

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

30th National Delegate Conference

ACC Liverpool

17 June - 20 June 2025

This publication contains the motions, amendments to motions and amendments to rule for the 30th national delegate conference, followed by amendments to motions ruled out of order by the standing orders committee and the reason for the ruling. Items in this agenda are not UNISON policy until they have been debated and passed at Conference.

Organising and Recruitment

Organisation and Development

1. Organising to Win and Delivering a Decade of Growth

2024 was a historic year for UNISON with over 215,000 new joiners resulting in net growth of 39,500. This growth of 3.3 percent significantly exceeds the minimum one percent target.

The activist base also grew in 2024 with 4,500 new workplace activists appointed and a six percent increase in Employment Relations Act (ERA) accredited stewards.

In the Organising to Win priority campaigns, member participation within aligned organising and bargaining strategies delivered significant material wins for members, amplified by digital communications to project a confident, growing and powerful union.

The new Organising Framework was launched, recognising the branch as the base organising foundation of the union with new action plan templates alongside Organising to Win guides to support activists to drive effective organising at the branch and workplace level. The Branch Support and Organising Fund has ensured additional resource with consistent reporting and evaluation for continuous improvement of the UNISON organising approach.

Significant membership growth of ten percent was achieved in social care, predominantly from migrant workers, and UNISON strengthened our partnerships with the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) and built our internal capacity to support and organise this vital but highly exploited group of UK public service workers.

Conference applauds the organising progress achieved in recent years and acknowledges it will take sustained effort and resource from Regions and Branches to continue to rebuild the activist base, sustain membership growth, and deliver significant material wins for members.

However, Conference believes we can sustain and build on the success of recent years. The NHS Earnings Max strategy and Pay Fair for Patient Care Campaign continues to deliver multi million pound wins for members and enhance UNISON's strategic organising capacity. And the Labour government has brought significant new organising opportunities with commitments to an English Social Care Fair Pay

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Agreement and National Care Service, and School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB).

Conference believes that the Organising to Win strategy leaves UNISON well placed to maximise these new opportunities through aligned organising and bargaining strategies to deliver significant material wins for members and achieve a decade of growth in membership, activism, influence and resource.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to continue the resourced implementation of the Organising to Win strategy, with a particular 2025 focus on:

- 1) Support for priority “One UNISON” organising campaigns of NHS Earnings Max/Pay Fair for Patient Care, target English Multi Academy Trusts and wider SSSNB implementation, and building a strong and powerful UNISON across UK adult social care;
- 2) Evaluate the introduction of the new “Active Member” category which enables social care members to be active beyond their individual participation without the full activist role commitment, and support extension of the role to other areas of the union;
- 3) Encourage branches to engage in the new Organising Framework action plan process and to provide resource and support to any Organising to Win priority organising campaign covering members of the branch;
- 4) Review existing UNISON guides, resources, and activist training to ensure consistency with the Organising to Win strategy;
- 5) Continue to develop the UNISON migrant worker member network and support an organising campaign to deliver UNISON’s policy position of fairer health and social care visa rules;
- 6) Action the recommendations of the 2024 Organising to Win new activist report including:
 - a) Work with self organised groups, young members and retired members to review and remove barriers to activist development particularly from groups under-represented in UNISON activist roles;
 - b) Set union wide objectives to urgently improve the proportion of new stewards who attend ERA training.

National Executive Council

1.1

In the seventh paragraph remove "an English" and insert "a" so it reads "...new organising opportunities with commitments to a Social Care Fair Pay Agreement..."

After "...and School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB)." Insert: "in England with the provision for Fair Pay Agreements in Wales and Scotland."

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

In action point 1) after "...SSSNB implementation..." insert: "devolved schools and campaigning for a SSSNB for Wales,"

Cymru/Wales Region

1.2

Add new point 7) to the end of the motion:

"7) To action previous motions passed at National Delegate Conferences seeking to learn from successful disputes and devise a lay activist training course on winning ballots, campaigns and disputes and which called on the National Executive Council to implement the Organising to Win strategy, with a particular focus on:

- a) Devising a training course for lay activists on how to win ballots, campaigns and disputes, using the organising techniques of strategic organising;
- b) Making sure such training is available to all lay activists before National Delegate Conference 2026;
- c) Developing the means of incorporating such training within the courses for new stewards so that such organising becomes standard practice for all new activists."

Barnet Local Government

2. Organising to Win 2025

Conference notes:

- 1) The positive impact Organising to Win has already had upon UNISON;
- 2) That Organising to Win approach has enabled members to begin winning improvements for themselves which was clearly demonstrated at National Delegate Conference 2024 when representatives from 27 successful disputes paraded in front of the Conference;
- 3) Members winning local disputes helps increase recruitment of new members and new lay activists;
- 4) That learning from our successes is important to help future success, recruitment and renewal of UNISON's activist base across the whole union;
- 5) From the original Organising to Win motion passed at Local Government Conference 2022 and subsequent motions passed at National Delegate Conference there has been a call to learn from the successful disputes and devise a lay activist training course on winning ballots, campaigns and disputes.

Conference believes that:

- a) Both strategic organising and base organising are vital for the success of the Organising to Win strategy to transform the future for our union;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- b) Strategic organising involves organising techniques that can be learnt and applied by lay activists.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to continue implementation of the Organising to Win strategy, with a particular 2025 focus on:

- i) Devising a training course for lay activists on how to win ballots, campaigns and disputes, using the organising techniques of strategic organising;
- ii) Making sure such training is available to all lay activists before National Delegate Conference 2026;
- iii) Developing the means of incorporating such training within the courses for new stewards so that such organising becomes standard practice for all new activists.

***West Midlands Region
Sandwell General***

3. Organising and Winning

Conference notes:

- 1) The positive impact Organising to Win has already had upon UNISON;
- 2) That Organising to Win approach as enabled members to begin winning improvements for themselves which was clearly demonstrated at National Delegate Conference 2024 when representatives from 27 successful disputes paraded in front of the conference. In 2024, UNISON has had a net growth of over 40,000 members and in the Fair Pay For Patient Care alone has won over £100m in backdated pay increases for our members;
- 3) Members winning local disputes helps increase recruitment of new members and new lay activists;
- 4) That learning from our successes is important to help future success, recruitment and renewal of UNISON's activist base across the whole union;
- 5) From the original Organising to Win motion passed at Local Government Conference 2022 and subsequent motions passed at National Delegate Conference there has been a call to learn from the successful disputes and devise a lay activist training course on winning ballots, campaigns and disputes.

Conference believes:

- a) That both strategic organising and base organising are vital for the success of the Organising to Win strategy to transform the future for our union;
- b) Strategic organising involves organising techniques that can be learnt and applied by lay activists.

Conference resolves to call on the National Executive Council to continue implementation of the Organising to Win strategy, with a particular 2025 focus on:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- i) Devising a training course for lay activists on how to win ballots, campaigns and disputes and using the organising techniques of strategic organising;
- ii) Making sure such training is available to all lay activists before National Delegate Conference 2026;
- iii) Developing the means of incorporating such training within the courses for new stewards so that organising becomes standard practice for all new activists.

Camden

4. Building UNISON in the Private Sector

Conference notes that increasing numbers of UNISON members are delivering public services while being employed by the private sector. Whether this is in private social care homes, working in our hospitals, waste management companies or for private contractors providing schools meals, all of our members, regardless of the type of employer, deserve the very best of support from UNISON at branch, region and national level.

UNISON must ensure that the voices of the outsourced workforce are represented at all levels of democratic structures to maximise our industrial strength with employers and government and to meet our rule book commitment to Proportionality and Fair Representation.

Conference affirms its belief that the best way to improve the support and involvement of members working in the private sector is by building strong effective workplace organisation, through local activists and the branch structures. This will ensure that members are represented and supported and engaged in relevant campaigns such as the Us2 pay campaign. To achieve this we need a network of well trained, motivated and engaged workplace activists that can engage with the branch for resources and expertise.

Unfortunately too many members working for private employers do not have a UNISON activist in their workplace or even in their employer and getting support from the branch can be difficult where officers do not fully understand the challenges of working for private companies.

In private contractor workplaces it is crucial to have a mechanism to network locally, regionally and nationally to get support and mentoring to win campaigns. The majority of UNISON members working in the private sector are in branches that are primarily focussed on the issues relating to the larger public sector employers.

UNISON must ensure that the voices and issues of private contractor members are heard in branches, in our regions and at a national level. UNISON's work in private employer workplaces should be led by members working for those employers, mentored and supported by branch officers employed by public sector employers and branch employed staff.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Develop and implement a clear Organising to Win strategy on how to build the union amongst those members providing public services while employed by private contractors. This should include the identification of priority occupational groups and employers;
- 2) Deliver a campaign focussing on the 'The outsourced worker experience' to amplify the challenges experienced by private sector members, many of whom are migrant workers and encourage branches and regions in providing necessary resources and support in organising outsourced workers;
- 3) Ensure any guidance relating to the Branch Support and Organising Fund (BSOF) specifically highlights how it can be used to build the union using the Organising to Win strategy in private workplaces such as care homes, multi academy trusts, waste management and hospitals;
- 4) Consider if the Organising Framework process effectively supports branches to devote sufficient resources to members in the private sector;
- 5) Consider if the Code of Good Branch Practice should recommend the election of at least one officer from either a private sector or community employer and that they should be responsible for supporting members to become active in the union and organise in harder to reach workplaces;
- 6) Advise branches and regions of the effectiveness of different branch structure models that ensures that all parts of our membership are fully supported and included in our democratic structures particularly those employed by private contractor or community sector employers;
- 7) Ensure all regions resource and support regional structures for members working for private contractor employers;
- 8) Review the make-up of all our branch, regional and national structures to ensure that members working for private contractor employers are represented in all our decision-making forums and develop ways of delivering this;
- 9) Implement an activist development programme that aims to ensure that members working for private contractor employers are fully equipped to tackle the specific challenges of those members working in smaller often less well organised workplaces;
- 10) Consider changes to our working practices and structures that better empower members working in private and community sector workplaces to become fully involved in our democratic structures;
- 11) Develop and deliver training to branches around all types of outsourcing and insourcing including public sector to private but also private sector to another contractor and private to public sector. The training should include how to influence the tender process to include recognition of UNISON by any new employer from day one of the contract and an agreed facility time etc this will deliver the ability for those members to become involved at branch, regional and national levels of the union.

