, Ireland**

### **38. Inclusive Language for All**

Conference notes that the trade union movement has a long and proud history of solidarity and camaraderie.

Throughout the centuries workers have traditionally greeted each other as "Brothers and Sisters" when meeting as a Union Family. This language, passed from generation to generation, has been an important element of strengthening our bond as comrades.

But times have changed, as has the language we use day to day.

Though this proud tradition carries on, we now risk leaving some of our Union Family feeling left behind at a time when the union busting bosses and right-wing groups are doing all they can to drive a wedge into the heart of our family.

We must adapt and evolve to defeat these underhanded tactics, as the generations of trade unionists before us did.

Now more than ever our Women, LGBT+, BAEM, disabled, young and retired siblings need our solidarity and the protection of their family.

We are a family and, like any good family, we won't leave anyone behind.

Conference calls upon Unite Equalities to:

- Work with the Regional Equalities Committees to establish best practice for the use of inclusive language for meetings and to educate officers, reps and activists.
- Update Unite's guidance packs to reflect inclusive language.
- Introduce non-binary and gender-neutral options in addition to the terms we already use such as "brother and sister" in official communications, documents and in everyday language.

**National LGBT+ Committee**

## **D Global Solidarity, International & Europe**

### **39. Dealing with the Damage of Brexit**

Conference notes that Unite campaigned against Brexit and in favour of remaining in the EU. While recognising many of the serious problems with the EU, our union understood that leaving would do nothing but severely worsen the situation facing our members and their families. Sadly, Unite's position has been proved absolutely right and the predictions our union made about the adverse effects of Brexit are becoming clearer by the day:

- A collapse of investment in many parts of manufacturing, a crisis in the auto and steel industries, relocations of companies outside of the EU, and huge disruptions to supply chains
- Major problems with ports and docks as new checks and controls slow down the movement of goods and create huge tailbacks and delays for drivers and transport workers
- The Tory government planning to revoke all EU social and employment legislation at the end of 2023 with the aim of creating a race to the bottom and turning the UK into a 'Singapore off the coast of Europe'
- Severe problems with the new controls on the island of Ireland and increasing political tensions as a result
- Permanent tensions and problems in the relationship with the UK's main trading partner – the EU – and ongoing serious problems with the UK-Spanish border in Gibraltar
- Poor trade deals with countries outside the UK that do nothing to address the huge decline in trade with our main trading partner – the EU
- That the government won't acknowledge the problems or do anything to address them comes as no surprise, nor does its disgusting attempts to stoke anti-immigrant and anti-refugee hatred to deflect attention and blame. But at the same time, it is also totally unacceptable that the Labour Party refuses to even acknowledge or talk about the problems that Brexit is causing.

No one is pushing for the Labour Party to demand the UK re-join the EU and it is noted that Keir Starmer has ruled out re-joining the Single Market or Customs Union. But simply denying the problems exist and refusing to discuss the implications of Brexit for hundreds of thousands of Unite members and millions of UK workers cannot be accepted – solutions to the problems will not be found if they cannot even be discussed.

Conference therefore calls on Unite to:

- Ramp up its media activity and highlight the massive problems that Brexit is causing for members across all our sectors
- Demand that the government act to deal with the problems our members face in all areas, including bureaucracy at the ports, investment in manufacturing and the political situation on the island of Ireland



- Demand that the Labour Party have an open and honest discussion about the problems that Brexit has caused and stop simply echoing the government's rhetoric about 'making Brexit work'

## **East Midlands Regional Committee**

### **40. Dealing with the Damage of Brexit**

Conference notes that Unite campaigned against Brexit and in favour of remaining in the EU. While recognising many of the serious problems with the EU, our union understood that leaving would do nothing but severely worsen the situation facing our members and their families. Sadly, Unite's position has been proved absolutely right and the predictions our union made about the adverse effects of Brexit are becoming clearer by the day:

- A collapse of investment in many parts of manufacturing, a crisis in the auto and steel industries, relocations of companies outside of the EU, and huge disruptions to supply chains
- Major problems with ports and docks as new checks and controls slow down the movement of goods and create huge tailbacks and delays for drivers and transport workers
- The Tory government planning to revoke all EU social and employment legislation at the end of 2023 with the aim of creating a race to the bottom and turning the UK into a 'Singapore off the coast of Europe'
- Severe problems with the new controls on the island of Ireland and increasing political tensions as a result
- Permanent tensions and problems in the relationship with the UK's main trading partner – the EU – and ongoing serious problems with the UK-Spanish border in Gibraltar
- Poor trade deals with countries outside the UK that do nothing to address the huge decline in trade with our main trading partner – the EU
- That the government won't acknowledge the problems or do anything to address them comes as no surprise, nor does its disgusting attempts to stoke anti-immigrant and anti-refugee hatred to deflect attention and blame. But at the same time, it is also totally unacceptable that the Labour Party refuses to even acknowledge or talk about the problems that Brexit is causing.

No one is pushing for the Labour Party to demand the UK re-join the EU and it is noted that Keir Starmer has ruled out re-joining the Single Market or Customs Union. But simply denying the problems exist and refusing to discuss the implications of Brexit for hundreds of thousands of Unite members and millions of UK workers cannot be accepted – solutions to the problems will not be found if they cannot even be discussed.

Conference therefore calls on Unite to:

- Ramp up its media activity and highlight the massive problems that Brexit is causing for members across all our sectors

- Demand that the government act to deal with the problems our members face in all areas, including at the ports, in manufacturing, on the island of Ireland, and that they drop plans to revoke EU social and employment legislation
- Demand that the Labour Party have an open and honest discussion about the problems that Brexit has caused and stop simply echoing the government's rhetoric about 'making Brexit work'
- Demand that the Labour Party commit to opposing any government moves to tear up EU social and employment legislation in the UK

**GPM & IT RISC, East Midlands**

#### **41. European Works Councils Post-Brexit – Supporting Unite Reps and Tackling Multinational Companies**

Conference recognises that since Brexit and the removal of UK workers from the scope of the European Works Council Directive, Unite's ability to participate in European Works Council's and to influence company decision making has significantly decreased. While central management continues to consult European trade unions many Unite representatives are now excluded from those important and critical discussions which ultimately impact on the livelihoods of their members.

Despite the loss of a legal right to participation UNITE must continue to fight for the inclusion of UK reps in EWCs and find other solutions to maintain contact and cooperation with sister unions where managements continue to resist formal Unite participation. Working with our European trade union federations and bilaterally with sister unions will be essential to achieving this.

Conference recognises that at the global level GFA's offer significant opportunities for trade unions, including the right to join a trade union, the right to organise, the right to collectively bargain, and the right to information and consultation. Unite will work to ensure that where MNCs have signed Global Framework Agreement's (GFAs) with Global trade union federations, these agreements are properly implemented in the UK and are complied with by UK management.

In order to fight for the continuation of UNITE reps in EWCs and to build trade union power in global companies Unite will therefore:

- Build pressure on companies to agree to the continued participation of UNITE's representatives on EWC's, and where this is not forthcoming find other solutions to maintain cooperation and involvement – including where necessary covering the costs of travel and accommodation to participate in those meetings of EWCs where management has no veto over participation;
- Continue and increase its involvement and work in the European and Global trade union federations, in order to build and strengthen relationships with sister trade unions;

- Identify where GFA's exist that cover UNITE members and raise awareness of their terms and obligations with relevant UNITE representatives and officers;
- Promote the negotiation and effective implementation of GFA's through the Global trade union federations;
- Promote and initiate the formation of global trade union networks within MNC's through the Global trade union federations and ensure that UNITE fully participates in those networks.

#### **GE Aircraft Engine Services Branch (WA/B1082), Wales**

## **42. Workers Uniting**

Conference notes that Workers Uniting was established between Unite and the North American United Steelworkers (USW) in 2008 with a view to creating a truly transnational trade union structure. The UK and North America share many similarities in the aggressive neo-liberal form of capitalism that dominates the countries and the history and struggles of our respective trade union movements to deal with repeated and sustained attacks on working people.

The rise of Donald Trump in the US and the right wing Brexit movement in the UK, demonstrated yet again how closely political developments mirror one another in our countries, while the Biden administration's pro-union domestic agenda should serve as an inspiration to the Unite and Labour Party as to what can be done to bring about change if the political will exists.

With Brexit now a reality and the UK outside the European Union, it is more important than ever that Unite reaffirms its commitment to strengthen and build upon the firm foundations laid in Workers Uniting.

Since its beginning Workers Uniting has gone from strength to strength and has undertaken a wide range of work centred on the interests of lay members. That work has included:

- Building effective trade union alliances in common companies including Vale, Rio Tinto, Caterpillar, OI Glass, Kimberly Clark, Westrock, and many others;
- Exchanging best practice and participating in each other's equality work including women's equality, LGBTQ+, disabled workers and Black Lives Matter;
- Running high level education courses under the title of Building Power Internationally;
- Maintaining an ongoing and permanent exchange in relation to political developments and campaigns on both sides of the Atlantic;
- Undertaking joint solidarity work in Colombia, Cuba and Mexico – culminating in the decision of Mexican Union Los Mineros to join Workers Uniting in 2015.

Conference therefore resolves that Unite:

- Reaffirm its commitment to maintaining and strengthening the Workers Uniting structure and its activities;
- Produce an Action Plan to be agreed at the Workers Uniting Steering Committee and implemented over the coming years;
- Ensure that the Workers Uniting Steering Committee begin meeting again and that a full meeting of USW, Los Mineros, and Unite workplace reps from common companies take place as soon as possible.

#### **Chemicals Pharmaceuticals Process and Textiles RISC, Scotland**

### **43. Strengthening International Trade Union Cooperation to Tackle Global Corporations**

Conference recognises that today's global economy is dominated by multinational companies that are often more powerful than national governments and political institutions. Multinationals relentlessly use this power to shape economic and political realities to their own advantage by driving down social, employment, environmental, and trade union rights, and by playing off government against government, and workers against workers. This has resulted in increased pressure on wages and other working conditions, increased inequality, and more precarious work and insecurity for workers.

Conference accepts that Unite and other national trade unions cannot tackle MNC's in isolation and that Unite needs to:

- Continue to develop and increase its international work and focus;
- Actively increase its participation in European and Global trade union federations to influence their work, strategies and policies, in line with UNITE priorities and policies;
- To build relationships with sister trade unions who face similar challenges in the same MNCs.

Unite is a diverse multi sector trade union and has the advantage of being affiliated to many of the European and Global sector federations, this gives us a unique opportunity to promote and demand that all of these organisations strengthen and improve their work on tackling MNC's,

The European and Global trade union federations need to become more strategic in their approach and much more effective in their campaigning by building capacity to hold MNCs to account on issues such as, trade union rights, organising, union building, global framework agreements, global trade unions networks, decent work, challenges related to restructuring, digitalisation, climate issues, vocational training, etc.

Conference calls on Unite to therefore push a coordinated agenda across all the European and Global trade union federations to which it affiliates with a view to ensuring that they:

- Campaign for trade union rights in companies and expose infringements and core labour standards within MNCs;
- Develop strategies for organising and capacity building to strengthen affiliates ability to use trade union power and worker's representatives' bodies to promote and defend trade unions rights;
- Reinforce transnational solidarity and trade union cooperation within multinational companies by forming global trade union networks and where possible negotiating and implementing effective Global Framework Agreements (GFAs);
- Evaluate and monitor the application and compliance of existing GFAs;
- Develop more effective strategies with which affiliates can anticipate and act upon changes and re-structuring that have an impact on working conditions and job security.
- Influence and pressure global institutions to improve the governance of MNC's and to promote international trade union policies and objectives within these institutions;
- Actively participate in the ongoing debate on global legally binding rules with the aim of strengthening trade union rights and protecting workers from abuses by MNCs;

**Arriva Leicester (EM/ LE19) East Midlands**

#### **44. Increased Violence against the Palestinians in the Apartheid Israeli State**

Conference notes:

- the upsurge in oppression, violence and ethnic cleansing with impunity by the Israeli state and settlers against the Palestinians;
- the potential for further extreme violence and ethnic cleansing with the election of a new Netanyahu government, which contains politicians who believe in a policy of removal of the Palestinians to Jordan, and a shoot to kill policy rather than arrest of those who resist;
- the important reports by B'Tselem, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the UN Special Rapporteur that were published in 2021 and 2022 that clearly found Israel as practicing the crime of apartheid;
- the increase in Israel's targeting of young people with schools being attacked and young people being murdered by the Israeli military and police, including 16 year old Jana Zakarneh and the point blank execution of Ammar Mefleh;
- the reports of UNICEF, Save the Children and PSC on the systematic detention of Palestinian children and their incarceration in inhumane conditions;
- the attacks on and criminalisation of 6 human rights organisations;
- the murder by Israeli military of journalist Shireen Abu Aqleh and the attacks on her funeral;
- the UK government's support for the apartheid Israeli state including:
  - Voting against the Palestinian bid for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on Israel's occupation at the United Nations.
  - Seeking a free trade agreement with Israel
  - Plans to enact anti BDS legislation;

- the British Labour Party increasingly closing the space for support for Palestine and the refusal of the Labour Party leadership to honour the motion passed in 2021 identifying Israel as practicing the crime of apartheid;
- the Irish government last year unanimously declared that Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories amount to de facto annexation.
- the important work of Unite has done in highlighting the situation that faces the Palestinians and leading the movement in advocating for them within Ireland and the UK, and within the global and European federations that Unite affiliates to.

Conference therefore call on Unite to;

- Identify Israel as practicing the crime of apartheid under international law and speak out publically against this system as well as the illegal occupation and ethnic cleansing;
- Publically support BDS campaigns against companies complicit in the illegal occupation of Palestine, and support the coalition of organisations against this legislation;
- Reaffirm and clarify the policy of suspension of any bilateral relations with Histadrut given that organisation's policy on the occupation and support for military actions by the Israeli state, until such time they publically denounce apartheid and occupation;
- Oppose Ireland and the UK government's free trade agreement with Israel, and with all countries that abuse human and labour rights and those that invade, occupy and ethnically cleanse;
- Educate Unite members on Unite's policy on Palestine, including specific sessions for sectors that have counterparts Palestine, as well as for young members;
- Ensure that Unite activists take part in delegations to Palestine;
- To work within the global and European federations to advocate for the Palestinians and ensure these federations become more progressive on Palestine;
- Continue to affiliate, take an active role in and fully support the work of PSC, IPSC and Labour & Palestine.

#### **National Young Members Committee**

#### **45. Stand with the Six**

On October 19, the Israeli Ministry of Defense declared six prominent Palestinian civil society and human rights organisations to be "terrorist organisations".

These organisations advocate for Palestinian human rights at the local and international levels, provide services and support to women, children, farmers, and prisoners, and collectively support thousands of Palestinians across the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.

This decision by the Israeli Ministry of Defense puts these organisations and the populations they serve at grave risk, including opening the door to potential mass arrests of staff, freezing organisational assets and bank accounts, and forcing the closure of these important

organisations. This repressive act is a serious escalation of Israel's attempts to criminalise and delegitimise lawful human rights and civil society work aimed at eliminating dissent and avoiding accountability.

