

ASH SILVERSTONE

for NEC Black Members Male Seat

Membership Number: 20995967

Branch Number: 20532



Dear Branch/Regional Self-Organised Group,

I am writing to you to request your nomination and support as a candidate for the Black Members Male Seat in the National Executive Council (NEC) elections.

I am standing for the NEC because it is no secret that our members, up and down the country are really struggling with the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis. A crisis not of their making, but a crisis caused by the government that we are all paying for. Black members are even more impacted as many undertake low paid jobs, in Local Government, Health, Police and Justice the list goes on...

This is at the same time as we are facing assaults on terms and conditions, unsafe workplaces and real terms pay cuts, and I believe that now, more than ever, we need a union that is truly able to rise to the challenge, fight and deliver for our members especially our Black members through working with our Black Members Self-Organised Groups (SOGs) and that means having an NEC that is committed to working collaboratively with our General Secretary, Christina McAnea, to focus on doing just that.

I have a strong track record of fighting and winning for our members at Branch, Regional and National Level, where I work with members, key stakeholders, other unions, community leaders and politicians to build a strong and effective movement, able to tackle issues head on! Including providing representation when needed.

An example of this is the instrumental role I played as a Member of my Regional Black Members SOG and National Black Members Committee (NBMC) in securing an Independent Inquiry into decisions taken by the current NEC which I believe did not live up to our aims, values and objectives as a union. Fair Representation is what our union was built on and I will not let that crumble or be attacked.

I believe that we, as the largest Trade Union in the country, must lead the way in tackling discrimination and inequity wherever it exists, that includes within our own organisation, and I commit to continuing to this fight if elected to the NEC.

Having previously been Branch Secretary, I am currently the Branch Chair, Convenor, and Assistant Secretary of the Shropshire General Branch. In addition to this, I am a Member of my Regions Local Government Committee, Regional Council, Regional Committee, Regional Finance and General Purposes Committee as well as representing my Region on the National Black Members Committee and serving as President of the Shropshire and Telford Trades Union Council. A wealth of experience that I can transfer to roles within the NEC.

MY COMMITMENT TO YOU AND OUR UNION

We know that we are much stronger together than we are divided, and the challenges we are facing now and are likely to face going forward will be significant and numerous. Therefore, if elected to represent our Black Members, I commit to dedicating my time to:



TACKLING THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

Our union has a significant role to play in ending this crisis, as the largest Trade Union we must use our power and influence to put pressure on this disastrous government to end the scandal of privatisation and shareholder profits and put that money into the pockets of our members. We can achieve this through strategic campaigning, organising, lobbying, and where necessary, supporting our members to take meaningful and effective industrial action.



INCREASING MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Our union is nothing without its members. For us to be able to fight and win, we must recognise that the world of work has changed, and we must too. With more members working from home, we need find new ways to support them to get involved and have their say. It is only when we show that their voices really do matter in this union, will we be able to properly address our need for more activists.



SECURING, PAY, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Our members are the unsung heroes of the COVID-19 pandemic with many Black workers severely affected, and instead of recognising this, employers continue to offer real terms pay cuts, and attack members terms and conditions. As the biggest union in the country, we urgently need to build on our workplace organisation to send the clear message that enough is enough, and we will no longer accept being treated like this.



CREATING EQUITABLE WORKPLACES

Equity must be at the heart of everything we do, both within workplaces and wider society. Treating everyone the same simply is not good enough! We are all individuals, with our own experiences, needs, and barriers and our workplace policies need to reflect this. We know that Black Members, as well as Disabled Members, LGBT+ Members, and Women Members are more likely to be in low paid and insecure work. This is why I will continue to work to cement a culture of equity within our workplaces and union.



ENSURING DEMOCRACY

Our principles of democracy must remain at the core of our union. This was made clear by the decisions made at our last National Delegates Conference in Brighton. I commit to creating a stronger culture of openness and transparency in our union, making sure that members can hold the NEC to account, and that when this happens, the NEC shows that it has listened, not through warm words, but with concrete action in the best interests of our members and union. In addition to this, I also commit to engaging with members, branches, and Black Members Self-Organised Groups of all nations whenever there is a key decision to be made or action to be taken, to make sure that I am truly representing their views.

Your nomination will greatly help my campaign and help to begin the work of building a union that is able to get on with the job of delivering for every member and I am happy to discuss it more with you. I can be contacted at: ash.silverstone@outlook.com

Please also consider nominating colleagues who I have confidence in to deliver for our Black Members, Manjula Kumari and Annette Heslop in Female Seats and Eunice White in the Reserve Low Paid Seat.

Yours in Solidarity,

Ash Silverstone