2025 National Delegate Conference

UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Private Contractors' National Forum

4.1

Add new point 3):

"3) Develop a toolkit to help branches organise to get union recognition and recruit stewards to improve pay and conditions and campaign for the service to come back in-house;"

Then re-number accordingly.

Camden

5. Industrial Action Better and Stronger in UNISON

Industrial disputes - better and stronger in UNISON!

Context:

- 1) The Labour government's Employment Rights Bill means strike laws are set to change dramatically, lifting the restrictions that have stifled industrial action and, since 2016, have prevented some UNISON disputes progressing beyond ballot stage.
- 2) The union must use these changes in strike laws to deliver not just more but better and stronger disputes in support of the union's bargaining objectives.

Rationale:

- a) Used effectively, consultations, formal ballots and industrial action are powerful tools to support our bargaining objectives. This has been apparent in the disputes taken under the Organising to Win campaign, where high levels of member support at ballot and strike stage have driven significant settlements. Even in our larger bargaining groups, where action has grown ever more complex to deliver, approaching ballots and action strategically has resulted in industrial action that has improved outcomes for significant numbers of members.

Conference notes and supports the ongoing Winning for the Future project which has been laying the groundwork for the union to improve ballot and dispute planning, including through:

- i) Embedding ballot readiness in the annual Organising Framework;
- ii) Developing and rolling out of activist training;
- iii) Sharing learning to strengthen decision-making and strategic planning;
- iv) Generating access to consistent, reliable and accurate information about the status, outcomes and impact of disputes.

This work, coupled with learning from Organising to Win disputes, must be consolidated in order to respond to and capitalise on the legal changes to come.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

By doing this, the union can protect against creeping complacency and a performative approach to disputes. Otherwise, we risk low levels of participation in consultations and ballots, a drop in focus on organising and action being taken that is not well supported or sustainable and therefore not an effective tool in winning disputes.

Low levels of participation undermine members' confidence that ballots and industrial action can deliver results. If we want our union to be a fighting union, where we continue to use industrial disputes as an effective tool, we must ensure UNISON is in a position to adapt quickly to the legal changes and anticipate and respond to a potential increase in volume of requests to run ballots and take action.

Actions:

- A) Conference therefore asks the National Executive Council to work across the union including with service groups and regions to consider the implications of the changes to strike laws. Topics will include (but not be limited to):
 - I) UNISON's internal processes and protocols related to industrial action;
 - II) Interaction between different decision making bodies on industrial action matters;
 - III) Implications for collective bargaining;
 - IV) Practical support for ballots and action.

Findings, and changes made or recommended from this work, will be set out in a report to National Delegate Conference 2026.

In undertaking this work, it will be particularly useful to learn from colleagues in Northern Ireland (where action has not been subject to the current restrictions in place across Great Britain) as well as the Winning for the Future project and the successful Organising to Win campaigns.

Staffordshire Community Health

5.1

Insert new last paragraph:

"It would also be useful to learn from Scotland's Regional Plan, that delivered effective campaigning and successful industrial action ballots and strike action in Local Government, Scottish Water and Higher Education, utilising modern organising tools and lay activists and staff working to deliver positive outcomes; building membership and recruiting activists in social care; organising around violence in schools and pay grading in the NHS."

Scotland Region

6. Lasting Legacy for Self Organised Groups

Conference notes that the year of LGBT+ workers finished at the end of 2024. This year followed the years of young members, disabled members and in 2023 the year

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

of Black workers. In a union of one million women workers, we have seen how intersectionality is woven into our very fabric and is throughout our existence.

UNISON has a long standing commitment to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within the workplace and society at large. This has been demonstrated in recent years by the dedicated efforts of UNISON to support and advocate for disabled workers, Black workers, young members, and LGBT+ workers. During these 'years of' UNISON members have been reminded of the importance of recognising and addressing the unique challenges faced by members who belong to multiple marginalised groups, through an intersectional approach. Being able to self-organise in how we individually identify is the strength of the union and allows everyone to have a place, and a voice in our union.

We have seen how celebrating the contributions and achievements of disabled workers, Black workers, young members, and LGBT+ workers is essential to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Organising for change whilst linking with UNISON's national and local campaigns are strengthened by supporting our unique intersectionalities.

Intersectionality is a critical framework for understanding how various aspects of a person's identity combine to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege. UNISON's efforts to embrace intersectionality through our self organised groups have strengthened our ability to advocate effectively for all members, ensuring that no one is left behind. In the fight for equality nobody will be left behind, as equality for one is equality for all. By celebrating the achievements of disabled workers, Black workers, young members, and LGBT+ workers, and by embracing intersectionality, we can build a stronger, more inclusive UNISON. Together, we stand united in our commitment to equality and justice for all.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with all sections of the union to:

- 1) Continue to celebrate and highlight the achievements and contributions of disabled workers, women workers, Black workers, young members, and LGBT+ workers within UNISON;
- 2) Continue to prioritise intersectional approaches in all organising, campaigning, advocacy and support efforts, ensuring that specific needs of those with intersecting identities are addressed;
- 3) Organise events, campaigns, and educational initiatives that promote awareness and understanding of intersectionality and its importance in the fight for equality and inclusion;
- 4) Encourage branches to actively engage with and support initiatives aimed at improving the working conditions and rights of disabled workers, Black workers, women, young members, and LGBT+ workers;
- 5) Reaffirm UNISON's commitment to creating a union where diversity is celebrated, and all members can thrive without fear of discrimination or exclusion;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 6) Continue to promote self organisation as the key to a healthy robust union;
- 7) Work with all sections of the union so that the organising to win strategy is closely aligned with our equalities agenda and intersectionality is welcomed as a powerful tool in all UNISON campaigns.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

7. Engagement, Education and Retention of Apprentices

Conference notes that the engagement and retention of Young Members can be challenging. However, engaging with young apprentices can often present additional challenges, with there often being little to no education on what a union is, while also feeling that their employment is tentative. Despite the fact there are approximately 135,000 Young Members in UNISON, only 1,911 of these are apprentices (1.42 percent) and have been entered on WARMS, and it is possible that this information is not up to date or accurate.

Conference notes that the engagement and retention of Young Members can be challenging. However, engaging with young apprentices can often present attentional challenges, with there often being little to no education on what a Union is, while also feeling that their employment is tentative. There are less than 2,000 apprentices in UNISON that have been entered on WARMS, however it is possible that this information is not up to date or accurate.

In the year 2022-2023, public sector targets were that 2.3 percent of all public sector employees should be apprentices. At this same time, according to the most recent UK Parliament report on apprentices, in England alone, the majority of apprentices for the academic year 22-23 were under the age of 25, while there is a very similar story in Wales, this meaning that there are a significant number of Young Workers who are likely without representation.

Conference notes that the quality of apprenticeships offered often varies across different sites within the same employer. UNISON is keen to push employers to take a strategic approach so that there is consistency across all apprenticeships. Conference also believes that training for apprentices is best provided through well funded Further Education colleges, rather than by public providers, and recognises the need for adequate funding of FE in order to meet this aspiration.

UNISON's Apprenticeship charter details the rights that all apprentices should have, along with the responsibilities of employers to the apprentices that they employ. These include providing a safe and healthy working environment and payment at the rate for the job. Conference notes that further effort is required to encourage and support employers in engaging with and implementing the charter.

On UNISON's apprenticeships page, there are a large number of resources, including a model apprenticeship agreement, and toolkit for negotiators and reps. Our Apprentices in Health page also explores the issues facing apprentices in Health, in more detail. UNISON Learning and Organising Services have developed a course for branches and reps who would like to support apprentices through a mentoring scheme, covering a wide range of topics.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference calls for the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with regions and service groups on campaigning activities to encourage our apprentices to be active in our union, and speak on issues that affect them in their workplace;
- 2) Work with regions to promote UNISON in colleges and sixth forms where possible to recruit apprentices prior to starting employment and inform them of their workplace rights;
- 3) Work with regions, service groups, and National Executive Council to develop a yearly campaign dedicated to recruitment and engagement with Apprentices.
- 4) Work with relevant service groups to identify how many employers have signed onto UNISON's Apprenticeship Charter and encourage more employers to sign up;
- 5) Work with UNISON College to promote UNISON mentoring for apprentices training across every region in order to engage with apprentices more effectively;
- 6) Work with branches to survey apprentices on how best to engage with them, as well as any issues that they are currently experiencing for more targeted support.

National Young Members' Forum

8. Support for Young Single Mothers

Conference believes that it is imperative that UNISON takes proactive steps to support and empower young single mothers in the workforce. The union should recognise the vital role that this group of workers play in the workforce and acknowledge the unique challenges they face.

The increasing number of young single mothers in various sectors highlight the need for specific policies and initiatives to ensure they are more active in the union, and that their well being, job security, and professional growth is also looked after.

Conference applauds the union for its relentless campaigns on equal pay and several other campaigns to help workers fight for fairness and equality in the workplace and beyond.

However, to engage women who are young single mothers, there is need to:

- 1) Ensure that young single mothers are adequately represented in union leadership and decision-making bodies;
- 2) Establish targeted training programs that equip young single mothers with skills and qualifications necessary for union leadership and career advancement;
- 3) Continue to promote flexible working arrangements, including homeworking options and part-time positions, to help young single mothers balance work and family responsibilities;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 4) It is beneficial to foster a supportive and inclusive environment for young single mothers, ensuring that they have the resources and opportunities needed to thrive both personally and professionally. This will not only benefit young single mothers but also contribute to a more equitable and resilient union and workforce.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to advocate for and promote flexible working and work-life balance, and to promote the work done by the National Women's Committee on these issues;
- b) Consider setting up support groups within the union, working with the National Women's Committee and the National Young Members Forum, to provide mentorship, counselling, and peer support for young single mothers;
- c) Develop a strategy, working with the National Women's Committee and the National Young Members Forum to improve the representation of young single mothers in UNISON's leadership and decision-making structures;
- d) Encourage branches and regions to make available information on how young people can have access to creche for their children or claim back the cost of childcare from their branches and regions when attending UNISON meetings and events to enable wider participation of young single parents.