Many in the international community were swift to condemn this decision and voice their support, but more pressure is needed to urge the Israeli government to reverse this decision and cease attempts to criminalise Palestinian civil society organisations.

This is a direct assault in an effort to isolate and restrict human rights defenders and limit the few avenues for justice and support available to the Palestinian people.

We ask this conference to recognise the significant impact this assault has on these prominent organisations, including on the local and international public's right to information about the reality of human rights violations in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Policy conference resolves:

- To call on the Government and wider Trade Union movement to demand the Israeli Government drop the spurious allegations against these organisations.
- To call on the Government to reaffirm its support for Palestinian civil society organisations and their workers, who are on the frontline of defending the human rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories and Israel.
- For Unite the Union to continue to campaign for the right of UK civil society to take actions in solidarity with the Palestinians, including boycott, divestment and sanctions campaigns.
- For Unite the Union to encourage all regions and branches of Unite to take action in solidarity with Palestinian civil society, and to affiliate to Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

**Community Youth and Not for Profit RISC, London and Eastern**

## **46. Ukraine**

Conference utterly condemns the Russian invasion of Ukraine and fully supports the decision of the Unite Executive Council and branches to donate to the ITUC fund to support the Ukrainian refugees and Ukrainian trade unions.

Conference also fully condemns the role that Putin has played in destabilising Europe and the US by supporting and funding extreme right politicians such as Trump in the US, Orban in Hungary, Le Pen in France, and the Vote Leave campaign in the UK. But Conference also notes the anti-trade union policies of the Zelensky government in Ukraine and urges caution against populist outright blind support of his government outside of the conflict.

With the war in Ukraine, massively increasing tensions with China, and the Middle East on the edge of an explosion, the world is in a more dangerous situation than at any time since 1945. Trade unionists and the labour movement know only too well that wars are never in

the interests of working people and the global trade union and labour movement must do everything in its power to prevent further escalations and to work for peace.

Conference believes it is essential there is a full, open, and honest debate about the causes of the conflict – including the role of NATO expansion – and fully rejects the Labour Party's attempts to silence any legitimate discussion of these issues or real analysis of how the world has arrived at the abyss of a nuclear confrontation.

The conflict is already causing massive problems for the European and UK economy through the energy crisis and huge disruptions to supply chains, this may in turn have a disastrous impact on the jobs, pay and conditions of millions of workers in Europe and the UK – particularly with the UK government already trying to use the conflict as a reason to cut public spending including cutting the wages of workers.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to:

- Publically call for the furlough system to be re-introduced for any workers laid off due to supply chain problems stemming from the conflict
- Oppose calls for an escalation of the war and call for a peaceful resolution;
- Ensure that NISCs, RISCs and branches are fully informed about the conflict and the industrial issues that have arisen from it that affect members jobs and wellbeing
- Demand equal treatment for all refugees not preferential treatment for those refugees that suit the government's political agenda
- Call on the international trade union movement to be consistent when dealing with conflict and for Unite to raise within the federations the following;
  - Publicly denounce countries that commit the same international violations and human rights abuses as Russia, such as Israel and Turkey
  - Insist that if the Russian unions are to be expelled for not opposing the Ukraine conflict, then so too must Histadrut for its support of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and Hak-is of Turkey for its support of the invasion and occupation of Syria.
  - Demand that the ETUC do not allow unions, such as Solidarnosc from Poland, to use their high-profile role in supporting Ukraine to white wash their own extreme right wing policies on LGBT rights, women's rights and their public support of Marie Le-Pen in France;
  - Demand that the European and Global Trade Union Federations condemn racism at the Ukraine border and call on their affiliates in the area to demand their governments let all Ukraine refugees across their borders regardless of colour or ethnicity.

**Chemicals Pharmaceuticals, Process and Textiles RISC,  
North East Yorkshire and Humberside**



## **Amendment**

In the second bullet point, line 1, after “peaceful resolution” insert:

“to support peace on the basis of Ukraine’s right to self-determination, full withdrawal of invading forces and an end to Russian aggression against Ukraine. In particular Unite should strengthen links with our Ukrainian trade union and socialist sisters and brothers, and support their struggles to help defend their country against imperialist invasion; defend and strengthen workers’, social and democratic rights within it; and win a more just and democratic post-war reconstruction”.

In the fourth bullet point, line 1, insert the following after "Demand equal treatment":

, free welcome and full access to public services and the right to work for all refugees,

**Central London Voluntary Sector Branch (LE/524), London and Eastern**

### **47. Solidarity with All Progressive Forces in Turkey and the Wider Region.**

Conference is proud of the solidarity work that Unite has undertaken in recent years in order to stand shoulder to shoulder with the brave trade unionists, human rights activists, women’s activists, Kurds and wider political opposition in Turkey. These brave men and women risk their jobs, livelihoods, freedom and even their lives in opposing the brutal authoritarian regime of Erdogan and the AK Party.

Conference is appalled to note that in the last two years there has been:

- Dramatic upsurge of violence, arrests and union busting against trade unionists in Turkey especially against those members of the independent trade unions of DISK and KESK;
- Sharp increase in the number of multinational companies using the increased authoritarian leadership in Turkey and the clamp down on trade union rights to attack workers’ pay and conditions;
- A rise in attacks on opposition parties and imprisonment of politicians by the Erdogan government in the run up to the presidential election;
- An continued use of ‘terrorism’ charges against all opposition – politicians, trade unionists and civil society activists- in order to hand down lengthy jail terms and criminalise those who stand up for human, workers and women’s rights;
- An intensification of the aggravated isolation of Kurdish political leader Abdullah Ocalan who has spent the last 24 years in prison and
- A continued international silence on the incarceration of Abdullah Ocalan, against international and domestic Turkish law and his conditions classed as torture by all international standards including the Mandela Rules;
- An escalation of attacks on women’s rights and women’s rights groups in Turkey including the withdrawal from the Istanbul convention to protect women and girls

against violence and the targeted attacks on the Kurdish women's revolution of Rojava (North East Syria);

- An marked increase in Turkish military aggression into the Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq and Turkish air attacks on Rojava with a potential ground invasion, which Erdogan has clearly stated will involve ethnic cleansing;
- An increase in the UK government's support of Turkey, including seeking a free trade deal and moves towards the criminalisation of the UK Kurdish community;
- A closing of space in the UK Labour Party to speak out against the policies of NATO and in support the Kurdish political movement, including the banning of a Unite activist from the 2022 conference and the welcoming of the Circle Foundation an organisation with alleged links to Erdogan;

Therefore Conference calls on Unite to:

- Reaffirm and deepen its support and affiliation to the Freedom for Ocalan Trade Union Campaign and encourage branches and regions to do the same;
- Deepen support for DISK and KESK and support them in their disputes with multinationals and their fight to defend basic worker rights;
- Publically support the HDP political party, the Kurdish political movement, the Kurdish women's movement and people of Rojava in their struggle;
- Speak out against any Turkish invasion and ethnic cleansing of Rojava, and the attacks on Northern Iraq;
- Send a delegation to Rojava to see first-hand the revolution that has taken place there and give support to them to develop their trade unions and civil society;
- Cease any bilateral relations with pro-government Turkish unions and oppose their affiliations to European and global federations, as long as they continue to support the Erdogan government's actions regarding military aggression and attacks on women's and Kurdish rights.
- Address the inconsistency of the trade union movement in not condemning the actions of Turkey whilst condemning the same actions by Russia against Ukraine.

**GPM London Print Branch (LE/7031L), London and Eastern**

#### **48. Abolition of Nato**

This Policy Conference agrees that NATO is not a peace organization as evident in the wars of Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Libya.

Conference has seen NATO move its bases and missiles 1,000 miles eastward despite a verbal agreement not to move them 1 inch between Reagan and Gorbachev.

NATO is and has been having massive military exercises on Russian, Chinese and North Korean borders and one mistake could lead to a third World War with nuclear weapons involved.

Conference asks Unite to organise educational courses on the structure of NATO and publicise the findings of these courses. We ask Unite to support the abolition of NATO and

to work to a meaningful peace dividend. This must be done as soon as possible in order to save innocent lives and move the world away from the destructive path it seems to be heading.

**FDA - South Yorkshire & Humber (NE/GEO/1), North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **E Environment & Energy**

### **49. Climate Change and Just Transition**

This Conference notes the global debate surrounding Climate Change, which over time will undoubtedly touch upon most, if not all sectors within Unite, in some way shape or form.

As part of the drive to net zero the government set out its strategy in October 2021, entitled 'Build Back Greener', in which it said, 'that economic growth and reducing emissions go hand in hand... and that changes will have a wider benefit for the public and business alike'.

The document also acknowledges that government cannot tackle climate change alone, and whilst it mentions the need for a coordinated approach across local and national governments, devolved administrations, business, and civil society, unsurprisingly, there is no specific mention for Trade unions, despite the potential impact, both positive and negative, on the millions of jobs that are represented by Unite and wider across the Trade Union movement.

Decarbonisation within many businesses and organisations now falls under the Environmental Social & Governance (ESG) umbrella. This looks set to increase when scope 3 reporting of emissions takes effect, because of the Task Force for Climate Financial Disclosures Regulations (TCFD), which comes into force in 2025 (scope 1 & 2 from 2022), requiring companies and investors to report the total carbon footprint, from their investments, operations, and products under the ESG umbrella.

The regulations will result in business and organisations looking at virtually every aspect of their operations, from Health and Safety, reducing emissions of their products, as well as its manufacture and/or operation, Terms and Conditions, Social value within their organisation and wider society, all of which could impact on the working lives of our members.

The investment that will be required to ensure that the net zero target, set under the Paris agreement and the UK's own commitment, will be significant in order to rise to the climate challenge. This will undoubtedly require both public as well as private sector money to support the investments required.

Therefore, Conference believes that it is imperative that Unite engages on these matters, either at the organisation level e.g. within government and at a workplace level via the workplace representatives and follow the mantra gathering pace with our brothers and sisters within the European Trade Union movement, of 'nothing done too us without us' to ensure that workers do not pay the price for climate change with their jobs and that communities do not suffer economic and social hardship.

Therefore, Conference calls upon Unite to actively

- Engage with government to ensure a 'just transition', to protect jobs as the UK drives to become greener and reduce emissions

- Engage with relevant Government bodies and the Companies, in which our members work to try to ensure the existing UK workforce has the requisite training to deal with industry 4.0 and reskill in areas where it currently does not do so and train the next generation of apprentices.
- Representatives to engage with their organisations on ESG plans and implementation
- Lobby government to ensure that any support provided to organisations under the build back greener agenda, with UK taxpayers money comes with strings attached about guarantees on UK jobs not just support for R&D, which then allows for that technology/services to be given away outside UK which will have a detrimental economic effect.

## **Aerospace and Shipbuilding NISC**

### **Amendment**

Add new bullet point at end:

- “• Recognises that with a Just Transition, nuclear power is not carbon neutral within a whole life cycle from mining uranium ore to decommissioning of nuclear power stations and the processing the resultant nuclear waste, and that those involved in related jobs must not suffer any detriment in this transitional process.”

## **Community & Not for Profit RISC, London & Eastern.**

### **50. Environmental Social and Governance Strategy**

This Conference calls on Unite Officials to commit to developing a national strategy and initiatives that can meaningfully engage with the Environmental, Social and Governance Framework (ESG) as part of its focus on protecting jobs throughout UK manufacturing, to be up and running no later than when we return to Policy Conference in 2025.

The Environmental, Social and Governance Framework (ESG) is a set of standards measuring a business's impact on society, the environment, and how transparent and accountable it is. It has been adopted by a number of companies in this country and is also a subject for debate at European Works Council and in board rooms.

We have seen in the past, such as against apartheid South Africa, how BDS movements can change the behaviour of companies and governments. Today the latest incarnation of this is ESG and we've already seen this impact investment decisions of banks and pension organisations, including those looking after the funds of A&S pension funds.

Today, some banks would refuse our business. This puts our jobs at risk.

Unite must take the lead in working with companies throughout UK manufacturing so it can remain an attractive prospect for investors and pension funds in the future and thus protect our jobs.

It is important that Unite not only challenge senior managers/business leaders on ESG, but show that we can provide resources, insight and support to UK manufacturing. With this support from Unite, UK manufacturing can better demonstrate that this subject is being considered in a thoughtful and holistic manner, without being accused of green/pink/black etc. washing when talking about the following:

- Health and Safety
- Net zero,
- TU recognition and improved terms and conditions,
- TU/worker representation on boards
- Social Value
- Gender balance
- Ethnicity pay gaps
- STEM outreach to minority groups Women/BAME/LGBT

#### **Aerospace and Shipbuilding RISC, South West**

### **51. Support for Climate Transition Agenda**

Unite recognises the *“ever-increasing threat of global warming caused by pollution from carbon fuels and the detrimental effect that this has on the planet*

This Conference recognises that the transition to a low-carbon society is inevitable, it is legislated for within UK law, and must progress substantially this decade in order for the UK Government to meet legally binding carbon budgets. This transition will necessitate a radical transformation and reshaping of every sector of the economy within the UK and indeed globally. It will affect all Unite members in some way, and in many cases, significantly and is a major threat to job security with workers in energy/emissions intensive industries most at risk from unplanned transition

Unite the Union has already committed to *“work for the establishment of a ‘Just Transition’ strategy and practical steps needed to achieve this as integral to industrial strategy.”* However, in many sectors the decarbonisation challenges and the potential technology or policy solutions are complex and difficult to navigate. In many instances, the sustainability strategies of industries across the economy have been dictated by a handful of business

Leaders and lack workers and unions engagement in shaping these strategies and the agenda’s that are needed to provide a worker perspective on industrial strategy and training requirements.

Business leaders are incentivised to deliver short-term results (e.g. quarterly profits and a rising share price) on time-scales at maximum of a few years, rather than ensure long-term sector stability. On the other hand, most workers will hope to have a safe and secure job that continues for decades. When it comes to pay, or employment terms & conditions, we don’t take the positions of our business leaders at face value. It’s our job within trade

unions to critically evaluate their plans and fight the corner of workers. The same applies to sustainability strategies.

For example, we will need to completely transform our buildings, energy and transport networks, and the way we produce power, fuels, chemicals, vehicles, food, and other products. In each of these areas there is a wide array of potential 'solutions' and it's important that workers, who know their sector most intimately, are engaged so that finance is directed to the optimum areas. On the flip side is the danger that leaders and organisations back the wrong policies or technologies, and we lose vital time and money. Ultimately, workers will pay the price if the business back the wrong solution, whilst business leaders and investors will have long since disappeared.

This Conference emphasises that any industry transformation needs workers as its agents for change in order to protect jobs, skills and terms and conditions. It needs their expertise, their skills and their engagement in shaping the transition to a low-carbon economy designed by us, rather than something that is done to us. It can benefit us, rather than provide an opportunity for employers to cut headcounts, weaken worker-rights sparking a race to the bottom and delaying vital climate action.

The challenges faced by workers is not unique or confined to individual sectors and in many cases are intrinsically linked cross sectorial.

Recognising that Unite is already establishing cross sector democratic structures in the form combines, this Conference calls upon Unite to ensure that the remit of those combines includes agenda items relating to climate just transition.