National Young Members' Forum

Branch Development

9. Support for Branch Activists

Being a branch officer and being able to support your colleagues is undoubtedly a privileged position and one that can be extremely rewarding. However, anecdotally we hear that many branch officers, particularly workplace stewards and branch secretaries are suffering from burn out. Workloads are high but not measured or capped, casework is complex and often have a heavy emotional load and, in many branches, there are simply not enough activists to do all the work. And the reality of the work that we do in our workplaces is listen to problems, support demanding situations, and challenge decisions, all things which take an emotional toll. Reps do not have the support of their line managers from their substantive posts in these situations and regional UNISON support is not tailored to the emotional needs of our branch officers. It is our view that there is a gap in UNISON provision for meeting the emotional well-being of activists.

This motion calls on the National Executive Council to undertake further investigation into this topic by means of a survey of all activists to understand if there is a gap in provision. If the outcome indicates that there is a gap, that resource should be allocated to develop a service that can support our activists in being able to support emotional and physical well being.

Eastern Region Probation

9.1

In final paragraph, first sentence:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

After "investigation" add: "and research"; after "topic" add: "including"; after "understand" add: "better the totality of workloads branch officers undertake and to consider"; after "provision", add: "of support to branch activists"

In final paragraph, second sentence:

After "develop a" add: "range of services" and delete "service"; after "our activists" add "including"

National Executive Council

Education and Training

10. Learning Develops our Activists – Promoting Clear Pathways and Support

Member learning through the UNISON College plays a vital role in encouraging members to participate and get active in UNISON. Research conducted by Exeter University for UNISON in 2019 concluded that members who had accessed member learning opportunities were almost 8 times more likely to be active than those who had not.

Conference notes the Organising to Win priorities of Schools, Social Care, and NHS Earnings Max and recognises the huge member learning and activist training potential of campaigns that build member participation around an escalating plan to win. The organising to win strategy is also to be a cornerstone of all the parts of the trade union including all service groups and sectors.

Conference acknowledges that learning builds confidence not just in the subject matter of the training, but builds confidence through the very act of engaging, developing new skills and connections. Therefore, member learning should continue to play a key role in encouraging members to participate and get active in UNISON and there should be a clear accessible pathway for members to train and develop with UNISON.

Conference believes that Union Learning Reps have a distinct and unique role in enabling members to access learning opportunities and provide a pathway to participation and further involvement. Union Learning Reps have the right to paid time off to analyse the learning or training needs of members; give information and advice about learning or training; arrange or encourage learning or training; discuss their activities as a learning representative with their employer; and train as a learning representative.

In addition, Branch Education Coordinators have a key role across the branch to organise training, support and development for reps and activists. This includes the mandatory training for activists through the National Executive Council Scheme of Accreditation, follow on training on organising, representation, bargaining and campaigning. Branch development sessions bring activists together to learn and develop new skills as well as establishing branch organising plans.

Conference notes that the development and support of activists is vital to the success of the union. Branch Education Coordinators together with Union Learning Reps can create an effective team to enthuse and support members as well as develop, support and mentor activists.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop a new suite of Organising to Win Branch development day materials, to embed UNISONs best practice organising skills and methodology at a branch level;
- 2) Encourage branches to set branch development sessions to review and progress the new Organising Framework Action Plan and incorporate plans for member learning opportunities as well as activist development;
- 3) Refresh and revitalise guides and resources to support and enable activist development;
- 4) Review the National Executive Council Scheme of Accreditation and all mandatory activist training to create a concise and clear pathway of training and development;
- 5) Develop a new “stage 3” follow on course to support experienced branch officers to develop their leadership skills and build branch capacity to win change;
- 6) Renew focus on the role of Branch Education Coordinators and how they can coordinate training, development and support activists;
- 7) Further promote and proactively target the recruitment and development of Union Learning Reps;
- 8) Ensure member learning is incorporated into Organising to Win priority campaigns with learning offers bespoke to target sectors and occupational groups.

National Executive Council

11. Neurodiversity Training for UNISON Activists

UNISON stewards have observed an increase in casework involving members with a wide range of neurodiverse conditions. Many stewards lack the necessary education and understanding of the challenges faced by our growing number of neurodiverse members. Without proper knowledge and training in this area, many stewards feel ill-equipped to effectively support our members in matters such as disciplinary actions, reasonable adjustments, and performance capability.

As activists, it is essential that we provide practical advice, support, and strategies to help identify barriers that workplaces and working conditions present to neurodivergent workers, as well as measures to remove or reduce these barriers. Additionally, we need to pinpoint workplace changes that would benefit neurodivergent employees.

Stewards are witnessing more members undergoing formal processes due to neurodiversity. Given the current lack of understanding and training among some stewards, both we and our members would greatly benefit from professional training.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to provide accessible professional training related to neurodiversity for all activists and stewards.

2025 National Delegate Conference

UNISON FINAL AGENDA

North West Anglia Hospitals

11.1

Insert new third paragraph:

"Many of our activists are neurodivergent themselves – some only being diagnosed later in life – it is also important that their fellow branch officers and reps are aware of their needs."

Surrey County

Constitutional Matters

12. All We Ask is to be Treated with Dignity and Respect

Police Probation and CAFCASS staff are well established members of our union and have been for decades. Police and Justice members work in very difficult circumstances both protecting the public and enforcing the law. The needs of these members are no different to that of other service groups. These members support our union and act with dignity and respect.

At previous Conferences there have been offensive and ill informed comments that have caused offense to Police Probation and CAFCASS members present. These remarks have often gone unchecked, leaving Police and Justice delegates feeling deflated and isolated.

All members of UNISON should be treated with dignity and respect in line with the rules of our union. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to maintain proceedings in the spirit of the aims, objectives and rules of our union and to challenge inappropriate comments when they occur.

Leicestershire Police

Negotiating and Bargaining

Bargaining

13. Kinship Care and Fostering

Conference notes that Kinship carers are family or friends who step up, often during an unexpected crisis, to care for a child when their parents are not able to. This may be because the parent has died, is unwell, has gone to prison, is experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol, or are neglectful or abusive.

Kinship carers are usually grandparents, aunts or uncles, brothers or sisters, a step parent, stepbrother or stepsister, or someone who is not related but knows the child well. Whatever their relationship to the child, in that moment a commitment is made. To bring love and hope to a child who has experienced trauma, no matter what.

According to the Kinship Charity recent make or break annual survey 87 percent of Kinship carers are women. With the medium age 55-59, though there is an increase of women under 40.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

There are more than 141,000 children in kinship care in England and Wales, 4,249 children in Scotland and 2,199 in Northern Ireland. It is estimated more than one-third of kinship carers are experiencing an income drop of more than 50 percent after stepping up to take on care of a child.

Many Kinship carers and foster carers step up for children sometimes with very little notice, going through varying stages of legal processes which can vary from months to a number of years, attending meetings, court hearings, home visits and checks, transitions times for children to settle in, contact arrangements with parents, medicals etc. For single carers the pressure is even greater.

Unlike those who adopt children, many kinship and foster carers do not have the same protections and rights to time off work, with many making the only choice to either reduce their working hours or leave employment all together, impacting the individual but with the employer also losing experienced staff.

Most local authorities do not have any support for carers within their own organisations with no guidance or policies in place.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Women's Committee:

- 1) Encourage branches, and provide necessary information, for them to negotiate with employers to include kinship carers in the adoption leave policy and for employers to become Kinship friendly employers;
- 2) Consider how to publicise campaigns seeking bargaining wins for kinship carers, so women members are aware and can support;
- 3) Collate and share best practice on bargaining successes in this area;
- 4) To work with Labour Link to raise the profile of Kinship Carers and the issues they and foster carers face with the Labour party.

National Women's Committee

14. Sexual Harassment

Conference is proud of the work that UNISON has achieved prior to and following the #MeToo movement in highlighting and tackling the pervasive and unacceptable culture around sexual harassment.

However, UNISON's own surveys in 2024 show how much further there is to go, with one in ten healthcare workers reporting that they have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace and one in ten female support staff in schools. It is clear that it continues to be prevalent despite high profile campaigning and widespread public condemnation.

In 2023 a TUC poll also found that in two out of five (39 percent) recent incidents, victims were sexually harassed not by a colleague, but by a third party. Over half of younger women reported that they were the victim of a third party.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

For public sector workers, and for those women who may be working in public facing roles or lone working in the community, those working unsocial hours or shift workers are at greater risk because it can also mean traveling alone to and from work, often in the dark, which increases their potential vulnerability from third parties. In UNISON's 2024 survey of healthcare workers, two fifths experienced sexual harassment from their patients rather than their colleagues.

We know that it is not only women that experience sexual harassment, whilst men may be less likely to be a victim, it can be equally devastating, and they may also face stigma in reporting incidents.

We must continue to acknowledge and address the different experiences of women, including the disproportionate harassment of and differing experiences of Black, Young, and Disabled women. As part of the legacy of the Year of the LGBT+ worker, we are shocked to hear that nearly seven in ten LGBT+ workers have been sexually harassed at work.

Lower paid women in the public sector face a secondary factor caused by serious power imbalances with figures of authority such as doctors, teachers and senior managers leading to fear and intimidation in reporting. For those working for private or outsourced companies, such as those in social care or childcare, they may not have access to HR support, sexual harassment training or policies to protect them.

Conference welcomes the Worker Protection Act that came into force on 26 October 2024 which introduced a new proactive obligation on employers to take preventative steps to eliminate workplace sexual harassment. Employers will still be expected to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment by any perpetrator, including third parties such as patients, customers, clients, service users, contractors and members of the public. However, the Act does not include liability for third party harassment.