Whilst it is not for us to determine exactly what is required in each and every combine, that is a matter for them to determine/shape their own industries however, areas for consideration could include:

- Critiquing the sustainability strategies of political & business leaders and developing their own independent strategies, informed by expert evidence.
- Produce independent, worker-led/focussed visions of the future and where possible underpinned by sustainability strategies that have utilised robust evidence.
- Set out clear requirements for the necessary worker skills and associated training.
- Where beneficial engage with other unions within the same or similar sectors to ensure a cross fertilisation of ideas and thinking and knowledge sharing with the protection of workers the underpinning principle.

**Aerospace and Shipbuilding RISC, North West**

### **Amendment**

First paragraph, line 2, insert after "has on planet"

'and on people, particularly those with health issues and the elderly who are less able to cope with very hot weather, severe flooding and poor quality air in our inner cities'

Second paragraph, line 1, before "This conference recognises" insert:

“Support for Climate Transition Agenda Unite recognises the “ever-increasing threat of global warming caused by pollution from carbon fuels and the detrimental effect that this has on the planet.

At the end of the motion after ‘underpinning principle.” Add new paragraph:

“Conference instructs the Executive Council to campaign to ensure that the economic benefits of decarbonisation result in good, unionised jobs spread fairly across the country and that the benefits of decarbonisation also result in a better quality of life for all.”

#### **National Retired Members Committee**

### **52. Sectoral Approach to Climate Change & Workers Assemblies**

Our union Unite has already recognised the ever-increasing threat of global warming caused by use of fossil fuels. We have already committed to “work for the establishment of a ‘Just Transition’ strategy and practical steps needed to achieve this as integral to industrial strategy.” (Policy Conference 2018).

This Conference recognises that the transition to a low-carbon society:

- is inevitable, is legislated for within UK law, and must progress substantially this decade in order for the UK Government to meet legally-binding carbon budgets.
- will necessitate a radical transformation and reshaping of every sector of the economy within the UK and indeed globally.
- will affect all Unite members in some way, and in many cases, significantly. Workers jobs in emissions-intensive industries are most at risk from such unplanned transitions.

This Conference also recognises that Unite the Union needs to ramp up its actions and industrial strategies to tackle the Climate Crisis. So far, insufficient progress has been made and it is urgent to integrate sustainability into our union activity, so all workplaces are fit for the energy transition.

In many sectors the decarbonisation challenges and the potential technology or policy solutions are complex and difficult to navigate. Frequently, the sustainability strategies of various industries across the economy have been dictated by a handful of business leaders, and we lack independent, worker-led visions for the future of these sectors. This conference requests that any industry transformation needs workers acting as agents for change.

An open and democratic process, involving discussion to produce recommendations, incorporating worker owned perspectives to deliver positive action, is most likely to lead to success. Unite's role should be to foster those dialogues and encourage positive proposals, facilitating them within sectors and between sectors.

This Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to:



- Adopt the approach of “Workers’ Assemblies” to produce independent, worker-led visions of the sustainable future for each industrial sector. This should be implemented in collaboration with Unite Industrial Sectors.
- Commission a taskforce to investigate & make recommendations for implementing Workers’ Assemblies.
- Resource the taskforce, pilot projects, Workers Assemblies & cross-sector coordination adequately

#### Local Authorities RISC, London and Eastern

#### Amendment

After the fourth paragraph ending “agents for change.” add a new paragraph as follows:

“The proposal is to approach this problem using “Workers Assemblies”, which would utilise the deliberative democracy principles of “Citizens Assemblies”. Participants would be selected from the relevant union membership using a process of Sortation, and would receive presentations from a range of experts before deliberating on the topic.”

In the final paragraph at the end of the second bullet-point, line 2, after “Workers’ Assemblies. “ add:

- . This taskforce would:
  - Engage organisations with experience in the field of Citizens’ Assemblies, e.g. *Involve* (who facilitated the UK Climate Assembly), to determine the best means of deploying these processes to feed into existing union structures.
  - Determine the most relevant industrial sectors in which to perform Workers Assemblies, with a priority list for possible initial ‘pilot’ trials.
  - Engage with other unions to identify areas for **cross-union** collaboration and jointly supported Workers Assemblies in relevant sectors.
  - Identify where **cross-sector** Workers Assemblies might be necessary, due to a high interdependency of strategies.

At the end, after “cross-sector coordination adequately” add new paragraph:

“This Conference notes and would encourage the union to highlight possible benefits of the Workers Assemblies approach, including

- More effectively utilising the collective and individual subject-matter expert experience of our members.
- Improving the union’s flow of information about the views and positions held by its members, as well as the issues, challenges and opportunities in their workplaces and industries
- Creating channels for involving new or different layers of workers, across our membership, who may not currently be active within our structures.

- In particular, inspiring and engaging younger members, who are often less active but tend to be most informed and passionate about issues of sustainability and climate justice.
- Strengthening Unite's profile as a progressive champion of both worker-led democracy, with deliberative discussion feeding dynamically into our representative structures, and of the fight for climate justice"

**Greenwich Local Government Branch (LE/2050), London and Eastern**

### **53. Energy Crisis**

Every sector has been affected by the ongoing energy crisis.

Light-touch regulation, significant tests of security of supply, major unfettered profiteering and a wilful neglect for investment in the energy infrastructure over a number of years have resulted in the UK now finding itself in a vulnerable position to deal with this current crisis.

Conference calls on our union to use all of its influence immediately to make sure that our members and the general public do not end up paying for this crisis and to make sure we never end up so exposed in the future should difficulties within the energy market reappear. We therefore instruct our union to demand a balanced energy mix of generation assets along with major investment in all areas of the energy sector to ensure a clear security of supply moving forward.

The current system is broken and works towards unfettered profiteering. Instead of this going to the shareholders of the energy companies profits should be re-invested in our energy infrastructure to ensure that energy remains available and affordable for all. The current system of privatisation and regulation of our energy and utilities industries fails to deliver this.

Conference call on our union to pursue the government of the day to re-nationalise the energy and utilities industries in order to stop the profiteering, to invest in the energy infrastructure and our members working within the industries in order to see an end to the current crisis and any future ones.

**Energy and Utilities NISC**

### **54. Energy Policy**

This Conference views with alarm the huge increase in energy prices since the end of the COVID lockdown. This has seen domestic bills more than double between winter 2021 and winter 2022 resulting in unaffordable bills for millions of people. These rises in costs will also cause many small businesses to cease trading.

Conference notes that the subsidies provided to make bills slightly less unaffordable will be financed by the taxpayer and not from the obscene profits of the energy companies.

Nothing could demonstrate more clearly that privatised energy companies are run in the interests of the millionaires and not ordinary people. We do not believe that tighter regulation or windfall taxes provide a real solution and subsequently believe that the energy companies should be taken into public ownership and run by the workers in the industry, consumer groups and representatives of local and national government and that compensation should only be paid on the basis of proven need

Conference notes that the TUC has estimated that if energy companies were re-nationalised, households could save up to £4,400 over the next two years.

The crisis in energy prices also exposed the weakness of the dependence on fossil fuels and conference believes that the time is right for major investment in the generation of green energy, including from solar, tide and wind power.

We do not believe that this will be achieved under private ownership because the oil, gas and energy companies will continue to want to profit from the fossil fuels they own.

But at the same time, we demand that the jobs, income and pensions of workers be protected and guaranteed during the transition from fossil fuels to green technology.

This Conference believes Unite should campaign for the entire energy industry to be taken out of the hands of profit driven owners and shareholders and placed under socialist democratic public ownership and control.

#### **Coventry and Warwickshire Local Branch (WM/6050), West Midlands**

### **55. Renewable Energy**

This Conference recognises renewable energy as a key component of the 'Green Agenda' Conference further believes that nuclear power must play a major role in any plan to establish 100% renewable energy within the UK.

Conference welcomes and supports the building of Sizewell C new nuclear energy plant. It recognises the thousands of highly skilled construction jobs that will be created during the build phase followed by the many highly skilled and well paid jobs that will be created for the running and maintenance of the plant once operational.

Conference calls on all levels of Unite to lobby the government and publicly campaign for a phased building programme of nuclear plants that ensure 'skill bridges' are created between the finish of a plant and the start of a new plant, thus ensuring those workers with the skills required to construct nuclear power plants are retained within the industry.

#### **Construction RISC, London and Eastern**

## **56. Public Ownership of UK Energy**

Conference completely condemns the continued practice of offshoring and private ownership of UK Energy.

We cannot stand by and witness the disastrous impact this shameful and unnecessary process continues to inflict on our members, their families and the communities they are part of.

Conference firmly believes the Tory Government has been completely void of a strategy to support UK energy.

Conference believes that the following strategy should be endorsed and adopted as policy in order to stem the practice of offshoring and privatisation for fat cat profit and, to rebuild a strong and healthy energy industry from whereupon our proud union can be at the forefront.

- All energy companies and producers to be taken into public ownership.
- The introduction of a strategic investment bank allowing adequate funding to all energy companies.
- Certain regions historically rely on energy production and heavy engineering and are suffering disproportionately and, as a result their communities have been destroyed. These areas require identification and given government support to restore and rebuild.
- Nationally, access to a subsidised affordable energy process.

Conference believes these are just and reasonable requests and will form the basis of a strategy to breathe desperately needed life back into UK energy industry. Furthermore this will form the basis of a self-reliant and prosperous UK energy industry and affordable energy for everyone in the UK.

**Engineering Manufacturing Steel RISC, North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **57. Public Ownership**

This Conference views with alarm the huge increase in energy prices since the end of the COVID lockdown. This has seen domestic bills more than double between winter 2021 and winter 2022 resulting in unaffordable bills for millions of people. These rises in costs will also cause many small businesses to cease trading.

Conference notes that the subsidies provided to make bills slightly less unaffordable will be financed by the taxpayer and not from the obscene profits of the energy companies.

Nothing could demonstrate more clearly that privatised energy companies are run in the interests of the millionaires and not ordinary people. We do not believe that tighter

regulation or windfall taxes provide a real solution and subsequently believe that the energy companies should be taken into public ownership and run by the workers in the industry, consumer groups and representatives of local and national government and that compensation should only be paid on the basis of proven need.

Conference notes that the TUC has estimated that if energy companies were re-nationalised, households could save up to £4,400 over the next two years.

The crisis in energy prices also exposed the weakness of the dependence on fossil fuels and conference believes that the time is right for major investment in the generation of green energy, including from solar, tide and wind power.

We do not believe that this will be achieved under private ownership because the oil, gas and energy companies will continue to want to profit from the fossil fuels they own.

But at the same time, we demand that the jobs, income and pensions of workers be protected and guaranteed during the transition from fossil fuels to green technology.

This could only be achieved when the entire energy industry is taken out of the hands of profit driven owners and shareholders and is placed under socialist democratic public ownership and control.

**Birmingham South Local Branch (WM/6030), West Midlands**

## **58. Tidal Lagoon Projects**

The need for an affordable and reliable form of renewable electricity generation is key to any industrial strategy for the future of the United Kingdom.

Without affordable and reliable renewable electricity generation the competitiveness of British industry is impeded.

In order to have strategic energy security the United Kingdom needs to invest in affordable and reliable renewable electricity generation based here in the U.K.

U.K. consumers are paying huge green levies for the current generation of renewables and are seeing very little benefit from wind or solar farms with their need for conventional and nuclear back up for when the wind does not blow or the sun does not shine.

The current high price of electricity is due partly to a failure of the Government to invest in the future of Tidal Lagoon projects.

Unlike wind and solar renewables which are unpredictable the tides around the UK coastline are completely predictable and the U.K. has an ideal tidal range for Tidal Lagoon projects. Swansea has one of the highest tidal ranges in the world.

This Conference believes that the failure of the current Government to authorise the previous Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon project was a strategic error.

This rejection, against the wishes of the Welsh Government, industry and unions, was based on the short sighted claim that electricity from Tidal Lagoon was too expensive.

This argument does not hold true today.

Alongside other schemes along the west coast of the UK, tidal range power generation has the potential to supply 5% to 10% of the country's energy needs, reliably and predictably, unlike other intermittent renewables such as wind and solar.

This project and others like it will also create or secure tens of thousands of jobs in the UK construction industry and Midlands engineering manufacturing sites key to maintaining the sovereign capability of British industry.

Therefore this Conference calls on Unite to campaign for Government to actively pursue the Blue Eden Tidal Lagoon project and other Tidal Lagoon solutions

**West Midlands Regional Committee**

## **59. Retrofitting**

Conference notes that there are around 2.5 million homes in Scotland, only 278,000 currently use a renewable or low-emissions heating system. Conference understands that the themes of Scotland's Just Transition Commission are:

- plan, invest and implement a transition to environmentally and socially sustainable jobs,
- create opportunities to develop resource efficient and sustainable economic approaches, which help address inequality and poverty
- design and deliver low carbon investment and infrastructure, and make all possible efforts to create decent, fair and high value work, in a way which does not negatively affect the current workforce

Conference is aware that inadequate housing is responsible for almost a third of carbon emissions. Conference campaigns for major investment in council home building, 'zero carbon' homes, large-scale retrofitting of existing homes and buildings, tackling fuel poverty; creating much needed skilled and unionised jobs underpinned by collective bargaining agreements.

Conference believes this means developing cross sectoral campaigns that can deliver much needed jobs from public investment in retrofitting. Conference identifies the need for a retrofitting programme to take place in every community and notes this is one of the economic policies required to deliver social justice where every citizen has access to a warm and decent home.

Conference believes it's critical that our campaign is an organising strategy to ensure low carbon building solutions deliver a better outcome for workers, families, and the communities we live in.

Conference notes the STUC Green Jobs in Scotland research report which identified the potential of over 36,000 jobs being created through deep retrofitting of homes and buildings in the next two years; conference will campaign industrially to defend and deliver quality jobs, and terms and conditions as part of any investment across the UK. This means fighting for:

- Retrofitting investment being nationally funded
- Delivering good jobs, pay and conditions, including collective bargaining, with investment in a number of opportunities for apprenticeships and young workers.
- Ending fuel poverty
- Establishing a key delivery role for Energy and Local Government workers, and where private sector construction contractors are necessary, that the Construction Charter is applied.
- Establishing warm homes for all, and establishing housing conditions that help children to flourish and achieve better educational outcomes.

#### **Energy and Utilities RISC Scotland**

### **60. Fossil Fuels**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a 'Just Transition'.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn't really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same
- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other 'false solutions' such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists

**CYW & NFP South Yorkshire Branch (NE/403/5), North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **61. No new Fossil Fuels**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a 'Just Transition'.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn't really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same



- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other ‘false solutions’ such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists

**Service Industries Branch (NW/70209), North West**

## **62. Fossil Fuels**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a ‘Just Transition’.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn’t really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same
- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other ‘false solutions’ such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists.