There is still much to do to ensure that the new obligations are effective and that employers take this responsibility seriously and that public sector workers and UNISON members are protected from everyone in the workplace, no matter who they work with or where they work. Conference also welcomes the work that the TUC has been undertaking following the #MeToo movement and believes that as trade unionists we must continue to model best practises and a zero-tolerance approach when it comes to all forms of harassment.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Promote UNISON's existing model policies on combatting sexual harassment, including the 'Sexual Harassment is a Workplace Issue' guidance, which can be found on the UNISON website;
- 2) Provide information to and support for branches to identify employers without a sexual harassment policy, to enable them to campaign to tackle sexual harassment in every workplace, utilising UNISON's guide including the checklist for branches and model sexual harassment policy;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 3) Ensure guidance is updated to reflect the new 'Worker Protection Act' with practical steps and guidance on steps employers should take to tackle third party sexual harassment;
- 4) Encourage all branches to ensure all employers review existing sexual harassment policies and risk assessments to include third parties, working with relevant sections of the union to ensure that it is suitable for all public sector workers, including for remote and lone workers, as well as those in outsourced or private companies;
- 5) Work with LAOS to update existing training to include the new 'Worker Protection Act' and ensure that activists are equipped to hold employers accountable;
- 6) Continue to campaign to strengthen the existing laws regarding sexual harassment, including liability for third party harassment and through the Labour Link, lobby the government to do so;
- 7) Work with the national self organised group committees to continue to highlight the different experiences of different groups of workers, building on the legacy of recent 'Year of the' SOG campaigns, such as Year of the LGBT+ worker;
- 8) Promote UNISON's zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment within UNISON and ensure that there is appropriate support and policies in place for all members within UNISON, utilising TUC guidance and information.

Greater London Region

15. Unionising Against HIV Stigma for 2030

With just five years remaining until 2030, the UK's ambitious goals of achieving zero HIV stigma and zero new HIV cases are within sight but require sustained, intensified effort.

Conference acknowledges and commends the vital work already undertaken by the Greater London region to combat HIV-related stigma, particularly through the Self Organised Groups as part of the Year of LGBT+ Workers campaign. Conference also celebrates the participation of members from across the union at the National Delegate Conference fringe event, "Unionising against HIV Stigma in the Workplace."

However, Conference recognises that despite significant progress, much more remains to be done to eradicate HIV stigma, defined as negative attitudes and beliefs about people living with or affected by HIV, which continues to adversely affect thousands of individuals across London and the UK.

With over 100,000 people in the UK living with HIV, a significant proportion are from Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Plus (LGBT+) and Black communities. London remains disproportionately impacted, accounting for 32 percent of new diagnoses in 2021. Notably, certain groups continue to experience higher rates of late diagnosis, with 56 percent of Black African individuals and 50 percent of women diagnosed late.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

The persistence of stigma acts as a major barrier to HIV testing and treatment, compounded by widespread misinformation regarding the virus and its medical advancements. Encouragingly, 98 percent of people diagnosed with HIV in the UK have an undetectable viral load due to effective antiretroviral treatment, meaning they cannot transmit the virus through sexual contact, a fact encapsulated by the U=U (Undetectable = Untransmittable) message.

Many people are unaware that individuals living with HIV are legally protected under the disability protected characteristic of the Equality Act 2010. A lack of awareness among employers and workers regarding these protections highlights an urgent need for education and advocacy.

London region has led the way by supporting the development of the National AIDS Trust's (NAT) HIV Confident Charter mark programme, which seeks to reduce stigma within member organisations by increasing awareness, fostering positive attitudes towards people living with HIV, combating workplace discrimination, and providing clear channels for reporting stigma. This initiative is complemented by the development of an HIV in the Workplace model policy.

UNISON is uniquely positioned to play a transformative role in supporting the global fight against HIV, advocating for the rights of people living with the virus, and achieving zero new HIV cases by 2030. Through union strength, we can help create environments free of HIV stigma.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Expand the Unionising against HIV Stigma Campaign by:
 - a) Encourage branches to promote the adoption of NAT's HIV Confident Charter with the employers they work with;
 - b) Encourage branches to advocate for the implementation of UNISON's HIV in the Workplace model policy with the employers they work with;
 - c) Raising awareness through communications about the legal protections afforded to individuals with HIV under the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (General Data Protection Regulation);
 - d) Work with the national self-organised groups to raise awareness about how the virus disproportionately affects certain groups of workers;
 - e) Highlighting the impact of HIV stigma not only on individuals living with the virus but also on their friends, family, and close associates.
- 2) Publicise and support the Terrence Higgins Trust's "2030: HIV Time's Up!" Campaign to amplify public understanding and commitment to ending HIV stigma and new infections;
- 3) Engage with the Labour Link to lobby Labour MPs to campaign for commitments towards a new HIV Action Plan, reinforcing efforts to achieve zero new HIV cases and eliminate stigma by 2030.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Greater London Region

16. Unionising Against HIV Stigma for 2030

HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) remains one of the most stigmatised long-term health conditions. Our members living with HIV often face stigma, discrimination, prejudice, bullying and harassment in the workplace, in healthcare settings, and in their daily lives.

Conference notes that more than 100,000 people in the United Kingdom (UK) are living with HIV. This is not just a statistic: these are our friends, colleagues and loved ones.

Less than five years remain until we reach 2030, and the goals of zero stigma and zero new cases remain both tantalisingly close and yet still so far away.

Although there is currently no cure for HIV, medical treatment known as antiretroviral therapy (ART), available since the mid-1990s, can help people with the virus to remain fit and healthy, and prevent them from developing advanced HIV or AIDS. However, widespread stigma and discrimination remain barriers to people seeking testing, treatment and support.

Around 98 percent of people with diagnosed HIV in the UK are said to have an undetectable viral load. This means they are successfully treated with antiretrovirals, and the level of virus in their blood is so low that it cannot be measured at their regular checkups. This also means they are unable to pass the virus on to their partners through sexual contact, which is known as U=U – or Undetectable equals Untransmittable.

People with HIV are automatically covered by the protections accorded to disabled people under the Equality Act 2010, although many employers and workers are not aware of this, highlighting an urgent need for education and advocacy.

Conference commends the work already undertaken by Greater London Region to combat HIV-related stigma in its Unionising against HIV Stigma campaign, and celebrates the participation of members at the 2024 National Delegate Conference fringe event and regional training sessions.

The HIV Confident charter mark programme aims to reduce HIV stigma in member organisations and is a partnership between National AIDS Trust (NAT) and Positively UK, supported by Fast-Track Cities London. UNISON has supported NAT in developing an HIV in the Workplace model policy for HIV Confident, which was launched at a parliamentary reception for World AIDS Day 2024.

UNISON is uniquely positioned to play a transformative role in supporting the national and global response to HIV, advocating for the rights of people with the virus so they can live their best lives, and achieving zero new cases by 2030.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Expand the Unionising against HIV Stigma campaign by:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- a) Encouraging branches to advocate for the implementation of UNISON's HIV in the Workplace model policy with the employers they work with;
 - b) Raising awareness about the legal protections afforded to people living with HIV under the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (General Data Protection Regulation);
 - c) Working with self organised groups to raise awareness about how the virus disproportionately affects certain groups of workers;
 - d) Highlighting the impact of HIV stigma not only on people living with the virus themselves, but also on their friends, family and close associates;
- 2) Publicise and support Terrence Higgins Trust's 2030: HIV Time's Up! campaign to amplify public understanding and commitment to ending HIV stigma and new cases;
 - 3) Engage with Labour Link to lobby Labour MPs to secure pre-election commitments towards a new HIV Action Plan, reinforcing efforts to achieve zero new cases and zero stigma by 2030.

Middlesex University

17. Universal Credit

Conference notes Universal Credit is to help with living costs. If you or your partner are working, how much Universal Credit you get will depend on how much you earn. There's no limit to how many hours you can work and still get Universal Credit.

Conference is concerned that when back pay following a pay award is paid as a lump sum, for some people this may have the effect of reducing and in some case wiping out completely a member's universal credit payment for the period in which the back pay was paid. This results in them not receiving the benefits of the back pay and can result in hardship.

Conference recognises there is no easy solution that will work for every member as each member's situation is different but believes that for some members the option of having back pay paid across a number of months may assist them and that the DWP could be doing more to recognise back pay payment and apportion these across the period in which they relate, which would avoid member of universal credit losing all their entitlement in one month and have to lose spread over a number of months.

Conference believes that backpay is members' money and should be paid to members immediately in the majority of cases. However, in some cases it may be in the interests of some members for payment to be staggered, and in those cases, employers should facilitate this for those members who specifically request it – and only for those members.

Conference instructs the National Executive Council:

- 1) Raise this issue with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and request the relevant Universal Credit regulations and procedures are reviewed so it becomes possible to apportion back pay across the period in which it relates;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Request that the union's service group executives and sector committees to:
 - a) Seek to negotiate employers that they agree to stagger back payments over more than one month when specifically requested to do so by individual employees;
 - b) Lobby national employer organisations to provide advice to individual employers to allow staggered back payments as above.

Ipswich

17.1

Add the following after the fourth paragraph:

"Conference also recognises that the majority of proposals for the future of Universal Credit announced in the Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to get Britain working green paper will have a detrimental impact on our members, including disabled members and young members.

While we welcome the proposals for people to try work without losing additional financial support related to a health condition or disability, this is completely at odds with the proposal to 'rebalance' the Universal Credit standard allowance and the health element. People deemed to have limited capability for work (LCW) or limited capability for work and work-related activity (LCWRA) can receive up to £416.19 a month additional benefit which is tapered if they find work. The government are proposing to replace this with a £7-a-week increase in the standard allowance by 2029 – 2030. There is no evidence that this will help disabled people find work. Disabled workers will be significantly worse off and no wage rise will make up for the amount they have lost. The government is not consulting on this change.

In addition, the government are proposing to raise the age at which young disabled people can claim the health element of Universal Credit to 22 from 2026. They claim they will use the money saved to fund a new Youth Guarantee for young people in England aged 18 to 21. This will leave young disabled workers, who are likely to be in the lowest paid jobs, significantly worse off as they will lose the health element of their Universal Credit with little or no time to plan for the financial loss. There is limited consultation on this."

Add a new action point 3) that reads:

"3) Work with the National Disabled Members Committee through Labour Link to:

- a) Call for the government to carry out a full consultation on all current and future reforms to Universal Credit;
- b) Campaign against the current proposals to increase the age at which young people can claim the health element and to remove the health element from 2029."

National Disabled Members' Committee

Health and Safety

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

18. Improving Occupational Health

Inadequate Occupational Health (OH) support is preventing people from staying healthy and safe at work.

Conference notes, ill health is excluding record numbers of workers from the labour market, and experiences at work are implicated in the problem. By the end of 2023, 2.8 million people aged 16-64 were economically inactive due to illness and disability, reaching the highest level in recorded history. Among sickness benefits recipients, musculoskeletal and mental health conditions are the biggest contributors to being off sick. And most workers who have experienced these issues recently cite work as a contributing factor to their illness.

Solving this problem lies at the heart of addressing the UK's low growth, labour supply, and public service pressures. A 2008 review estimated the total annual cost to the taxpayer, including benefit costs, foregone taxes and additional health costs, is £60billion (£100billion today) while the economic costs from working days lost and worklessness (but excluding the costs of productivity losses that do not involve absence) were over £100billion (£175billion today). For comparison, the NHS budget for 2023/24 was £170billion. However, the scale of the problem is likely bigger, given illness related economic inactivity has increased and unfilled vacancies are about double what they were in 2008. Under these conditions, the NHS is feeling the pressure from both ends: healthcare professionals are dropping out while waiting lists remain long. Fabian Society survey research shows that 16 percent of over 50's without work are on an NHS waiting list and it is affecting their ability to work.

People struggle to access the flexibility and adjustments they need to stay well at work. People who do not provide evidence under the Equality Act and qualify for 'reasonable adjustments' fall through the cracks, whether they are protected by current legislation or not. But even those who provide this evidence may struggle to get the support they are entitled to, or face (legal or illegal) detriment after sharing confidential medical details.

The Work Foundation's 2024 research into tackling economic, inactivity recommends the government leads a strategic transformation of occupational health services focused on improved and extended coverage for all workers, with mandatory provision by large employers and that an examination of the practicalities of extending the duty of care for employers, subsidising the cost of long-term sickness absence, and incentivising vocational rehabilitation. Occupational health services aren't adequately available. Only 45 percent of workers in Britain currently have access to some form of occupational health service, which is significantly lower than many comparable countries. Moreover, just 18 percent of small employers provide this to their staff, meaning support is often missing where it is most needed.

Problems with occupational health support in the UK run beyond poor access and they are as true today as they were in 2008, when Dame Carol Black published her review on the health of the UK's working age population. Specific issues include:

- 1) Detachment from mainstream healthcare; The historical separation of occupational health from the NHS has restricted availability of holistic support;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Limited remit: Support excludes people without work. It also traditionally neglects proactive promotion of health and wellbeing, and occupational rehabilitation;
- 3) Inconsistent quality: Limited professional standards means there is no guarantee of quality where services are available;
- 4) Accountability: Some regard occupational health as part of sickness absence management and human resources functions, rather than supporting worker health;
- 5) Diminishing workforce: A declining occupational health workforce and insufficient entry into the sector is resulting in capacity constraints and de-professionalisation.

The government's white paper published on the 26 November 2024 'Get Britain Working White Paper' states it will be "Launching an independent review into the role of the UK employers in promoting healthy and inclusive workplaces". It appears a primary focus for the government is to boost support and work incentives for those who have fallen into economic inactivity, including interventions for those with long-term illnesses. The Government has set an ambitious target to raise the employment rate to 80 percent which would represent an increase of approximately 2.4 million more people in work than today.

Conference believes we need a radical rethink of health at work, treating it as central to our economy and public services. This means a better occupational health provision. And better ways to manage health at work, prioritising prevention and early rehabilitation to maintain people's links with work, through partnership between workers, employers and healthcare professionals.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Develop policy recommendations on occupational health interventions, standards, access and identify options to reform practices, helping to place UNISON at the centre of the policy debate;
- b) Work with relevant structures in our union to continue lobbying the government to deliver on its commitment to review health and safety guidance and regulations, with a view to modernising legislation and guidance.
- c) Support UNISON service groups and other parts of the union to illustrate the impact of the problem which results from gaps in support for members to stay well in work, and to rehabilitate if they become ill.

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

19. Improving Occupational Health

UNISON United Utilities branch believes inadequate Occupational Health (OH) support is preventing people from staying healthy and safe at work.

Conference notes, ill health is excluding record numbers of workers from the labour market, and experiences at work are implicated in the problem. By the end of 2023, 2.8 million people aged 16-64 were economically inactive due to illness and

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

disability, reaching the highest level in recorded history. Among sickness benefits recipients, musculoskeletal and mental health conditions are the biggest contributors to being off sick. Most workers who have experienced these issues recently cite work as a contributing factor to their illness.

Solving this problem lies at the heart of addressing the UK's low growth, labour supply, and public service pressures whether those providers are in the public or private sector. A 2008 review estimated the total annual cost to the taxpayer, including benefit costs, foregone taxes and additional health costs, is £60billion (£100billion today) while the economic costs from working days lost and worklessness (but excluding the costs of productivity losses that do not involve absence) were over £100billion (£175billion today). For comparison, the NHS budget for 2023-24 was £170billion. However, the scale of the problem is likely bigger, given illness-related economic inactivity has increased and unfilled vacancies are about double what they were in 2008. Under these conditions, the NHS is feeling the pressure from both ends: healthcare professionals are dropping out while waiting lists remain long. A Fabian Society survey shows that 16 per cent of over-50s without work are on an NHS waiting list and it is affecting their ability to work.

People struggle to access the flexibility and adjustments they need to stay well at work. People who do not provide evidence under the Equality Act and qualify for 'reasonable adjustments' fall through the cracks, whether they are protected by current legislation or not. But even those who provide this evidence may struggle to get the support they are entitled to, or face (legal or illegal) detriment after sharing confidential medical details.

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Occupational health services are not adequately available. Only 45 per cent of workers in Britain currently have access to some form of occupational health service, which is significantly lower than many comparable countries. Moreover, just 18 per cent of small employers provide this to their employees, meaning support is often missing where it is most needed.

Problems with occupational health support in the UK runs beyond poor access and they are as true today as they were in 2008, when Dame Carol Black published her review on the health of the UK's working-age population. Specific issues include:

- 1) Detachment from mainstream healthcare: The historical separation of occupational health from the NHS has restricted availability of holistic support;
- 2) Limited remit: Support excludes people without work. It also traditionally neglects the proactive promotion of health and wellbeing, and occupational rehabilitation;
- 3) Inconsistent quality: Limited professional standards mean there is no guarantee of quality where services are available;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 4) Accountability: Some regard occupational health as part of sickness absence management and human resources functions, rather than supporting worker's health;
- 5) Diminishing workforce: A declining occupational health workforce and insufficient entry into the sector is resulting in capacity constraints and de-professionalisation.

The government published on the 26 November 2024, a Get Britain Working White Paper stating it will be "Launching an independent review into the role of UK employers in promoting healthy and inclusive workplaces". It appears a primary focus for the government is to boost support and work incentives for those who have fallen into economic inactivity, including interventions for those with long-term illnesses. The government has set an ambitious target to raise the employment rate to 80 per cent – which would represent an increase of approximately 2.4 million more people in work than today.

Conference believes we need a radical rethink of health at work, treating it as central to our economy and public services. This means a better occupational health provision, better ways to manage health at work, prioritising prevention and early rehabilitation to maintain people's links with work, through partnership between workers, employers and their trade unions and healthcare professionals.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Develop policy recommendations on occupational health interventions, standards, access and identify options to reform practices, helping to place UNISON at the centre of the policy debate;
- b) Work with relevant structures in our union to continue lobbying the government to deliver on its commitment to review health and safety guidance and regulations, with a view to modernising legislation and guidance;
- c) Support all UNISON service groups and other parts of the union to illustrate the impact of the problem which results from gaps in support for members to stay well in work, and to rehabilitate if they become ill.

United Utilities

20. High Working Temperatures - a Workplace Issue

Conference notes with alarm that 2024 turned out to be the hottest year on record. We recognise this as the result of climate change, with an average increase of 1.22 degrees celsius from pre-industrial levels.

Not surprisingly workplace temperatures are increasingly becoming a health and safety issue, particularly in the public sector where crippling cuts to funding have seen our infrastructures crumbling. In hospitals for example, health workers can find themselves treating patients in temperatures well above 30 degrees celsius in the summer months. Not only does this have a detrimental effect on patients but is a serious threat to staff who can suffer from loss of concentration, tiredness and other symptoms of heat stress.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

There is no legal maximum temperature but, the Workplace Health Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992, state that the temperature inside workplace buildings must be 'reasonable'. The Approved Code of Practice also states that 'all reasonable steps should be taken to achieve a comfortable temperature' and that 'effective and suitable provision shall be made to ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air'. Unfortunately, this legal obligation is being ignored by many employers, who force us to work harder and harder with less and less resources. The TUC has for years called for a maximum temperature of 30 degrees celsius, or 27 degrees celsius for strenuous work. With a new government in office now is the time to make this a reality.

UNISON plays a vital role in defending workers' Health and Safety conditions at work, Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for properly funded public services and to include provision to upgrade insulation, air conditioning and ventilation alongside other health and safety improvements to public buildings;
- 2) To campaign for public ownership of the energy sector with workers control and management (with compensation only based on proven need) to ensure working conditions are prioritised and capacity is sufficient to allow green alternatives;
- 3) Support Health and Safety reps to demand improvements in working conditions including alternative arrangements in hot weather, including temporarily stopping work if conditions are not 'reasonable' or 'comfortable';
- 4) Work with Labour Link to lobby the government to strengthen Health and Safety legislation to include a legal maximum workplace temperature of 30 degrees celsius and 27 degrees celsius for strenuous work.