**Finance and Legal Branch (SE/6152), South East**

## **63. Fossil Fuels**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a 'Just Transition'.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn't really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same
- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other 'false solutions' such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists

**Merseyside Voluntary Sector Branch (NW/522), North West**

## **64. Fossil Fuels**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a 'Just Transition'.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn't really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same
- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other 'false solutions' such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists

**Bromley Council Branch LE/531, London and Eastern**

## 65. Fossil Fuels

This Conference recognises that:

- Since 2010 Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to address the climate crisis.
- Policies can be contradictory. There is continued support for the extraction of fossil fuels alongside policies which support sustainable solutions such as renewable energy.
- Unite represents workers in many sectors including in the fossil fuel industries. Unite must campaign to protect their interests while using evidence, research, skills and expertise of Unite members to work towards a 'Just Transition'.

Unite policies include a number of controversial and unproven technologies, often promoted by vested interests, for example:

- Net zero target, rather than real zero, which allows continued FF extraction with carbon trading mitigations
- Carbon Capture and storage (CCS) that adds cost and is unproven with no working plants yet established worldwide.
- Blue hydrogen (with CCS), which is not low carbon
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the National Executive Council to:

- End support for and campaign against any new fossil fuel development and investment
- Accelerate the work within its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for 'false solutions' such as Carbon Capture and Storage, blue hydrogen or biomass
- Commission research and evidence for a Just Transition using the skills and expertise of Unite members, alongside climate justice campaigners.
- Campaign for public ownership of the energy industry, including fossil fuel, nuclear, renewable, distributive and large retail companies, so the entire industry can be democratically planned to urgently move to sustainable energy production and protect the livelihoods of all workers in them.
- Public ownership to be without compensation to those who have taken massive profits, except to shareholders in genuine need including pension schemes, community-owned wind-farms and similar renewable energy schemes.

**Medical Practitioners' Union (Doctors in Unite) (LE/0375M), London and Eastern**

## **66. Fossil Fuels and the Climate Crisis**

This Conference recognises that:

- Unite has adopted many policies related to Climate Change since 2010
- Unite policies generally recognise the urgency and need for action to reduce climate change
- Many of those policies can be contradictory as they support the continuation of the extraction of fossil fuels as well as sustainable solutions such as investment in renewable energies
- Unite represents many workers in many sectors including the fossil fuel and other polluting industries and is therefore motivated to campaign to protect their interests, as part of a 'Just Transition'.

This Conference is also concerned that Unite policies promote a number of controversial and potentially ineffective technologies generally promoted by vested interests, which include for example:

- A net zero target, rather than real zero, which encourages Fossil Fuels extraction mitigated by carbon trading
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) that adds cost, is still unproven and may delay the transition to genuine renewables
- Blue hydrogen (produced from methane with CCS), which isn't really low carbon, let alone close to zero
- New coal, oil and gas (with CCS)

This Conference acknowledges that NO NEW fossil fuels should be extracted if we want to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the Executive Council to:

- End support for, and campaign against, any new exploration or development of fossil fuel reserves and any investment in the same
- Accelerate the work with its Sectors to develop sustainable alternatives and Just Transition bargaining agendas
- Review its support for the mass usage of Carbon Capture and Storage
- Review its support for other 'false solutions' such as blue hydrogen or biomass burning, and commission proper research working with Climate Justice organisations rather than solely with the industry lobbyists

**CYW & NFP West Yorks & Humber (NE/403/15) North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **F Improving Health & Safety**

### **67. Long Covid**

Conference recognises that at the time of preparation for this motion that it was recorded that over two million people in private households in the UK alone will have experienced self-reported Long Covid symptoms for over four weeks

Of this, according to ONS.gov it is reported that 333,000 people are unable to do day to day activities, amongst this would include brain fog, difficulty in concentration, shortness of breath and muscle ache to name just a few similar to other illnesses. Long Covid is greatest among those aged 35-69 year olds, women and of people in more deprived areas.

Conference accepts that Long Covid is an emerging phenomenon across the world not yet fully understood. Alarming for a growing number of workers, many of whom will be Unite members at work, are facing disciplinary action and in some cases leading to dismissal to avoid organisations paying out for ill-health retirement.

Indeed, there will be workers who will have contracted Covid leading to Long Covid whilst at work carrying out their duties thereby could mean classing Covid as an industry injury and thus being a breach of care towards employees.

Conference unreservedly condemns those organisations who did not and are not standing by their employees and especially to those who declare that they are caring employers when the reality is that they are not.

Conference notes also that the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) have reported that Long Covid is costing hundreds of millions of pounds in the UK in lost income for workers.

Whilst Conference notes that varying organisations are looking into Long Covid, we believe that this is not enough and more urgently needs to be done.

Over the years our Union movements have led campaigns to tackle health injustice and have won.

Conference therefore calls on the Executive to look at launching a review of where Unite members have been disciplined or dismissed due to Long Covid symptoms and to approach all workplaces, branches and RISCs to help assist with this gathering of information.

We further call on the Executive to also approach other Trade Unions to see if they're doing the same to collate this information and see what patterns emerge.

Conference strongly believes that dismissal on the grounds of Long Covid should be legally challenged and that calls on the Executive to mandate our legal department and solicitors to prepare appropriate legal action whilst also working within Parliamentary means through the Labour Party to seek a change in legislation and recognising that Long Covid should never be grounds for disciplinary action, let alone dismissal from work.

Conference also calls on the Executive to look at naming and shaming those organisations who have sacked our members in the last two years due to Covid-related illnesses.

Conference is of the view that no one wants Long Covid in all that it brings and affects how they live with the personal negativity and demoralisation that will affect their lives and affecting their families also. Employers, especially big-name organisations and pension companies should be ashamed of how they have acted.

Conference calls on the new Executive to report in full detail to the next Policy Conference on the actions called for and how these have been implemented whilst ensuring that the Executive needing to be regularly briefed in between.

Conference resolves that Unite demands justice for all Long Covid workers.

**Health RISC, London and Eastern**

## **68. Long Covid – A Disability within the Workplace**

Conference, We call upon the Executive Council to campaign for Unite members who have developed Long Covid, and for those members to be treated as would a disabled member when returning to work. With access to reasonable adjustments within the workplace, enabling our members the opportunity of a phased return to work, flexible work start/finish times, and or flexible breaks.

We also encourage Officers and workplace Reps to seek agreement with the employer regarding local absence procedures. Acknowledging the numerous prolonged medical conditions associated with Long Covid.

The Office for National Statistics reports that an estimated 2 million workers in the UK were experiencing self-reported Long Covid as of June 2022, with fatigue, shortness of breath, loss of smell, and muscle ache being the most common symptoms. It was also reported that the greatest increase of Long Covid sufferers was between the age of 35 to 65, with women employed in social care or the health sector being those most affected.

All though many members who have had Covid recover within weeks, some will continue to experience debilitating symptoms. These symptoms can last for months after first being infected, with some members reporting that they have experienced new, or recurring symptoms at a much later time. It must not be forgotten, that this can happen to anyone who has had Covid, even if the initial illness was mild, and it must be recognised, that Long Covid can be both a physical or mental impairment, affecting one or more body systems.

This includes neurological, respiratory, cardiovascular systems, or mental impairment. Both mental and psychological disorders can also include emotional or mental illness.

Conference therefore calls upon the Executive Council, to organise a campaign to highlight the ongoing issues of Long Covid in the workplace that will continue to affect our members

for many years to come. We also call on Unite to give our Reps the full support of the Union when negotiating these much needed changes with reluctant employers.

**Disabled Members Committee, North West**

## **69. Health & Safety**

Conference is deeply concerned that over a decade of cuts to the HSE budget has led to a significant reduction in the number of HSE inspectors, affecting the enforcement of health & safety laws, regulations and procedures.

Conference is also deeply concerned that the implementation of the Retained EU Law Bill could lead to a further reduction in health & safety laws and regulations.

Conference believes that the experience of the Covid pandemic has particularly demonstrated the need for stronger health & safety legislation and enforcement.

Conference recognises that trade union workplace health & safety reps, backed by strong health & safety legislation, are crucial to building union organisation and fundamental to improving workplace health & safety and wellbeing, preventing death and injury, addressing workplace hazards and responding to issues such as mental health issues exacerbated by Covid and the cost-of-living crisis.

Conference therefore calls for a campaign to:

- Reverse the cuts to HSE budgets.
- Oppose the Retained EU Law Bill and, in particular, those elements of it affecting health & safety and other employment related rights.
- Strengthen the rights of trade union health & safety reps, including rights to issue legally binding improvement notices and rights for roving union reps to facility time and to access, inspect and issue improvement notices.

**Unite Scottish Executive**

## **70. Health, Safety Rights at Work – Breathe Safe**

This Conference notes the change in the definition of welding fumes from a possible carcinogen to a fully recognised industrial carcinogen in 2017.

This means that employers now must take action to both reduce the amount of fumes welders are exposed to and control any fume that may be in the environment of other associated workers.

Scientific research shows that exposure to all welding fumes can cause lung cancer and it has also been linked to kidney cancer.

There is also concern that there is a link for those manufacturing and fabricating various metals contracting respiratory infections.



Conference calls on the Executive Council to work with other trade unions and engage with the UK Government and medical and science professions to get a clear and full understanding of the health implications for our members of welding fume and working with various metals with the aim of having this declared as an industrial disease.

#### **Aerospace & Shipbuilding RISC Scotland**

### **71. Suicides Become Reportable, to the Health & Safety Executive, under the Requirements of Reportable Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.**

Conference notes that according to a report commissioned by the Office for National Statistics there are large number of unrecorded work-related suicides. The employer has a duty to record, and report when necessary to the Health & Safety Executive, all workplace incidents. The information provides valuable information that allows where and how risks are arising and so similar incidents can be prevented. Work-related suicides are directly caused by many common issues in the workplace for which examples are -

- Job insecurity
- Poor line management
- Mental Trauma
- Stress caused by little or no control over work loads
- Working excessive hours with unreasonable workloads or targets.

This Conference requires change to reporting requirements to include the ultimate outcome caused by the employer and protect employees in the future.

This Conference resolves to ask Unite to call for all work-related suicides, are reported to the Health & Safety Executive under the Reportable Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

#### **Education RISC, North West**

### **72. National Prostate Cancer Screening for All Men**

This Conference is asking Unite to campaign and give full support to the implementation of national prostate cancer screening.

Almost 48,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer annually, and 12,000 men die of the disease each year. 1:8 and 1:4 white and black men respectively are at risk of developing prostate cancer. Unlike with breast cancer currently there is no UK national screening program for prostate cancer. Previously national screening has been opposed for several reasons including:

- PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test inaccuracy: it can give false positive and negative results

- Risk of sepsis (infection associated organ failure)/death from downstream surgical biopsy investigation to diagnose prostate cancer

However, there has been tremendous development and improvement of non-invasive imaging techniques including advanced MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) used in conjunction with the PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test which has significantly reduced the proportion of non-diseased men being unnecessarily subjected to surgical biopsy.

Furthermore, increased awareness and earlier testing for sepsis has contributed to risk reduction following biopsy.

The European Commission issued new updated guidelines on 20 September 2022 recommending extending screening programs, including prostate cancer. The new screening guidelines replace the previous ones (CR 2003/878/EC) that omitted prostate cancer.

Earlier prostate cancer detection will reduce premature male deaths and adverse life-changing affects associated with late stage disease.

This Conference calls upon the Unite Executive Council to campaign vigorously for the Government to urgently introduce a national prostate cancer screening program for men, commencing from the age of 45, and to emphasize that African/Caribbean men have an increased risk of developing an aggressive form of prostate cancer at an earlier age, and have increased risk of dying from the disease if not diagnosed and treated early.

**Health RISC, East Midlands**

### **73. Mental Health support for Reps and Activists**

Conference is concerned at the impact mental health issues are having on our Reps and Activists. Our Reps and Activists often work in the most difficult of circumstances, dealing with complex issues and supporting members, many of whom are at their absolute lowest ebb. Reps not only support members through these issues with representation and guidance, but often also become a shoulder to cry on, a friend, a counsellor. Every workplace rep at some point, will come in to contact with a colleague who has mental health issues, be it stress, depression, anxiety, etc. A lot of Reps haven't been through any mental health training to help them to deal with these issues, so have to navigate their way through to the best of their ability.

As a result, Reps often take the burden of these issues and carry them through the working day and week, into their own time and personal life. This can have a massive impact on their own mental health, but they work on, and struggle (often in silence and alone), because they want to present a strong and supportive presence for their members. Add to this the environment that they have all been working in during COVID, working with difficult employers through turbulent times. Dealing with pay issues, redundancies, and the cost-of-living crisis.

A lot of larger companies these days have an 'employee assistance program', that their employees can use to provide mental health support and counselling, as well as trained Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs). But many companies don't have this facility, especially those in smaller, unorganised, or volatile industries

The NHS is on its knees and the waiting times for mental health support is months, sometimes years so is unfortunately not a viable option for those who are in immediate need of support.

As a union we cannot stand by and allow our Reps to suffer, often in silence, when these facilities and services are not available or accessible. We have a duty of care to look after those in our Union who give up their time and energy to look after others.

Conference therefore calls upon Unite to:

- Increase the amount of Mental Health training to Reps and Activists
- Provide Mental Health information and guidance on the Unite website.
- Develop an assistance program that is available to Reps and members to provide additional mental health support when required.
- As part of that assistance program, provide Reps and Activists free counselling sessions as and when required.

**GE Aviation - Bishops Cleeve Branch (SW/8171), South West**

#### **74. Mental Health Support**

This Conference:

- recognises that work related stress and poor mental health are an increasing issue among our members across all sectors, having a major impact not only on their ability to do their jobs, but their quality of life;
- notes that lay representatives and full time officials are the front-line - and often only – support that members going through a poor mental health episode or a period of crisis have available to them, despite a lack of specialist training in how to deal with these issues;
- is concerned that there are no clear policies or procedures on how reps and officers should deal with these individuals, and no pastoral or aftercare support for the involved reps and officials following dealing with these cases which are often emotionally draining for the officials involved, especially in cases that end tragically, having impact on their own mental health;
- recognises that neurodivergent reps or officials may face additional difficulties in supporting members or accessing relevant informed support and should be supported fully and appropriately in undertaking their duties;
- strongly believes that no lay rep or union official should be left to deal with the aftermath of these challenging cases on their own;

- instructs the executive council to develop a clear infrastructure of mental health policy and support that lay reps and union officials can follow for these difficult cases, including signposting for members to high quality and trauma-informed support that is not available in many workplaces;
- recommends that the executive council as a matter of urgency develops pastoral and aftercare support, resources, and procedures for lay reps and union officials who have had to deal with difficult or tragic cases so that they do not have to work through these difficult issues on their own.

**Education RISC, Scotland**

## **75. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

**Women's Committee, North West**

## **76. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

**Stagecoach Wigan Branch (NW/306), North West**

## **77. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

#### **Stagecoach Hyde Road Depot Branch Branch (NW/5/3), North West**

### **78. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

#### **Stagecoach Manchester Ashton Branch (NW/137), North West**

### **79. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National

Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

**Stagecoach Princess Road Depot Branch (NW/5/2), North West**

## **80. The Right of Workers to Access Adequate Sanitary Facilities**

As industry rapidly evolves, so too should National and Local Government policies regarding the treatment of employees who work away from a permanent base, specifically those for whom driving is the main part of their job.