Southampton Hospitals

Pensions

21. Gender Pensions Gap

We note that UNISON has been at the forefront of fighting for Equal Pay and tackling the Gender Pay Gap. However, the experience in pensions is very different. Government Actuary's Department statistics indicate that the Gender Pension Gap in England and Wales is 63 percent in the NHS Pension Scheme, and 49 percent in the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Research has shown that the reasons behind this gap are varied, but include:

- 1) Different working patterns (for example taking time off work for caring responsibilities, or working part time);
- 2) Different earnings (women on average earn less than men);
- 3) Women being more likely to work in contracted out jobs with poorer pension schemes;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 4) Women being more likely to work part time and so earn below the lower threshold for auto-enrolment;
- 5) How divorce settlements treat pensions.

We believe that women deserve equality in retirement as much as they deserve equality in their working lives, and public employment and public sector pension schemes should be at the forefront of removing this discrimination.

Therefore, we call on the National Executive Council to work with service groups, self organised groups, and Labour Link to:

- a) Publicise the existence of the Gender Pensions Gap to members;
- b) Campaign for the Gender Pensions Gap injustice to be rectified;
- c) Issue materials to members to help educate them about this;
- d) Raise this issue with employers;
- e) Write to pension schemes covering UNISON members asking them to research and disclose their Gender Pension Gaps.

Grampian Health

22. Divest Our Pension Fund

Conference notes that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) with 6.4 million members is the largest defined benefit scheme in England and Wales, holding over £370 billion in total assets valued in 2022, which are concentrated (two-thirds) in pooled investment vehicles.

Conference notes that research conducted for the Palestine Solidarity Campaign indicates that LGPS investments include more than £4.5 billion in companies that are engaged in supplying armaments and/or surveillance technology to the Israeli military, and others that are complicit in the construction of Israeli settlements on occupied Palestinian land in violation of international law.

Conference further notes and welcomes that UNISON has been to the fore among trade unions in Britain in building support for a campaign “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” among its own members and the wider trade union movement in solidarity with the Palestinian people. The union has published a number of very useful guides on divestment for use by branches.

Conference believes that those companies currently supplying weaponry and logistical support to the Israeli military risk not only reputational damage but also significant financial and legal risks.

Conference further believes that many LGPS members, whether they currently pay into the scheme or are beneficiaries will be concerned by such investments being made on their behalf without their knowledge or informed consent.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Continue to support the union's efforts for divestment from those companies that supply weaponry to the Israeli military and other repressive regimes;
- 2) Campaign proactively for ethical investment of our pensions – no war, no occupation, no fossil fuel extraction;
- 3) Work with all relevant parts of the union to achieve these aims, and particularly with the National Retired Members Committee as many of our retired members are now living off the proceeds of such investments and should also have a voice.

Camden

22.1

Insert new paragraph before "Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:"

"Conference deplores the call in March 2025 of the so-called 'Labour growth group of MPs' for Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investment rules to be waived for arms manufacturers by banks and investment funds."

National Young Members' Forum

Campaigning

Campaigns

23. Rise of the Far Right

Conference notes with deep alarm an upsurge in activity by the far right, aided by the growing normalisation of far right ideas and rhetoric in politics. These range from increasing permission given to racist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, antisemitic, misogynistic as well as violent language targeting political opponents on social media and in real life. Anti-immigrant and Islamophobic rhetoric has risen to a new level with extreme language targeting particular communities being voiced by mainstream politicians. Rhetoric about 'small boats' from both Tory and Labour politicians have further put the rights of vulnerable refugees at risk. Eugenicist ideas targeting disabled people, Black communities and LGBT+ people has gained greater currency. This has gone hand in hand with deeply misogynistic ideas about women, their place in society, control of their bodies and their right to choose.

Against this backdrop, UNISON's ongoing commitment to equality, social justice and a fairer world at work and beyond faces greater challenges. Conference asserts that our commitment to tackling discrimination and fighting for a fairer and more equal world will not waver, but instead grow stronger. This commitment includes fighting the far right and its ideas at the ballot box, in the workplace, on the streets, and in society. Conference notes that these ideas and language are no longer confined to the fringes of society or street violence by fringe groups but are being articulated by powerful and influential voices in mainstream politics.

Conference is deeply concerned at the success enjoyed by Reform in the General Election. Its attempts to divide communities, attack migrants and other vulnerable groups and claims to champion working class people obscure how its policies stand

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

counter to the interests of working people of all backgrounds and benefit no one but those who want to slash and burn UK regulations for private profit.

Reform's hateful rhetoric especially towards immigrants and LGBT+ people will leave communities divided. The Reform manifesto's attacks on benefits and on disabled people's rights include a call for all job seekers and "those fit to work" will have to find employment within four months or accept a job after two offers or face benefit withdrawal. Reform's manifesto also calls for all assessments for PIP and work capability assessment to take place face to face.

While Farage, leader of Reform has called himself, "anti-establishment", his party seeks to attack the rights of women, Black, disabled and LGBT+ people and voted with the Tory party against the Employment Rights Bill. Rather than seeking to strengthen the rights of working people in the UK, they attack them.

Reform's manifesto said, "scrap thousands of laws that hold back British business and damage productivity including employment laws. We must make it easier to hire and fire". It also called for the cutting of "unnecessary regulations" from the EU calling them "nanny state regulations" including Health and Safety and anti-discrimination laws. Reform also intends to scrap net zero targets leaving our future at risk. Reform would damage the NHS, with policies for vouchers for private healthcare treatment, tax relief for private insurance and job cuts for "back room" staff. Its economic policies will cost us all. Its call to leave the European Convention of Human Rights will diminish all our rights.

The electoral growth of Reform has been mirrored by growth on the streets of Stephen Yaxley-Lennon (aka Tommy Robinson). Twice last year he mobilised thousands to march through central London. He called for his supporters to vote Reform and used blatantly Islamophobic language. Trade unions and anti-racist campaigners were central to organising counter protests to challenge these marches.

While espousing nationalist politics, the far right across Europe have found common cause across national borders. The far right have been resurgent in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, and the Netherlands. In the 2024 European Parliament elections, the far right won 150 of the 720 seats. A new and emboldened far right politics is unapologetically promoting an alarming vision of an all-white Europe with promotion of racist, antisemitic conspiracy theories about 'the great replacement'. The European far right as a movement have also gained a powerful new ally in Donald Trump and his allies in the world of business and media. The UK and its democracy has come under sustained attack by the far right, corroding our politics and endangering communities and individuals.

Conference condemns the horrific violence in Southport where three little girls were murdered and eight other children were left grievously harmed by Axel Rudakubana. Their families and their community have been left irreparably wounded. The actions of the far right, exploiting this tragedy, attacking communities and attacks on public service workers including police and healthcare workers are unforgiveable. Violence erupted in a manner that many thought consigned to history. Black people were physically attacked in public spaces. Houses where Muslim people were suspected to be residing were attacked street by street. Shops and community spaces were

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

looted and attacked. Public service workers were assaulted. Most alarmingly of all there were attempts to burn down accommodations housing asylum seeker families who were terrified and trapped as attackers laughed and joked about killing them. The violence raged like wildfire, racing across cities and towns, organised online but emerging in the most brutal ways on our streets. HOPE not Hate research helped expose a key ring leader of the riots, a dangerous neo-Nazi who made racist and violent threats against Jews and Muslim people and attempted further escalations in local communities. Racists were emboldened, racial slurs came thick and fast on videos and graffitied on walls. Violence against “foreigners”, Black people, and migrants, were not only threatened, but enacted. Conference welcomes the unequivocal responses by communities across the UK to challenge the far-right, rebuild public spaces and express anti-racist solidarity. Conference welcomes the initiatives led by Stand Up To Racism to oppose these riots and prevent their planned repeat the following week.

Conference is proud at the role played by UNISON at every level in supporting our members and challenging the rhetoric of hate and division. Whether it was picking up the pieces in the aftermath of the riots, supporting our members who feared being targeted by violence, taking part in rallies to defend public spaces and communities against threatened mobilisations by the far right, or strongly speaking out to challenge those who sought to defend or excuse racist violence, UNISON and its members led the way.

Conference asserts that the struggle for equality and social justice is at the core of our work. It is the foundation of a public service ethos built on the labour of workers of all backgrounds serving all communities. This has been at the heart of our commitment to tackling the far-right and the politics of hate whether at the ballot box, in our public spaces or in the workplace.

Conference further asserts that strong and active trade unions bargaining and negotiating to raise pay and standards for all members at workplace level is the most effective response to the attempts by the far right to make in-roads into our communities.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the TUC, STUC, ICTU and TUC Cymru and affiliated unions to renew the trade union struggle against the far right wherever they organise;
- 2) Challenge Reform’s policies for the workplace and society, raise awareness of their risks and hold to account Reform’s elected representatives;
- 3) Working with the International Committee, support the work of trade unions across Europe and the world as they face the challenge of the far right;
- 4) Continue our work with a wide coalition of anti racist groups at national and local level to support local community organising against racism and xenophobia, including branches affiliating and working with HOPE not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card and Stand up to Racism;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 5) Continue to develop, promote and implement training materials and campaigning resources to challenge the politics of hate, discrimination and prejudice;
- 6) Continue to support TUC activity to mark UN anti-racism day;
- 7) Have a renewed focus on collective bargaining and trade union activity, working with self-organised groups to challenge racism and xenophobia in the workplace and beyond.

National Executive Council

23.1

Insert after the third paragraph:

“Conference notes that Reform, as well as Far Right and Fascist groups have benefited from fourteen years of Conservative government, which created the conditions for right wing extremism and Fascism to grow. These conditions include widespread and growing economic hardship; a general sense of unfairness; an almost complete break in trust with a political class that is increasingly seen as out of touch with millions of people; the constant demonisation and scapegoating of minorities, including trans people, asylum seekers and Muslims; and, maybe above all, a lack of hope.”

Insert new point 3):

“3) Work with Labour Link to encourage the Labour Party to consistently and unequivocally reject the hateful narratives promoted by Reform and others, and to commit to providing progressive and inclusive solutions to the problems faced by our communities;”

Renumber the remaining action points accordingly.