In Manchester City Centre there are 3 public toilets per hundred thousand people. Very often these are out of order, unsanitary, or are located in an inaccessible location, leaving mobile workers angry, upset and, often, desperate.

It is also widely recognised that driving whilst desperate to relieve oneself impairs a driver's abilities as much as driving whilst under the influence of alcohol or narcotics.

A survey was held across a large number of Manchester bus garages. The results were quite shocking: 85% thought the lack of facilities was detrimental to their health; 80% said they'd relieved themselves in empty bottles etc; 85% said they couldn't concentrate on their driving whilst needing the toilet; 25% admitted soiling themselves as a direct result of being unable to access adequate toilet facilities in time.

Where facilities ARE provided, they are often inaccessible to those with limited mobility or do not provide a suitable, clean environment for women's sanitary needs, and washing facilities are often rudimentary. It is also the case that asking drivers to use public facilities can put them at risk of assault or robbery. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is reflected across many sectors where driving constitutes a major portion of their work.

Conference believes that it is a fundamental and absolute right of all mobile workers to have access to permanent, sanitary toilet facilities that are safe, easy to access, and available at all times. This Conference also believes that the failure of employers, Local, and National Government to provide such facilities is exclusionary and seriously detrimental to drivers' health and wellbeing.

Conference instructs the National Executive to campaign for legislation at a national level to address this problem, to publicise workers' plight and shame the Government into action. Conference also calls for Unite to engage with employers, Passenger Transport Executives and Metro Mayors to make the resolution of this problem the highest priority, with the potential for an Industrial Solution to the issue if it cannot be resolved by negotiation.

**Stagecoach Stockport Branch (NW/48), North West**



## **G Organising**

### **81. Recruitment Strategy**

This Conference should commit to developing a new recruitment strategy, with the express aim of recruiting non-unionised and/or young workers.

In light of lowering living standards and bleaker prospects for young workers, existing efforts to recruit new members by highlighting the material member benefits of joining the Union fail to attract this demographic. Young workers are increasingly willing to engage in activism and demonstrate for causes they believe in; however, the current recruitment strategy fails to channel this undercurrent of discontent into the ongoing fight for workplace rights and working-class education.

The Executive Council (in close collaboration with regional and national Young Member Committees) should therefore commit itself to creating a commission to develop a new recruitment strategy aimed at recruiting new members via a heavy emphasis on Workplace Activism, Working-Class Solidarity and Education. This should be coupled with a de-emphasis of Member benefits as a motivator for joining the Union. The Commission should aim to develop this strategy as soon as possible in order to better reach out to workers during the ongoing economic crisis. The strategy should be enacted and in practice prior to the next policy conference in 2025.

Young and currently non-unionised workers are the future of the Trade Union movement in Britain, and are set to inherit the movement in years to come. Efforts must urgently be made to stem the steady decline of Union membership and recruitment from younger generations, as well to capitalise on the decline of material conditions in Britain; empowering a new generation of workers to win a better future for themselves.

**Young Members Committee, North West**

### **82. Young People in Society**

Conference notes the underrepresentation of young people in society, and seeks to address generational wealth inequality. Unite believes that it is wrong that the most educated generation in history will also be the first to earn less than their parents, and sees the trade union movement as a method to address these issues. Unite is committed to:

- Prioritisation of Young member recruitment and retention.
- Establish why young people do and do not join trade unions, as well as what can be done to make trade unionism more attractive.
- An adoption of the ideas from the above investigation into member recruitment and retention strategies, as well as targeting under represented sectors.

- Focus on building relationships at universities and student unions to aid in awareness and recruitment of young people.
- An emphasis on training and development of young members to take on branch roles, and to know how to organise the workplace;
- Developing and extending Unite's young members structures and involvement in union organising work and community campaigning.
- Putting pressure on the Government to introduce a statutory right to a contract of at least 16 hours, to raise the minimum wage and equalise it for young people, and make workers' rights enforceable from day one of employment.

**Young Members Committee, West Midlands**

### **83. Building the Activist Base**

This Conference calls on the Executive Committee of Unite to adopt a policy of building the size of the activist base in the whole union.

We note the following facts.

- In both the elections of 2017 and 2021 for General Secretary, only 123,000 or 12% of members bothered to vote.
- In the same election in 2021 only 1400 branches out of 3400 branches bothered to meet to propose a nominated candidate for General Secretary.
- The majority of Area Activist Committees struggle to involve all sections of the union in their deliberations.

To this end this Conference instructs the Executive Council to implement the following:

- All branches of the union covering all sections and sectors to redouble their efforts to build close working links together.
- This to be established at Area Activist level, and at regional level in England, and national level in Scotland, Ireland and Wales.
- To involve Industrial branches, Retired and Community branches, and the equality sections of the whole union.
- By organising street campaigns, and Public Meetings, to engage the membership in activities in the communities where they live, and to engage their inactive workplace members to get involved, both at work and in the community.

**Northumberland Tyne and Wear Area Activist Committee,  
North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **84. Union Recognition**

This Conference calls on Unite the Union to be committed to:

- Winning union recognition agreements in every workplace where it has members and establishing the benefits of such recognition for all its members
- Winning union recognition for its members in workplaces irrespective of the size of such workplaces and the number of members in them
- Ensuring that recognition agreements - in line with previously agreed Unite policy - make provision for its reps and officers to have facility time for their activities representing their members and paid time off to facilitate their participation in all official union events, committees and conferences
- Ensuring that Unite members can have a voice over their work and pay through such agreements and through collective bargaining
- Ensuring that such agreements are actual recognition agreements between employer and the union and not just "memorandums of understanding" or "statements of intent" with their employer or organisations claiming to represent their employer
- Calling on organisations the Labour movement - Labour Party and Trade Union - to set an example to all employers by reaching such agreements with appropriate union and its members that they employ
- Ensuring that such agreements are national, sectoral, regional or local as appropriate to the circumstances
- Ensuring that the legal parties are those defined in the Unite Template Recognition Agreement as the employer and the trade union. In other words the agreement must cover the direct employer and those they directly employ. The criteria must be that the agreement is with the person or organisation who control the hiring and firing of staff
- Calling on all Labour Members of Parliament - who are the sole legal employers of their staff - to set an example to all MPs regardless of party affiliation, to establish direct recognition with Unite the Union or others unions where appropriate for each of the Parliamentary staff teams they employ. All such staff - regardless of their employer's political affiliation - should be afforded the right to trade union recognition
- Calls on the Parliamentary Labour Party to recognise that its responsibility is to ensure that each of its members - as the individual and direct employer - establishes a recognition agreement for the union members they employ and asks the PLP to pressure the MPs of other parties to do the same

**GDPC RISC, North West**

## **Amendment**

Delete second bullet-point which reads:

- “• Winning union recognition for its members in workplaces irrespective of the size of such workplaces and the number of members in them”

**West Yorkshire RTC & Retail Dist (Warehouse) Branch (NE/300/21),  
North East, Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **H Pensions & Retirement**

### **85. Triple Lock**

Conference calls for a campaign, to promote a fair annual pension increase, based on a comparison of 'Retail Price Index' and the 'guarantee minimum increase' at 4% - for the triple lock to be maintained and guaranteed increase from 2½% to 4%

**Retired Members Committee, London and Eastern**

### **86. Pensions Campaign**

Conference is concerned to note that inequalities in the UK pension system means that millions of UK workers are forced into poverty when they retire.

Recent research by the Pensions Policy Institute has shown that the pension wealth gap continues to widen year on year, with a significant number of people retiring with 85% less than the UK average.

Women, in particular especially single parents and those who are divorced, carers, ethnic minorities, the disabled and those in non-traditional employment, including self-employed and multiple job-holders are most at risk from retirement poverty.

Many people in these groups are unable to earn sufficiently through their working lives to be able to save for a comfortable retirement and have to rely far more heavily on the state pension which in the UK is already well below the European average.

The Pensions Policy Institute has stated that:

“The current economic climate is likely to exacerbate the under pensioned gap. High levels of price inflation, particularly on necessities such as home energy costs, food and petrol inevitably affect those on lower incomes the hardest and will have an impact on their ability to save into a pension, leading to greater pension inequalities over the long term.”

Conference calls upon the union to institute a campaign to protect all workers from poverty in retirement.

The campaign should call for:

- The removal of the auto-enrolment earnings (currently £10,000)
- The phasing out of the Lower Earnings Limit
- The lowering of the age threshold to 18
- Those unable to work to State Pension Age because of ill health, caring responsibilities, or long-term unemployment should get early access to an unreduced State Pension, and the eligibility age for Pension Credit should be lowered to mitigate the impact of previous SPA increases

- The government to set out a plan to increase minimum employer contribution rates to help more workers achieve the contribution rates needed to fund a decent retirement

**Finance and Legal RISC, Wales**

## **87. State Pension**

This Conference instructs the National Executive Council to lead a nationwide campaign for a reduction in state pension age.

This is to allow the members and others to enjoy some quality time after many years of contributing to our economy.

Currently anyone starting work at 16 has to work 50 years before retiring and many of these jobs will include high risk of repetitive strain injuries and impacting on mental health and wellbeing.

The reason cited for raising pension age was that people were living longer, this trend has reversed since the pandemic with official figures showing life expectancy now reduced by 3 years for men and women since 2014.

This Conference calls for Unite to make the following demands:

- Lowering full state pension to be payable from 63 years of age.
- Guaranteed minimum pension of not less than 85% of the net living wage.
- Compensation scheme for the WASPI women.
- Additional benefits for those working beyond 63.

**Automotive RISC, Scotland**

## **Amendment**

Amend first bullet-point as follows:

- “• Lowering full state pension for men and women to be payable from 60 years of age.”

In last bullet-point delete “63” and replace with “60”

**Cornwall Retired Members Branch (SW/009999) South West**

## **88. The Basic State Pension.**

Conference congratulates Unite, the National Pensioners Convention, Age UK, and the Labour Party for their successful campaign to retain the triple lock of the State Pension for 2023. The suspension of the triple lock in April 2022, resulted in a 3.1% increase in the State Pension when inflation was 7%, in April, rising to 11% in October. When we were still members of the European Union, the coalition Government introduced legislation which

guaranteed that the basic state pension will rise by a minimum of either 2.5%, the rate of inflation or average earnings growth, stating that this would close the gap between British Pensioners and our continental colleagues. There is no evidence that this has happened.

Conference agrees that the triple lock is no answer to a low State Pension which will never keep up with the rise in average wages, because a similar percentage rise to that of average wages, will always result in the State Pension falling further behind average wages in monetary terms. For example, a 5% increase on the new basic State Pension, currently £185.15 per week, is only a £9.26 per week increase, but a 5% increase for a person who is working, and on £570 per week (£29,640 p.a., an average wage), is £28.50 per week.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to campaign with the National Pensioners Convention, Age UK, and the Labour Party for a basic State Pension of 70% of average earnings, and dispel the myth that, by awarding pensioners with a 10.1% increase in the basic State Pension in April 2023, they have had a larger increase than most people in work.

**Retired Members Committee, East Midlands**

## **89. A Better UK State Pension**

This Conference believes that Unite, which not only represents retired members but also tomorrow's pensioners, should be at the forefront of a campaign to provide a better state pension.

We believe that the UK state pension must be sufficient to meet the needs of a retired population who can no longer rely on secure work or occupational pensions to supplement what is one of the lowest state pensions in the world's developed economies.

**South West Retired Members Committee**

### **Amendment**

In the second paragraph, line 1, delete "sufficient" and replace with "lowered sufficiently"

Add new third paragraph:

"Conference recognises that no two people will be alike and lowering the UK state pension age to 63 will mean that the UK populous can enjoy more time of what is left to them. We note that not everyone may want to retire early, but that for many especially with ailing health conditions the lowering of the pension age will be one less burden for them and therefore calls on the Unite Executive to campaign for this change."

**North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust Branch (LE/7116L ), London and Eastern**

## **90. Occupational Pension Schemes and Death in Service Benefits**

Conference recognises the positive work that has been undertaken to address issues of mental health and striving to remove the stigma attached to discussing such issues and instead to seek help. Suicide remains a prevalent cause of death and particularly for men, with suicide being the biggest cause of death for men under the age of 50.

Conference is therefore alarmed that many occupational pension schemes in the employers in which we organise have specific clauses that prevent or provide trustees the discretion to not pay death in service where the reason for death is suicide. This is a very antiquated view of suicide and these pension schemes have not kept up with the aforementioned positive movement on mental health issues. There can be no reasonable argument that the family and dependents of a member that has committed suicide does not need and are unable to receive the financial support of death in service benefits within an occupational pension scheme.

Conference notes positively that the Unite pension scheme contains no such provision and is therefore leading by example. Conference agrees that union negotiators should:-

- Ascertain the death in service benefits of the occupational pension schemes in the employers that they negotiate
- Where these pension schemes contain express provisions to exclude or provide trustee discretion to exclude death in service provisions for those scheme members that have committed suicide, union negotiators should seek to have these provisions removed from the scheme rules
- Reports will be provided to the Executive Council with regard to the progress with making these changes to schemes that include these detrimental clauses

**Gibraltar Area Activists Committee**

## **91. Retirement Age**

This Conference is appalled at the latest attack by various think tanks & especially the Centre for Social Justice that in future people will have to work until they are 75 years of age. From people that have done little, if any, manual work in their entire lives, it really is galling.

The attempt to frighten people into accepting a longer working life, by saying 75 years should be the norm is setting the agenda for pension age retirement by stealth. 68 is better than 75; 70 is better than 75 and so on and so forth. They use the argument of cost, it cannot be financed. Yet they provide little evidence to support this argument.

In the North East and other parts of the country, where hard manual work shortens the lives of many who did not live to see pension age or had short retirements. Who wants bus drivers, construction workers, health workers and lots of other types of workers, facing a lifetime of work with little reward at the end?

If people have to work until 75 years where will young people find jobs?

Artificial intelligence will wipe out thousands of jobs. What a bleak future for younger generations.



On that basis this Conference calls on the Unite Executive Council to:-

To lobby UNITE sponsored MPs and the Labour Leadership to ensure the extension of retirement age never sees the light of day.

**Retired Members Committee, North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **92. Unused Workplace Pensions Contributions**

Conference believes it is inherently unfair that so many workers on low paid are not able to take advantage of a workplace pension because they are paid too little to afford to do so. This in turn creates future pensioner poverty. The state is effectively subsidising low wages by accepting this deferred financial burden in retirement, and future tax payers are being expected to pick up the tab.

Employee contributions too, and payment of a workplace pension, should not be a matter of simple affordability on the part of the individual employee. Employer contributions to workplace pension schemes should be regarded as part of an overall employment reward package, which is paid in exchange for work undertaken. It should not be kept by the employer because workers don't earn enough to be able to pay into it themselves.

Employers' unused contributions ought to be compulsory, and should be used appropriately for the worker who has undertaken the associated employment. Conference instructs the Executive Council to examine the issue of unutilised employer pension contributions (where a worker opts out of a pension scheme), with a view to developing appropriate policy and campaigns.

**Finance and Legal RISC, North West**

## **93. Lifelong Learning for Older People**

There is an urgent need to increase the availability of vocational training particularly in relation to digitalization and new technology to enable older people to remain active.