Merseytravel and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

23.2

After the 12th paragraph, ending “...into our communities.”, add a new paragraph:

“Linked to this has to be the clear and unequivocal demand for an end to anti-immigrant sentiment from all those connected to the labour movement. Fighting racism at the ballot box cannot be limited to supporting the least objectionable candidate. It needs to be based on support for genuinely anti-racist candidates as well as support for genuine demands that unite all workers, including measures which make it easier for trade unions to organise to win. Unity of working people in struggle, both industrially and politically, is the key to undermining the backward ideas of the right.”

University of Brighton

23.3

In action point 3) after "trade unions" add: "and affiliated organisations such as ILGA Europe."

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

In action point 7) after "racism" add: ", LGBT+ phobia"

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

24. Standing Together Against Far Right Organisations and Individuals

Conference Notes:

- 1) The alarming rise of far right violence and hate crimes in the UK, particularly targeting Black communities, migrants, and asylum seekers;
- 2) The increasingly hostile environment, particularly in the summer 2024 perpetuated by far right violence and ideology, fuelled by divisive rhetoric, misinformation, Islamophobia and hate speech across social media and other platforms;
- 3) Reports from independent bodies, and government statistics highlighted that the growth of racially motivated attacks have had a detrimental impact on the safety, mental health, and overall wellbeing of Black members across the UK. Additionally, far right organisations have capitalised on economic and social hardships, exacerbating racial tensions, and fostering division.

Conference believes:

- a) That far right violence is a direct threat to the values of equality, diversity, and human rights that UNISON upholds;
- b) That the rise of far right extremism has deep roots in systemic racism, discrimination, and economic inequalities, which disproportionately affect Black communities;
- c) That Black members have the right to live free from the fear of violence, discrimination, and harassment.

Conference acknowledges the spirit shown by communities supporting each other in the aftermath of terrible violence, proving that extremist beliefs are unwelcome and not representative of the unity and success of multiculturalism in the United Kingdom.

Conference believes that UNISON and all other affiliated trade unions, must be at the forefront of challenging racism, extremism, and discrimination in all its forms.

Conference resolves to call on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Commit to raising awareness among UNISON members of the dangers of far right extremism, providing resources to empower members to stand against racism, hate speech, and violence in the workplace and communities;
- ii) Signpost activists to mental health support services tailored for Black members affected by racial trauma and harassment, and demand employers take their duty of care seriously in creating safe and inclusive workplaces;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- iii) Explore with Labour Link how action can be taken to address the long term causes in far right violence and hate crimes are being discussed in the Labour Link Forum ensuring adequate resources for policing, community support, and educational initiatives aimed at tackling racism and extremism;
- iv) Engage with regions and branches to work with organisations who have signed UNISON's Anti-Racism Charter to follow up on the methodology used to implement the commitments in the charter and share best practice;
- v) Work with anti-racist organisations, such as Stand Up to Racism, Hope not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card, Tell Mama, Runnymede Trust, and local communities and faith groups to combat the growing influence of far right ideologies and promote unity, solidarity, and inclusion;
- vi) Encourage UNISON to support campaigns and initiatives aimed at strengthening Black communities, promoting civic engagement, and addressing the systemic inequalities that contribute to the rise of far right movements;
- vii) Reaffirm UNISON's commitment to being an anti-racist union by ensuring that all its structures, policies, and activities reflect this commitment and work toward the eradication of racism in all its forms;
- viii) Share good practice across all regions to encourage use of the UNISON North West pamphlet on Tackling Hate: Advice for Branches, produced in October 2024.

National Black Members' Committee

24.1

In point b) add "climate denialism," after "discrimination,"

National Executive Council

25. Tackling the Far Right and Opposing the Politics of Hate

Conference recalls the horrific attacks on the community in Southport, in the North West Region, in July 2024 when an individual stabbed a total of eleven children (three fatally) and two adults - an event which came to have national resonance.

Conference further recalls that, following this event, deliberate misrepresentation and false information provoked widespread violent disorder orchestrated by far right actors which targeted asylum seekers and minoritised communities across our nations. The victims, their families and the impacted communities of our nations were supported and sustained during these events by an active, responsive, and dedicated range of UNISON members across all our service groups.

Conference notes that UNISON membership is 75 percent female, more diverse than the United Kingdom (UK) as a whole, provides public services for everyone everywhere in Britain and is at the heart of sustaining functioning inclusive communities.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

As trade unionists it is in our DNA to challenge the politics of division and hate, as it threatens the interests and wellbeing of public service workers everywhere and the unity and cohesion of the communities we serve.

Internationally, we are confronted by the threat of a growing and emboldened far right. In 2024, Europe saw a clear shift to the right, with both the European elections and national polls in France, Portugal, Belgium, and Austria showing a move towards right-wing and extreme-right politics. The traction these populist right-wing movements have gained at the ballot box is more alarming when placed against the background of existing right-wing national governments in other European states.

At home, multiple crises, exacerbated by the failure of the 40 year experiment in neo-liberalism and 14 years of Tory austerity, including a cost-of-living crisis, a housing crisis, a crisis in health and care, a crisis in public services, and a climate crisis, all reinforce the economic pessimism that undermines trust in politics and hope for the future.

Into this void, the populist far right seeks to sow fear and division by turning worker against worker, neighbour against neighbour. They are driven by ideological hatred or cynically seeking to gain political support or distract from the real causes of problems.

Conference notes that UNISON has consistently stood up against the far right. We continue to work with partners like Hope not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card and Stand Up to Racism and have actively challenged the British National Party (BNP), the English Defence League (EDL), Tommy Robinson, and the UK Independence Party (UKIP).

This proud record of partnership working to combat racism, fascism and extremism is underpinned by our commitment to continuous training, development, awareness raising and capacity building towards forging a strong, resilient and responsive anti-racist movement within our UNISON membership.

Now, more than ever, we must continue to provide that leadership and develop those partnerships with organisations and grass-roots movements which seek to combat hatred, division and the scapegoating of already marginalised communities.

The specific threats in the UK include the intimidatory demonstrations targeting asylum seekers, street demonstrations, including the appalling riots in summer 2024 and the proliferation of an online post-organisational far-right.

Yet more insidious is the rightward movement of electoral politics, spearheaded by the leadership of Reform UK, exploiting divisive narratives, whilst the Conservative Party desperately tries to keep them at bay by moving itself further rightwards.

We also face increasingly ill-informed hostility to our cohesion from 'global influencers' such as Elon Musk and a range of other social media giants who seek to impose their world view via new methods of communication.

Conference believes that it is our job to take on this threat in partnership with others. Our members pay the price when hate comes to town and bear the brunt of pulling

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

things back together. We have a legitimate stake and a unique insight to bring to this challenge.

Our experience of public services and campaigning against the far right tells us:

- 1) Essential to defeating the politics of hate is to provide more hopeful answers and support more hopeful solutions;
- 2) The best way to truly call out the far right is to accurately identify each threat posed and continually adapt to the ever-changing milieu to respond appropriately in each case;
- 3) Defeating the far right involves not just showing they are morally wrong, but that they have no answers, and their proposals will make things worse;
- 4) The electoral threat is posed not by most people being supportive of the far right, far from it, but by the far right building a critical mass that can give them an electoral base to build upon. 'Zero tolerance' implies securing voting patterns whereby they cannot win elections. We must mobilise those who oppose them, convince those who are unsure, and draw away those that support them by better answers and exposing the inadequacy and irrelevance of the far right to their daily problems.
- 5) More importantly, we do not dismiss people who agree with the views promoted by the far right. We draw away their support and isolate the extremists. We do this by addressing concerns and reassuring fears in one-to-one conversations;
- 6) Solving our problems is about planning for and treating people fairly (whether there are more or fewer) rather than refusing to plan for those the far-right wish were not there and thereby creating chaos for us all;
- 7) UNISON activists are especially well placed to have difficult conversations with members and others to bring reassurance, hope, and alternatives. We are trusted more than politicians or other media sources.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Adopt and develop a proactive strategy to tackle the far right, wrapped around UNISON's core objectives;
- b) Highlight and promote successful training initiatives which can be utilised by UNISON structures to combat racism, fascism and the arguments advanced by the far-right, working in partnership with affiliate organisations.

North West Region

25.1

In seventh paragraph at end add:

“and their clear common, and deliberately divisive, threats of racism, misogyny, homophobia, discrimination, climate denialism and fascism.”

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

National Executive Council

26. Combating the Global Rise of Far Right Movements through Solidarity and Strong Public Services

Conference expresses profound concern over the disturbing rise of far right movements worldwide. These movements, which thrive on division and conflict, pose a serious threat to the principles of democracy, equality, and workers' rights that form the cornerstone of our union values.

Conference believes the state has a crucial role to play in counteracting this trend through the provision of strong fully funded public services. Education, health care, social welfare, and housing are essential for building strong, cohesive communities that can withstand the forces of division and hate. These services not only meet basic human needs but also promote a sense of unity and common purpose among diverse populations.

Conference unequivocally condemns public figures like Elon Musk who fuel tensions and division by engaging in inflammatory rhetoric and demonstrating support for far right figures such as Tommy Robinson. Such endorsements seek to legitimise far right ideologies, contributing to a climate ripe for division and undermining the efforts to foster community cohesion and solidarity.

Trade unions, as international movements, have always stood at the forefront of the struggle to unite working class people across all divides, be it national, ethnic, or economic. In the face of rising far right ideologies, it is imperative that UNISON not only continue this tradition but also intensify efforts. We are uniquely positioned to educate, mobilise, and support our members, advocating for policies and practices that foster social inclusion and justice.

To address these challenges, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for robust public funding in essential services such as education, housing and health care to ensure they remain strong and accessible to all, reinforcing the fabric of our communities;
- 2) Campaign within our membership to raise awareness of the dangers posed by far right movements and the importance of community solidarity;
- 3) Strengthen ties with other trade unions and international workers' organisations to share resources, strategies, and support, reinforcing the global labour movement's response to these divisive forces;
- 4) Continue to support the work of Hope Not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card and similar organisations who actively work within our communities to counter extreme ideologies;
- 5) Commit to taking a proactive stance against far-right movements by nurturing solidarity among workers worldwide and advocating for public policies that build cohesive, resilient communities.