Access to information is increasingly available only by means of online services and so training in digital skill is imperative.

The growing importance of the internet and other digital services and platforms are an area that provides specific challenges in later life.

Older people have, in general, been slow on the uptake in the use of information and communication technologies and this may exclude them from important things such as personal contacts, banking services and booking information.

Lifelong learning in health is also an important element in the prevention of loss of autonomy, due to age, being associated with the decline of physical and mental health, which can lead to an exclusion from mainstream society.

Therefore, acquiring skills in digital technology can help older people to maintain a healthy lifestyle and lessen the risk of social isolation.

Conference believes that ongoing education throughout life will help individuals to stay mentally and physically well and encourages interaction with the younger generation and to play a full role in society.

Therefore, Conference calls on the Executive Council to design and implement a series of education courses exclusively for retired members.

Unite supports lifelong learning and an education program empathising the needs of retired members, especially in the digital field, will enhance and support the needs of our retired members.

**Retired Members Committee, West Midlands**

# **I Rights for Workers and their Unions**

## **94. Repeal of Anti-Trade Union Laws and prevention of future anti trade union Legislation**

This Conference notes that for the past 13 years Conservative led governments have introduced anti trade union legislation and are introducing more anti trade union laws.

This not only stifles effective trade unionism, but also weakens our democracy and stops workers rightfully challenging employers

This Conference resolves that Unite:

- Puts pressure on future United Kingdom and devolved governments to repeal this legislation
- Lobbies the TUC to co-ordinate strike action if new anti trade union legislation is passed

**Education NISC**

## **95. Support Striking Workers**

Conference notes:

We already have some of the toughest anti-trade union laws in Europe and now the Conservative government has announced new anti-strike legislation, bringing in a minimum service level bill which will mean unions could be sued and workers such as nurses, bus and train drivers could be sacked in future if they go on strike.

We welcome the Labour Party's response that any new anti-strike legislation introduced would be repealed.

We also welcome the proposals set out in Labour's Employment Rights Green paper, 'New Deal for Working People', where Labour commits within 100 days of taking office to:

- Repeal anti-trade union legislation, including the Trade Union Act 2016,
- Use public procurement to support good work
- Oversee the biggest wave of insourcing of public services for a generation
- Fair Pay Agreements will be negotiated through sectoral collective bargaining
- Give all workers from day one rights on the job
- Ban zero hours contracts and give workers predictable contracts
- Outlaw fire and rehire
- Close gender, ethnicity, disability pay gaps

However, our members find themselves in the middle of a cost of living and energy crisis, with possibly two more years of Tory mismanagement of the economy. We have inflation running at historically high levels, which disproportionately affects the lowest paid workers. The Bank of England Governor, Andrew Bailey acknowledging this has stated "Inflation is

bad for the least well off generally and this inflation is particularly bad. The reason is that it is concentrated on energy and food – these are the essentials of living.”

Strong trade unions are vital to advance the interests of working people. Workers are fighting back, taking industrial action to protect their pay, terms, conditions, workplaces and public services from being destroyed. Workers cannot wait until the next General Election for a Labour government, they need to act now.

We applaud the thousands of Unite members across all Regions, Nations and Sectors, fighting back and winning.

In other unions, too, many workers have taken and continue to take industrial action, fighting to protect pay, terms, conditions and services such as our NHS, railways and mail. We send solidarity to all unions and members involved in these disputes.

Conference reaffirms:

- support for Labour’s commitment to repeal the new anti-strike legislation
- support for Labour’s Employment Rights Green Paper and welcomes the commitment from the Labour leadership to its full implementation within 100 days of taking office

Conference resolves:

- to call on the TUC to organise coordinated solidarity action if any union has this anti-strike legislation used against them
- to do everything possible to ensure all wings of the Labour party, including those who sit on the front bench, demonstrate unequivocal support and show solidarity with striking workers by joining them on the picket line, standing shoulder to shoulder with them in their struggles.
- to call on the TUC to mount a coordinated campaign to ensure full implementation of the Employment Rights Green Paper, should there be any sign of delay

**London and Eastern Regional Committee**

## **96. Unite to Protect the Right to Strike**

This Conference stands opposed to the 2023 Tory trade union laws, proposing ‘minimum service levels’ during strikes, and all anti-trade union laws designed to prevent workers fighting back against the cost-of-living squeeze and attacks on terms and conditions at work. The Tories put the profits of big companies and cuts to public services before the conditions of workers, customers and service users.

The scale of opposition to the Tories and their big business friends has been immense. The large number of strikes organised by Unite in workplaces, plus regional and national strikes on London Underground, the railways, the NHS, education, etc., have shown the depth of

anger against a system which refuses to give workers living wages. The fantastic demonstration in London of 20,000 CWU members in Royal Mail gives a glimmer of what could be achieved by a campaign against these proposed laws.

Unite cannot allow these laws to pass without a fight, and even if they do become law, must strive to make them unworkable and repealed. Unite should call on the TUC to launch a campaign of meetings, rallies, demonstrations and industrial action against these undemocratic laws. Local trades union councils should organise meetings and rallies involving trade union branches, workplace reps and all those opposed to the laws.

Nationally, this Conference believes Unite should call on the TUC to organise a mass demonstration against the proposed laws, to be held at a weekend. Furthermore, we should call on the TUC to coordinate action, in the form of a 24-hour general strike, to highlight the opposition to the proposed laws, and to mobilise the maximum numbers of working-class people against the Tories.

**Barts Health NHS (LE/7384L), London and Eastern**

## **97. Fighting Anti-Trade Union Laws**

This Conference stands opposed to the 2023 Tory trade union laws, proposing ‘minimum service levels’ during strikes, and all anti-trade union laws designed to prevent workers fighting back against the cost-of-living squeeze and attacks on terms and conditions at work. The Tories put the profits of big companies and cuts to public services before the conditions of workers, customers and service users.

The scale of opposition to the Tories and their big business friends has been immense. The large number of strikes organised by Unite in workplaces, plus regional and national strikes on London Underground, the railways, the NHS, education, etc., have shown the depth of anger against a system which refuses to give workers living wages. The fantastic demonstration in London of 20,000 CWU members in Royal Mail gives a glimmer of what could be achieved by a campaign against these proposed laws.

Unite cannot allow these laws to pass without a fight, and even if they do become law, must strive to make them unworkable and repealed. Unite should call on the TUC to launch a campaign of meetings, rallies, demonstrations and industrial action against these undemocratic laws. Local trades union councils should organise meetings and rallies involving trade union branches, workplace reps and all those opposed to the laws.

Nationally, this Conference believes Unite should call on the TUC to organise a mass demonstration against the proposed laws, to be held at a weekend. Furthermore, we should call on the TUC to coordinate action, in the form of a 24-hour general strike, to highlight the opposition to the proposed laws, and to mobilise the maximum numbers of working-class people against the Tories.

The Tories want to neuter trade unions but we must get rid of the Tories.

**Waltham Forest Council Branch, (LE/1228), London and Eastern**

## **98. Anti-Union Laws:**

Conference re-affirms its policy of opposition to all anti-union laws, as adopted at the 2021 Policy Conference: to campaign for the repeal of all anti-union laws; to defy the anti-union laws through organised action if necessary; to rally to the aid of any union targeted by the anti-union laws; to take the lead in campaigning for the repeal of all anti-union laws if the TUC fails to initiate such a campaign.

Conference notes with concern the lack of progress in implementing the policy agreed at the 2021 conference, especially given threats of further anti-union laws by the Tories and the impact of the anti-union laws on strike action in response to the cost-of-living crisis, e.g. strikes prevented by the 50% threshold or called off because of threats of legal challenges.

Conference therefore resolves to instruct the national Executive Committee to:

- ensure that campaigning against the anti-union laws is an item on the agenda of every meeting of the national Executive Committee.
- ensure that Unite produces hard-copy and online educational materials explaining the need for the repeal of all anti-union laws and explaining Unite policy on this issue, for circulation to all members.
- encourage campaigning against the anti-union laws by all levels of our union, from national Executive Council to local branches.
- approach other unions with similar policies on the anti-union laws with a view to holding a national demonstration for the repeal of, and defiance of, all anti-union laws.
- use its position as Labour's biggest trade union affiliate to campaign for Labour Party conference to re-affirm existing policy for the repeal of all anti-union laws and for inclusion of this policy in the next Labour general election manifesto, and to seek to work with other Labour-affiliated unions to achieve these goals.

**CYNFP Glasgow/Lanarkshire Branch (SC/164/403), Scotland**

## **99. Extension of EU Legislation until 2026**

Conference believes that the Union should adopt the policy of, and campaigns for, a full Extension of the retention of EU laws and legislation until 2026. This will allow government to reach relevant agreements and / or alternative legislative provision, which will ensure the fullest protection of workers and their associated rights.

**Civil Air Transport NISC**

## **100. Brexit Freedoms Bill**

Conference understands that the UK Government is intending to push ahead with its so called “Brexit Freedoms Bill” otherwise known as the “Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. Apparently 3,800 pieces of legislation will be reviewed covering the areas of employment rights, health and safety regulations, environmental protection and consumer protection.

Ministers will be able to revoke, restate or update retained EU law without proper parliamentary oversight and any retained law that is not specifically addressed by the end of 2023 would automatically expire under a ‘sunset clause’.

If the Bill becomes law important employment rights and health and safety rights are at risk.

Conference calls on the Executive Council to continue to campaign to stop the Bill becoming law forming alliances with environmental and consumer protection organisations.

**CYW and Not for Profit Sector Edinburgh and Forth Valley Branch (SC/162/403), Scotland**

## **101. Unite and Europe**

“Conference understands that the UK Government is intending to push ahead with its so called “Brexit Freedoms Bill” otherwise known as the “Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill. Apparently 3,800 pieces of legislation will be reviewed covering the areas of employment rights, health and safety regulations, environmental protection and consumer protection.

Ministers will be able to revoke, restate or update retained EU law without proper parliamentary oversight and any retained law that is not specifically addressed by the end of 2023 would automatically expire under a ‘sunset clause’.

If the Bill becomes law important employment rights and health and safety rights are at risk.

Conference calls on the Executive Council to continue to campaign to stop the Bill becoming law forming alliances with environmental and consumer protection organisations.”

Conference further believes that the ‘Brexit Freedom Bill’ underlines the inherently and necessarily anti working class nature of the Brexit project and will therefore couple campaigning against the Bill with campaigning for the closest possible links between the UK and the EU, including the membership of the European Single Market, and with campaigning for the UK to re-join the EU. Unite should call on the TUC to support this campaigning as well.

**Community Youth and Not for Profit RISC, Scotland**

## **102. Zero Hour Contracts**

The Conference instructs Unite to campaign with the TUC, Labour Party and Government to abolish all zero hours contracts and all variants of zero hours contracts.

These zero hours contracts are demoralising to the post holders and their families and create nothing but 2 tiers of employment within the workplace in any sector. Zero hours contracts do not provide stability or a guaranteed salary which prevents those people on those contracts from getting mortgages, paying debts or providing regular monetary structure and a reliable income with which to flourish.

**Service Industry RISC, West Midlands**



## **J Social Action**

### **103. Energy Costs Crisis**

Conference notes that increasing fuel poverty and the cost of living crisis is devastating working class communities across the UK. Conference believes that galloping energy prices are a huge contributor and are frankly completely out of control. Conference is clear that the private market has failed and that its time to take control of our energy requirements through public control and ownership.

Conference is aware that National Energy Action figures in December 2022 highlighting that 81% of people across the UK say they will ration energy, while 55% are already rationing hot water, and 13% are reducing use of medical equipment; from April, 8.4 million UK households will be in fuel poverty.

Conference further notes that an energy bill based on average use is likely to be around £3,000 from April 2023 and will have more than doubled in 18 months yet the UK establishment and media consistently portray a narrative to undermine workers seeking fair pay rises to cope with inflation.

Conference believes that it's the lowest paid workers and all those dependent on benefits that will be hardest hit by the increase in energy costs. Conference believes piecemeal UK government action is grossly inadequate.

Conference understands that pay is being cut in real terms. Conference is clear only union organised workplaces with collective industrial power win decent pay increases and building the union at the workplace, embedded in communities is the way to fightback.

Conference is calling for the union to maintain the campaign that seeks to restrain boardroom greed not workers' pay, and as part of that we demand:

- Public ownership and control of energy and utilities
- Immediate effective price controls on the cost of energy to consumers
- Sector-wide fair pay agreements and statutory sectoral collective bargaining
- Raising the minimum wage to at least £15 an hour now;

**Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Process and Textiles NISC**

## **104. Home line Price Freeze**

This Conference notes that:

The Unite Swindon Community Branch has started a campaign, alongside the local Labour party, to ensure that the cost of vital Home Line service used by vulnerable residents is capped during the current cost of living crisis.

Home line is an essential service to many and has considerable benefits to residents' safety. This service acts as a lifeline to vulnerable residents across the UK. To many this is their only way of accessing emergency help should they suffer a fall or injury.

Every resident has a right to a safe and secure home, irrespective of their financial situation.

By utilising this service residents contribute to a financial saving for the council, reducing the need for greater and vastly more expensive service provision such as residential care. Each council has a moral and legal duty to care for the vulnerable within their borough. However the cost of this service varies widely across councils, with some subsidising the costs and others not. Unsubsidised service costs individual users in excess of £33 per month. With CPI measured inflation predicted to hit over 13% in the near future this service is becoming unaffordable for many.

Our members have spoken of vulnerable people having to choose between paying for this vital service or eating.

Home line should be free to as part of the NHS as it can help to reduce "the need for greater and more expensive care".

This Conference calls on Unite to:

- Ensure that all Labour run Local Authorities develop a plan to freeze the current cost of Home line until such a time that this council recognises the cost of living crisis we are currently in has abated.
- Ensure that all Labour run Local Authorities develop a plan for a longer term subsidy for this service ensuring the affordability of the service for all.
- Encourage all Unite sponsored Labour Councillors to raise this issue at full council calling on a cost freeze and a long term subsidy.
- Give physical support to this campaign by encouraging all members to become involved and attend lobbies, demonstrations etc.
- Encourage all Unite Branches to support this campaign financial where possible.

**Wiltshire Area Activist Committee, South West**

## **105. Economy and Poverty**

This Conference is saddened by the devastating state of the country's economy which continues to suction the nation into poverty and hunger.

More and more people continue to rely on foodbanks which are already overwhelmed, yet the Government can afford to fund war in other countries. It feels like bread winner feeding a neighbours family leaving his/her own starving.

This Conference believes that:

- The government must prioritise its nation by diverting finances towards paying its nation decent wages that match the wage.
- Cut funding wars in other countries instead to invest in our Health and Social Care which is at the brink of collapse.

**North West London Branch (LE/9708M), London and Eastern**

### **Amendment**

Delete first bullet-point and replace with:

- “• The Government must ensure all workers earn sufficient to have a decent standard of living, by improving collective bargaining rights, increasing the national minimum wage to £15ph and reviewing the mechanisms for setting public sector pay.”

Add new third bullet-point at the end to read

- “• Our Social Security System has been undermined over many years so that it is punitive and does not provide sufficient to live on. Unite resolves to support the Guarantee Our Essentials campaign, called by a coalition of charities, and to call for a triple lock on social security benefits to ensure that people who are out of work are not forced into destitution but instead can live with dignity and wellbeing.”

**North London Voluntary Sector (LE/785) Branch, London and Eastern**

## **106. Re-build and protect the NHS**

This Conference records its anger at the worst crisis in the UK NHS's 75-years existence:

- Record difficulty getting GP appointments, dental care and emergency or elective hospital care.
- Years of funding below the rising costs from an ageing population, increasingly expensive pharmaceutical and other treatments, decaying buildings and general inflation.

- Years of privatisation, including Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) programmes, sucking out huge profits that should be used for patient care and NHS reinvestment.
- Privatisation and chronic under-funding of social care.
- Growing inequality and poverty in society worsening health.
- The government's woeful mishandling of the covid pandemic and nepotistic awarding of contracts, adding to these long-term problems and resulting in national economic crisis.

Conference instruct the Executive Council to continue and urgently step up NHS campaigning, based on our 2022 policy. Campaign material should call for these demands:

- A fully publicly funded and owned NHS and care system free at the point of use.
- Massively increase recruitment and improve retention of health workers.
- Co-ordinate industrial action by NHS workers with non-NHS workers' industrial action to maximise pressure on the government.
- Abolish student tuition fees and restore student bursaries at a living level.
- Scrap all UK health charges, including prescription charges in England.
- Reverse all NHS privatisation. Scrap PFI and LIFT and cancel all the debts.
- Bring all outsourced workers and services in-house on permanent contracts.
- Nationalise the private health care sector and integrate its facilities into the NHS.
- Democratic control by elected and accountable committees, including NHS workers and users.

Conference instructs Executive Council to approach the TUC and other unions to jointly organise a national demonstration on the NHS in early autumn, in preparation for further industrial action.

Conference notes the Labour Party leadership does not support this programme and ignores the NHS policy passed at its 2022 conference. We instruct Executive Council to use our funds to campaign to rebuild and protect the NHS, and for a society that ends inequality, poverty, pollution, poor housing, and poor nutrition that underlie so much ill-health.

#### **Nottinghamshire NHS Branch (EM/NG32), East Midlands**

#### **Amendment**

First paragraph, after final bullet-point, insert new bullet-point:

- “• The Labour led Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, in 2021, agreed a Co-operation Agreement, which included moving towards the creation of a National Care Service for Wales which is free at the point of need. The aim: To better integrate health and care and work towards parity of recognition and reward for health and care workers. They commissioned an Expert Group to identify and report on how to achieve the aim. UNITE Retired Members in Wales welcomed the publication of the report of the Expert Group: Towards a National Care and Support Service for Wales.

Elderly Care Services are at the point of collapse and as a result NHS health care is under pressure which cannot be allowed to continue."

Second paragraph, first bullet-point, after "funded and owned" add "fully joined up"

Second paragraph, first bullet-point, after "point of use" add "across all of the nations and regions of the UK."

**Retired Members Committee, Wales.**

## **107. Care in the Community**

Conference recognises that Unite the Union supports our members in social care and call on this Unite policy conference to continue this fight.

UK Governments underfunding of Local Authorities has caused a funding crisis in the care sector, which has a detrimental effect on our members as staff are not replaced when they leave, adequate training for the profession is not being implemented and supplies and equipment to safely care for families loved ones is often inferior and sub-standard.

The media, rather than simply calling out providers and highlighting the inadequacies in the sector, should hold UK Governments to account for the underfunding, which forces Local Authorities to outsource care to private companies.

Conference reaffirms Unite's commitment to our members in the social care sector by challenging UK Governments when they look to make changes to current care provision which will lead to privatisation of service and to adequately fund Local Government in order the care sector can receive the funds it needs.

**Disabled Members Committee, Scotland**

### **Amendment**

After final paragraph, add following:

"We support the aims of the Unite "All Hearts Campaign" in Scotland, and resolve to campaign for the following:

A publicly funded and publicly owned National Care Service in all the nations that we organise in, developed and delivered in conjunction with local authorities and with recognised Trade Unions

A minimum of £15 per hour for social care workers

Collective bargaining covering terms and conditions across the sector, including paid breaks, occupational sick pay, and adequate training."

**CYW & NFP NISC**

## **108. No Cuts in Jobs and Services – Defend Local Government Jobs and Services**

This Conference notes:

- That local government faces a funding crisis, with England facing an estimated collective funding shortfall of £2.4bn in 2023.
- Between 2010 and 2020, the Institute for Government estimates that local government funding fell by £15bn in real terms.
- That Labour run councils, far from resisting, have been to the fore in implementing cuts and carrying attacks on our jobs, terms and conditions.

This Conference believes:

- That without a serious fight-back local government faces an existential crisis under the Tories.
- That crocodile tears from axe wielding Labour councils and councillors are not enough
- A mass movement is required bringing together the whole labour movement, anti-cuts campaigns and those few councillors prepared to fight in order to save local government services.

This Conference is committed

- In its opposition to all cuts to jobs and services no matter who is carrying them.
- To rejecting all forms of privatisation and outsourcing.
- To call on Labour councils to stop carrying out cuts, using borrowing powers and reserves to continue funding services and to buy time to build a mass campaign to win back funding stolen by the Tories through over 12 years of austerity.
- To call on our executive to ensure that any council/ors carrying out or voting in favour of attacks on our members' jobs and services receive no funding from our union.
- All RISCs, working with NISCs to develop a robust strategy to resist and reverse attacks on workers and communities.

**Greenwich Local Government Branch (LE/2050), London and Eastern**

## **109. Cashless Society**

Conference calls on Unite to endorse and support the campaign for a Universal Service Obligation to be introduced by government for cash and in doing so putting on UK banks a legal obligation to provide cash on the same footing at the USO does currently for water, electricity, post and more recently broadband.

The Bank of England's 2022 survey suggested that 65% of UK consumers use some cash and need regular access to ATMs. Currently it is not illegal for shops, hotels and other outlets to refuse to take cash and with over 2.4 million citizens aged 65 plus reliant on cash for essential payments such as bills and food we need some government intervention.

It is not only pensioners though. Many low paid workers, disabled workers and others on benefit may not have the banking facility to work with the cashless system and rely on cash payments to control their budgets and expenditure. Citizens in this category are often disenfranchised in a cashless environment. Buying a coffee for a friend, buying a drink at a gig or just getting on a bus to the high street are all prohibited if you are not using a digital payment.

The printing and design of UK bank notes and the maintenance of our ATM machines are roles currently performed by our Unite members and as we sleep walk into a cashless society our jobs and manufacturing sites are at risk.

But it is not just about our member's jobs. Digital transactions leave a footprint, and as citizens our purchases and our behaviours are monitored and there is a total lack of privacy as we go about our day to day work and social interaction.

Conference supports this campaign and seeks support from the Executive Council and the political team to put pressure on the UK government to deliver the USO for cash.

**GPM & IT NISC**

## **110. Housing 2023**

Conference notes with grave concern the continuing UK housing crisis with vast income and wealth inequality here in the UK exacerbating housing costs and housing shortages. An unregulated housing market is pricing key workers and local people out of decent housing in many areas and forcing more families into a cycle of frequent moves, overcrowding and an increasing risk of homelessness. Expensive overcrowded, unhealthy homes, are just a few streets away from luxury second homes, empty flats and mansions and this represents a National disgrace. Contrast of Grenville Tower with much of Kensington is rolled out across the land.

Mortgages and rents commonly take 40 - 50% of peoples incomes. The UK has some of the worst housing stock in Europe. The average new UK home has shrunk to almost half the size of those built in the 1920's. We have no rent controls and little protection for tenants. Massive profits are made from house building and land ownership and profits are only limited by capital's cycle of boom and bust.

Until the 1980's, public house building programmes ensured continuing high levels of new houses being built despite capitalism's business cycle. The Squatters movement deterred empty housing. Tenant's associations and rent controls limited housing costs. Thatcherism criminalised resistance. The interest of finance and speculation now completely control housing provision.

People's taxes subsidise landlords' profits. Many areas experience high levels of unoccupied housing. It is estimated that at any one time there are now around 600,000 empty homes in England, and that excludes second homes. Air B&B and similar business models go unregulated and have rapidly cut houses for rent in holiday areas. House prices are now 10

to 20 times people's incomes - excessive profiteering is at the heart of the housebuilding industry and the speculative market in land for housing.

Conference resolves to campaign for:

- The introduction of a public house building programme, providing at least 50% of new homes for rent.
- The introduction of compulsory purchase powers for land selected for social housing, with compensation limited to ten times its agricultural value.
- The introduction of legislation that establishes affordable and fair rents.
- Planning limitations on the extent of Air B&B's, second homes and appropriate taxation bringing Air B&B returns back in line with returns from lets.
- A massive programme to upgrade and insulate existing homes and the removal of VAT on all house building materials and labour.
- The introduction of a schedule of escalating charges discouraging houses and flats remaining empty for more than a year.

#### **Food Drink and Agriculture RISC, South West**

### **111. Housing Policy**

For decades the policy of successive UK governments has been to increase the role of private capital in social housing provision. Since the global financial crisis, financial institutions such as the giant asset managers BlackRock, have been expanding into rented housing on a global scale. This has driven further focalisation of our social housing. A pattern of rising rents, rampant service charges, and shocking disrepairs have resulted.

Conference calls on Unite to campaign for:

- A return to fully grant funded social housing accountable to local communities and residents. Councils should be funded to deliver 150,000 new social rent homes each year, including 100,000 council homes.
- A massive programme of investment to bring social housing up to a high standard and to retrofit fire safety and green energy saving updates with a shift from outsourcing to using Direct Labour Organisations.
- Councils to adopt a 'needs based' policy to fight housing cuts in line with Unite policy.
- Public landlords to be held democratically accountable, with support provided by Unite for representative resident organisations.
- Local authority and HAs to act on the Grenfell Inquiry recommendations to devise PEEPs for residents, and for government to make this a mandatory requirement.



- Planning authorities to use their powers to ensure buildings are safe and prevent the construction of more single fire stairway buildings. We also call on the government to ban single staircase tower blocks.
- No 'economic evictions', with a moratorium on evictions during the crisis.
- The government's long-term pledge to ban unfair no fault 'section 21' evictions to be implemented immediately.
- A reintroduction of the pre-1989 position of secure tenancies with rent controls.
- Support for the call by housing campaigns including the Social Housing Action Campaign and New Economic Foundation for all landlords to implement a rent and service charge freeze.
- Labour to support the rent and service charge freeze.

**Housing Workers LE/1111, London and Eastern**

## **112. Benefits for Mixed Aged Couples**

Conference notes that changes to benefit regulations for couples where one is over State Pension Age and the other under, now effectively treats the older partner as if working age, preventing claims from low-income mixed aged couples for Pensions Credit (PC). Instead, these couples have recourse to Universal Credit (UC).

However, at £121.15 per week, the UC rate for a couple is over £60 per week lower than the Guaranteed Pension Credit rate for a single pensioner (£182.60). This is an absurd situation which leads many mixed aged couples facing a choice between desperate poverty and separation, often entitled to neither PC nor UC (due to the Pensioners State Pension exceeding their UC level) and therefore ineligible for cost of living support targeted at recipients of means-tested benefits. We call on the Government to redress this situation, either by reinstating access to PC for mixed-aged couples or by introducing a Pensioners Premium to UC.

To initiate this aim Conference calls upon Unite the Union along with any other interested parties, including National Pensioners Convention and the Labour Party to lobby the Government to change the situation.

**Coventry and Warwickshire Area Activist Committee, West Midlands**

### **113. Teaching Trade Unionism in Schools**

Conference notes:

- The age demographic of trade unionists has increased in recent years, with very limited knowledge among younger people about the purpose and benefits of collective organisation and representation in the workplace.

Conference recognises:

- The excellent work carried out by Unite in Schools and the work of our Community Coordinators and activists in attempting to take the message of trade unionism to secondary school students.
- However, we do not have the resources to be able to reach the millions of students across our Nations.

Conference therefore resolves:

- To lobby an incoming Labour government to introduce onto the curriculum of all secondary school students, structured lessons about the role of trade unions in the workplace and the positive force for good that they represent in wider society.

**Passenger RISC, London and Eastern**

### **114. Teaching Trade Unionism in Schools**

Conference notes:

- The age demographic of trade unionists has increased in recent years, with very limited knowledge among younger people about the purpose and benefits of collective organisation and representation in the workplace.

Conference recognises:

- The excellent work carried out by Unite in Schools and the work of our Community Coordinators and activists in attempting to take the message of trade unionism to secondary school students.
- However, we do not have the resources to be able to reach the millions of students across our Nations.

Conference therefore resolves:

- To lobby an incoming Labour government to introduce onto the curriculum of all secondary school students, structured lessons about the role of trade unions in the workplace and the positive force for good that they represent in wider society.

**London and Eastern Area Activist Committee**

## **115. Access to Justice**

This Conference believes that all residents of the UK should have justice under the law, regardless of their financial means. Without practical mechanisms in place to support people, unlawful acts by Governments, local authorities, landlords, employers and others go unchecked.

We note that Legal Aid was established in 1949, and covered 80% of the population and a wide range of areas of law, including many civil issues. It was a pillar of the welfare state.

It has since been cut dramatically and now covers very few areas of law and is very heavily means tested.

Independent advice centres (e.g. Citizens' Advice, Law Centres, and other groups supporting local communities) have lost the ability to secure legal aid income and are reliant on grants and discretionary contracts. Services have contracted and closed as a result. Many law firms have withdrawn from legal aid altogether, leaving "advice deserts" where people have no access to any legal support. Civil legal aid fees have not increased in 30 years. Funding for casework carried out by advice workers has also reduced, leaving many people without access to the support they need to challenge wrong decisions and to secure income they are entitled to.

Lack of investment in access to justice has undermined job security and terms and conditions for workers, leading to skills shortages.

There is now a perfect storm, with a dwindling pool of specialist lawyers and advice workers able to run complex social welfare law cases and a huge demand for help.

This is a collective issue as well as affecting individuals – tackling disrepair, for example, can benefit a whole estate, and ensuring that people get the social security payments that they are entitled to, improves the local economy.

Conference call on Unite's Executive Council to mount a campaign to:

- Lobby for a future Labour Government to create a legal obligation on local authorities to fund access to independent legal advice, casework and representation for residents in social welfare law which covers the range of needs from initial advice through to representation at court and Tribunal.
- Lobby for a future Labour Government to set aside funding to develop a scheme to enable people to train as specialist social welfare law practitioners, to fill the skills gap and support the development of new services.
- Demand that the Government increases investment in Legal Aid to extend the areas of law and ensure access to those who need assistance.
- Support our members in the advice and legal sectors taking action to demand increased funding and decent terms and conditions.

**North London Voluntary Sector (LE/785) Branch, London and Eastern**

## 116. Sex Work

Sex work takes place via phone, webcam, stripping, pole-dancing, modelling and porn and from escort agencies, flats, streets, parks, saunas, massage parlours, peep shows, BDSM venues, private parties and home.

Selling sex itself is not illegal, but many laws criminalise associated activities that leave sex workers vulnerable and deprived of basic rights.

When sex workers receive criminal records for offences relating to their work, it makes it harder for them to find other employment.

Sex workers are increasingly organising alongside other workers within the trade union movement.

A number of international human rights organisations support the full decriminalization of sex work including Amnesty, Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women; HRW; UNAIDS; the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health; TGEU; ILGA-Europe and the WHO.

Unite believes:

- While it is gendered, stigmatised and often precarious work, sex work is work that pays the rent, bills, and puts food on the table for thousands. This is especially the case for LGBT+ people who work while unhoused and experiencing exclusion from healthcare.
- Current laws means that sex workers are unable to legally work together to increase safety, and are discouraged from reporting crimes for fear of being arrested themselves.
- People have the right to work in the sex industry without threat of criminal sanctions or police harassment. We need other workers to support sex workers in their demands for workplace safety, rights and dignity.
- Decriminalisation means sex workers can report suspected cases of trafficking to police without self-incrimination.

Unite resolves:

- To support the full decriminalisation of sex work.
- To support the unionisation of sex workers and to respect their demands for labour rights and to improve their working conditions.
- To campaign against any attempt to introduce the criminalisation of clients.

**Greater Manchester Social Action Branch (NW/389), North West**

## **117. Equality, Fairness for All and Freedom of Expression**

Conference notes that Unite should rightly be proud of its record for advocating equality and fairness for all, particularly in speaking out against oppression and discrimination and seeking to defend the rights of minorities. Quite justifiably the rationale for Unite's activities and advocacy in this area is expressed as an object of the union in rule 2.1.6.

Notwithstanding our successes to date, much more remains to be done in the public arena and defence of basic human rights.

Freedom of speech and freedom of expression, of individuals, groups, organisations and the press is a standard we ought to be able to avail of in any modern democracy, in a pluralist society like the UK and like Ireland. Unite should always strive to prevent any form of gagging individuals or groups, of the press and media, and of organisations by restrictions imposed by government or powerful institutions, indeed gagging by anybody corporate, even by other individuals, seeking to suppress the freedom of expression and speech of others with whom they disagree. These freedoms apply to all means of communication and expression: speech, written, pictorial whether physical or via social media, electronic communications, or radio waves.

That said, the message expressed or spoken cannot ever be permitted to demonise, deprecate, denigrate, objectify or make others feel less than human or feel that they belong to a lower category of human being, for whatever reason. Freedom of expression and freedom of speech must always be balanced against the rights of others so as not to cause insult or injury, must be respectful and dignified. Individuals and groups, whether or not capable of being designated by gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, no-faith or faith all share their common humanity and therefore all equally deserving to be held in the same high esteem. This applies generally, not just where jobs, pay and conditions are concerned.

Conference therefore calls on Unite to:

- Campaign for the right to freedom of expression and of speech.
- Lobby government with a view to establishing a charter for freedom of expression and speech, with the proper, definitive protections in place and enshrined in law to protect against abuse of these freedoms which could result in insult or injury.

**Thales Branch (NI/B0011), Ireland**

## **K Political & Labour party**

### **118. Unite Labour Party Affiliation**

Unite, along with many other unions in the UK, has always been affiliated to the Labour Party and has a proud record of campaigning for Labour governments to bring about change for working people.

The disgusting response of the tory government to the current cost of living crisis, the emergency in the NHS, the huge rise in poverty and inequality, etc., demonstrate only too clearly why it is essential that working people in the UK have a Labour Party that can represent their interests rather than the interests of the out of touch elites.

Unite, along with many other unions, has rightly criticised the current Labour leadership for failing to make it clear the party stands firmly on the side of working people during this crisis. Banning Shadow Ministers and Labour MPs from standing alongside striking workers is disgraceful at a time when working people need to know that their party is with them, on their side, and offering a real alternative.

This is not 1997 and the UK doesn't need a re-run of Blairism, we need a party that is not afraid of offering real and radical change, that is not afraid to stand with workers in their struggles to get through, and which has the competence and courage to challenge the Tory's head on.

But despite the many frustrations that Unite members have Unite cannot abandon its commitment to the Labour Party at this critical moment

Conference therefore resolves for Unite to:

- Maintain its full involvement in all levels and activities of the Labour Party while making it very clear that the current line and appalling weak policy agenda is unacceptable and must change – taking Unite policy in all areas as our starting point
- Campaign within the Labour Party for a commitment to replace the First Past The Post (FPTP) voting system with a fairer proportional voting system – FPTP has delivered decades of Tory governments on nothing but a minority of the vote

**Aerospace and Shipbuilding RISC, East Midlands**

### **Amendment**

At the end, after second bullet point, add new bullet-points:

- Work closely with the Labour Party to further develop and enact its Green Paper "A New Deal for Working People" within the first 100 days of an incoming Labour government.
- Work closely with Labour to ensure that Unite's policy and strategy 'Manufacturing Matters' remains a central plank of the Labour manifesto. Delivering an industrial strategy to meet the needs of workers and industry across our nations with a plan to

support and invest in our industrial recovery, rebuilding and transforming our industrial heartlands to meet the demands of a cleaner, greener world that leaves no workers or community behind in a just transition for both.

**Regional Committee, London & Eastern**

## **L Union Administration & Membership Services**

### **119. Internal get me home safely policy**

Conference recognises that many workers, especially women, BAEM, LGBT+ and workers with disabilities are increasingly worried about their safety travelling to and from work at night.

Conference calls upon the union to adopt a gold standard internal Get Me Home Safely policy for Unite staff, contracted staff and activists when travelling on union business or working during late and unsocial hours.

This Conference is fully aware of the increased reports of gender-based violence on our streets and on public transport. To combat this, last year Unite launched our Get Me Home Safely (GMHS) campaign which calls on employers to extend their duty of care to staff to include provisions of safe free travel to and from work and for local and national governments increase and improve public transport so as to make it safer for women and all people in our communities.

This campaign has now grown to global levels, engaging sisters unions from across the globe who have committed to campaigning on the principles of Unite's Get Me Home Safely campaign. A few employers have signed Get Me Home Safely agreements, but many more are yet to commit.

Conference then concludes as a trade union and centrally as a progressive employer, Unite the union must set the standard for all employers on what a GMHS policy is. As our activists go out and lobby their employers to adopt Get Me Home Safely agreements, they must be able to proudly say Unite is leading by example.

This Conference is committed to working proactively to eradicate gender-based and all forms of violence in the workplace and in the wider community and therefore calls on the union to develop an internal GMHS committee made up of GMHS leads and staff reps to develop a proactive and progressive GMHS policy which includes:

- An internal mechanism for staff and union activists to 'check in' with the union when travelling nationally or internationally on union business. We note here that this mechanism should only be used for health and safety purposes and not for the purpose of monitoring staff;
- A risk assessment which includes individual journeys to and from work for staff and contracted staff,
- The policy also covers the hospitality workers at our Birmingham and Eastbourne hotels;
- Supplementary travel arrangements for the lowest paid workers;
- Safety of our colleagues and activist is paramount and this should be the primary concern when booking hotels, with consideration given to location and proximity to stations, car parking facilities and time of day travel.

**Passenger NISC**



## **120. Safe Home**

This Conference agrees that Unite the Union adopt the Safe Home Policy for their members, representatives and employees who attend meetings and conferences. The union must ensure that they will not be expected to travel or to wait on train station platforms or in airports late at night. If necessary overnight accommodation will be provided by the union, ensuring that all get home safely while travelling on union business.

**Scotland Women's Committee**

## **121. Unite Member Education**

This Conference calls on the Executive Council to refocus as a priority, on the member education programme that has been drastically reduced.

Education is one of the pillars around which Unite is formed, but it is often overlooked as one of the most successful organising, recruitment and retention tools available to the Union.

We recognise that knowledge is power. Through member education support, positive relationships have been established which have in turn supported the industrial arena and enabled recruitment of new members.

Moreover, with the growing threat of automation and outsourcing, updating and reskilling members will underline Unite's commitment to supporting them throughout their working lives, giving them transferrable skills, and promoting the benefits and goodwill of membership to potential new workplaces.

**Local Authorities RISC, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **122. Embracing the Welsh Language and communicating with our Members**

This Conference notes the growing demand for unions to communicate with its members bilingually. Latest figures from the Wales TUC show that currently, one in three people in Wales can speak Welsh. In December 2021 the official figure was 892,200 and this number is only set to increase further as the Welsh Government has a target of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Not only is the number of Welsh speakers increasing, but the attitude towards the language is changing among Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers. According to research by the Welsh Language Commissioner, 86% of the population of Wales feel that the Welsh language is something to be proud of. And 94% of Welsh speakers feel that providing Welsh language services helps a company make a good impression. Embracing the Welsh language opens up opportunities to recruit new members and recognises the important status of the language in our nation.

This Conference calls on Unite to

- Develop a Welsh Language Policy
- Ensure all National and Wales Campaign materials produced are bilingual
- Encourage the learning of Welsh
- Increase Welsh Language support for our Officers, Staff and Reps and encourage learning of the language where possible
- endeavour to increase the bilingual communications we offer over the coming years

**Regional LGBT+ Committee, Wales**

### **123. Accessibility Audit**

This Conference calls for Unite's Executive Council to create a clear accessibility audit document that can be applied to all Unite meetings/committees and conferences, whether they take place in person or virtually.

We also request a review of existing venues and practices to check for indirect discrimination that may currently be in place. This should take place as soon as possible and on completion any barriers identified should be reviewed.

This motion will allow everyone to feel confident that they can access all levels of the Unite Structure and participate without concern barriers.

**South West Disabled Members Committee**

### **124. Contract Compliance**

Conference believes all construction work carried out on Unite the Union properties, nationally or locally, whether it be capital or maintenance work undertaken by a main contractor/s or sub-contractor/s shall be following the Working Rule for that sector and all operatives undertaking such work shall be members of the appropriate union.

To ensure this policy is carried out, a list of the construction companies shall be made available to National Officers, Executive and NISC/RISC members.

**Everton Construction Branch (NW/UD088), North West**

### **125. TUC General Secretary Election**

The Trades Union Congress has long been a respected engine for progress, solidarity and democracy within the Trade Union movement.

Unite and its predecessor unions have proudly and consistently participated within its structures throughout.

The TUC has given example and solidarity to the many burgeoning Trade Union movements globally from its inception and up to modern day.

With trade unions under increasing pressure from restrictive legislation and an accelerating need to bargain for a fair share for workers it has never been more necessary that the TUC has a General secretary that is prepared to rise to the challenges that we face, that is prepared to wholeheartedly fight to free trade unions from their fetters and who does not shrink from the matter at hand.

The TUC and its General Secretary should reflect the mood and aspirations of the affiliate unions, especially in the context of the current strike wave.

Conference adopts a policy advocating for an elected TUC General Secretary, to be elected by popular vote of the members of the affiliated trade unions.

**Lancashire Area Activists' Committee North West**

## **126. Prioritising Member Education\***

This conference calls on Unite to refocus as a priority, on the member education programme that has been drastically reduced.

Education is one of the pillars around which Unite is formed, but it is often overlooked as one of the most successful organising, recruitment and retention tools available to the Union.

Moreover, with the growing threat of automisation and outsourcing, updating and reskilling members will underline Unite's commitment to supporting disabled members. They already face multiple barriers to engagement and learning, through both their visible and hidden disabilities. Unite's special understanding of these needs will afford it the ability to make reasonable adjustments for learning that would not necessarily be available from other learning providers.

This will underpin Unite's full commitment to Equality for All in the workplace.

**Disabled Members Committee, North East Yorkshire and Humberside**

## **127. Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment in the Workplace\***

This Conference is appalled that sexual harassment is widespread and persistent across workplaces in the UK. A TUC report revealed that over 1 in 2 women and nearly 7 out of 10 LGBT+ workers, have been sexually harassed in the workplace. This is likely to be only the tip of the iceberg of the incidences of sexual harassment, the majority of which go unreported.

Sexual harassment means that a significant number of Unite members, particularly women, are not working in a safe environment. It has a big impact on the mental health of those that are subjected to it.

Sexual harassment can be a particular issue in male dominated workplaces where it is important to increase the number of women workers in the interests of equality and closing the gender pay gap. Many women feel forced to leave jobs and industries, where men are in the majority, because of a culture of sexual harassment and the lack of action taken by their employer to address it.

Conference calls on the Unite Executive Council to take responsibility for over-seeing the following actions aimed at developing a zero tolerance to sexual harassment in the workplace:

- campaign for a new legislative preventative duty be placed on employers to take action to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and for this to be introduced urgently by the Government;
- for a new training programme to be developed, with supporting materials, for Unite employees and Unite Reps, so that there will be a greater understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and how to promote a zero tolerance to it in the workplace; and
- for work on combatting sexual harassment to form part of the bargaining and organising agenda throughout Unite linked in with Work, Voice, Pay and its supporting tools and materials.

**South West Regional Women's Committee**

## **128. BAEM Leaders in the UK\***

This Conference notes that UK society often fails to recognise, capture and share the great works and successes of our marginalised ethnic minority leaders.

Too often the work of people like Roy Hackett, Alice Kinlock, Jocelyn Barrow, Bill Morris and Avtar Jouhl, are only recognised either in the final stages of life, or after they've died.

By learning about and sharing the stories of BAEM leaders, we can seek to learn their lessons and inspire the next generation of activists for whom these stories are not readily known.

This Conference calls on Unite to:

- Pull together information about BAEM leaders who achieved great things in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century in the UK and to ensure that BAEM women leaders are included in this publication
- Share that information in videos and short presentations for all Unite branches and committees
- Seek to make or adapt them to be educational and freely available on YouTube and other social media, especially tik tok.

**South West Regional BAEM Committee**

## **129. Equality Act 2010\***

This Conference notes:

The Equality Act 2010 shows that discrimination is unlawful and is intended to ensure that our country is fairer and more equal. However, sometimes religious organisations and charities are allowed to discriminate when they provide services.

Sexual orientation and religion and belief are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. However, it also says a religious organisation can do the following things on the grounds of your sexual orientation or :

- exclude you from participation in certain activities or services they offer
- restrict membership of the organisation
- restrict the use of its premises.

The National Secular Society called for a review of religious exemptions contained within the Equality Act of 2010 in response to a public consultation.

In their submission to the Equality Act review the NSS said religious exemptions:

"cause unnecessary discrimination, fuel segregation, and reduce opportunities for people according to their protected characteristics".

This Conference believes the government has failed to properly represent the people it serves by implementing and leaving this exemption in place. Thus leading to the discrimination of people with protected characteristics, in particular Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and non-binary people, which this act was meant to protect.

To prevent further discrimination taking place this conference calls upon Unite to:

Campaign alongside the TUC to remove the religious exemptions from the 2010 Equality Act for the benefit of all members.

Lobby the government to remove the religious exemptions from the Equality Act 2010 on the grounds of religion and in relation to charities.

**South West LGBT+ Committee**

\* For administrative reasons, this motion did not appear in the preliminary agenda. The Standing Orders Committee for the 7<sup>th</sup> Policy Conference decided they could appear in the final agenda.

# NOTES





# **Policy Conference 2023**