East Midlands Region

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

26.1

Replace point 4) with:

"4) Work with anti-racist organisations, such as Stand Up to Racism, Hope not Hate, Show Racism the Red Card, Tell Mama, Runnymede Trust, and local communities and faith groups to combat the growing influence of far right ideologies and promote unity, solidarity, and inclusion;"

Barnet Local Government

27. Campaign against Reform UK

Conference notes with concern:

- 1) Reform UK uses racist scapegoating, blaming migrants and Muslims for problems in society;
- 2) Reform UK proposed massive cuts to the public sector during its 2024 general election manifesto;
- 3) Reform UK wants to scrap the NHS as it is and promotes private health care insurance;
- 4) Reform UK's neo-liberal economic policies desire a much smaller state which would mean even deeper cuts than those made after 14 years of Tory austerity;
- 5) Reform UK's leader, Nigel Farage, stated that the Liz Truss budget that crashed the economy was "the best Conservative budget since 1986.";
- 6) The multi-billionaire Elon Musk plans to cut a third of all US government jobs under the Trump administration;
- 7) Reform UK is receiving serious financial support from millionaires and billionaires.

Conference believes:

- a) Reform UK is using racism to gain popularity so that it can pursue neo-liberal economic policies that are essentially anti-working class by rolling back the welfare state, destroying the NHS, and pushing 'free market' policies into other areas of the public sector;
- b) Reform UK is a threat to anyone who works in the public sector;
- c) That Reform UK in government would be a massive set back for all equality policies;
- d) That defeating the electoral threat of far right parties has been achieved in previous decades by campaigning directly against them and that the rise of Reform UK can be reversed.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- i) Expose the anti public sector policies of Reform UK to all UNISON members through producing publicity and communications to all members;
- ii) Oppose the racist scapegoating from Reform UK;
- iii) Work with the wider trade union and labour movement to expose both the racism and anti-working class nature of Reform UK;
- iv) Work with Labour Link to encourage the Labour Party and Labour party members, to join campaigns against Reform UK;
- v) Actively support campaigns against Reform UK in any forthcoming local or national elections, working with anti racist groups such as Stand Up to Racism.

***West Midlands Region
Birmingham***

28. Campaign Against Racist Reform UK

Conference notes with concern:

- 1) Reform UK uses racist scapegoating, blaming migrants and Muslims for problems in society;
- 2) Reform UK proposed massive cuts to the public sector during its 2024 general election manifesto;
- 3) Reform UK wants to scrap the NHS as it is and promotes private health care insurance.;
- 4) Reform UK's neo-liberal economic policies desire a much smaller state which would mean even deeper cuts than those made after 14 years of Tory austerity;
- 5) Reform UK's leader, Nigel Farage, stated that the Liz Truss budget that crashed the economy was "the best Conservative budget since 1986;"
- 6) The multi-billionaire Elon Musk plans to cut a third of all US government jobs under the Trump administration;
- 7) Reform UK is receiving serious financial support from millionaires and billionaires.

Conference believes:

- a) Reform UK is using racism to gain popularity so that it can pursue neo-liberal economic policies that are essentially anti-working class by rolling back the welfare state, destroying the NHS, and pushing 'free market' policies into other areas of the public sector;
- b) Reform UK is a threat to anyone who works in the public sector;
- c) That Reform UK in government would be a massive set back for all equality policies;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- d) That defeating the electoral threat of far right parties has been achieved in previous decades by campaigning directly against them and that the rise of Reform UK can be reversed.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- i) Expose the anti-public sector policies of Reform UK to all UNISON members through producing publicity and communications to all members;
- ii) Oppose the racist scapegoating from Reform UK;
- iii) Work with the wider trade union and labour movement to expose both the racism and anti-working class nature of Reform UK;
- iv) Encourage the Labour Party and Labour party members, through Labour Link, to join campaigns against Reform UK;
- v) Actively support campaigns against Reform UK in any forthcoming local or national elections, working with anti-racist groups such as Stand Up to Racism.

Sandwell General

29. Hate Crime Equality

Conference is concerned that current hate crime laws are in disarray and that the way crimes motivated by 'hate' are recorded is inconsistent. Manufactured culture wars have allowed malicious players to make some groups seen as 'less deserving' of protection than others.

This can be seen in the latest College of Policing (CoP) guidance on the recording of non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs). These are incidents that don't reach the threshold of a crime but may be the first signs of deteriorating behaviour and increased victimisation.

After the tragic death of Fiona Pilkington and her disabled daughter it was found that police had failed to connect dozens of separate calls about local youths targeting the family. The case was one of the reasons why NCHI recording was introduced.

However, when Harry Miller, a former police officer, challenged the way NCHIs are recorded after making transphobic comments, the courts found in his favour. This led to the CoP revising their guidance so that perpetrators details are no longer recorded on NCHIs. This change makes it virtually impossible to identify patterns of concern in an individual's behaviour before it escalates into abuse, assault or worse.

Conference is further concerned that if a hate crime does reach the threshold to be recorded it can only be treated as an aggravated offence if it was motivated by religion or race.

Courts can impose an enhanced sentence when it is shown that the perpetrator was motivated by the disability, sexual orientation or the gender identity of their victim but this does not always happen. Even when an offence is recorded as a 'hate crime' the court may decide not to treat it as one and a lesser sentence can be imposed.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Additionally, the law on stirring up racial hatred can apply if the person committing the offence was insulting, threatening or abusive. For other protected characteristics an offence is only recognised as stirring up hatred if the behaviour is proved to be threatening and not if it was insulting or abusive.

In 2021, the Law Commission consulted on whether hate crime law should be clearer and more consistent. They found that the unequal treatment of different types of hate crime was unfair and recommended changing the law so all types of hate crimes are treated the same. The changes have not been implemented.

According to government statistics, 140,561 hate crimes were recorded in England and Wales for the year to March 2024. Although this is a five percent decrease on the previous year there are concerns that this could be due to some hate crimes not being recorded correctly. This is especially concerning for disability hate crime reporting as evidence suggests disabled people are less likely to be believed and more likely to be seen as unreliable witnesses.

Government data also shows that the number of hate crimes recorded to March 2024 was 33 percent higher than in March 2020. In the same time disability hate crime has increased by 38%, hate crime motivated by sexual orientation is up 44 percent and transgender hate crime has risen by 88 percent.

Hate crime is personal. Perpetrators usually target vulnerable people and reinforce stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Disabled people are often targeted because elements of the media portray them as work-shy scroungers who are a burden on society.

The law also fails to recognise that intersectionality can increase the risk of someone being a target of hate crime. And there is no hate crime legislation relating to gender, including for non-binary and gender diverse people, who can be seen as an easy target by some perpetrators.

Conference believes that all hate crime should be treated equally and that the option to charge perpetrators with aggravated offences should be extended to all hate crimes.

Conference also believes that all hate incidents, including the identity of the perpetrator should be properly recorded. This would help identify patterns of behaviour and before an individual's actions become a crime.

The Labour Party manifesto 2024 stated that if elected a Labour government will "protect LGBT+ and disabled people by making all existing strands of hate crime an aggravated offence" but disappointingly this commitment was not included in the King's Speech.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National Disabled Members Committee, other self organised groups and the Police, Probation and CAF/CASS Service Group Executive to identify, raise awareness and campaign for the removal of inequalities in hate crime legislation;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Work with Labour Link to lobby the Labour Party to stand by their manifesto promise to make all existing strands of hate crime an aggravated offence.

National Disabled Members' Committee

30. Don't Take Our Winter Fuel Allowance Away!

Conference expresses its concern at the shocking announcement at the end of July 2024, by the Labour government, that those State Pensioners not entitled to benefits will no longer get the Winter Fuel Allowance from autumn 2024.

The Winter Fuel Allowance is specifically designed to help cover winter heating costs. Many pensioners rely on this payment and are amongst those most likely to be affected by the cost of fuel and rises in energy costs.

It is not part of the Pensions Triple Lock, which is designed to cover the rise in the cost of living. It has been estimated that under the Triple Lock mechanism the new state pension will rise by £460 per year in April 2025, and the old state pension by £353. Conference notes that this means a pensioner over 80 on the old state pension will (after compensating for the loss of the Winter Fuel Payment) will be better off by a guinea a week in 2025/6.

It is estimated that 10 million pensioners in England alone have lost their right to this annual payment from autumn 2024 worth between £100 and £300.

Conference notes that although the decision initially only applied to England and Wales, further constraints placed on the Scottish government's funding resulted in similar restrictions on the Pension Age Winter Heating Payment in Scotland being announced on 14 August 2024.

Conference notes the government won a vote in the House of Commons to go forward with this change on 10 September 2024, despite there being no Impact Statement on the consequences of the proposal being made available, no mandate for the proposal being contained in the 2024 Labour General Election manifesto, and, at Prime Minister's Questions on 1 May 2024, Sir Kier Starmer asking Rishi Sunak, "Will the Prime Minister rule out taking Winter Fuel Payments off them (pensioners) to help fund his £45 billion black hole?"

Conference further notes that the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) stated it had received 38,000 new applications for Pension Credit in the five weeks following the announcement of 29 July, however in an "equalities analyses" released by the DWP after Freedom of Information requests on 14 September 2024, the DWP estimated a further 780,000 people were eligible for Pension Credit but had yet to claim it. Conference notes that this matter is not helped by the DWP application form for Pension Credit which runs to 24 pages and 243 questions.

Pension Credit (which in itself needs change) is an 'all or nothing' benefit. If your income is a few pounds under the limit, you get the benefits but stray even a few pounds over and you get nothing. This change will penalise those who are the poorest in society removing their small cushion of finance at a time when extra heating is required at the coldest time of the year.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Age UK has estimated that more than two million people who are only just above the eligibility threshold for Pension Credit will no longer qualify and who will be hardest hit by this decision. A means tested benefit has more than a whiff of Conservative dogma about the myth of the wealthy pensioner.

Many State Pensioners who are members of UNISON, particularly those that gave a lifetime working in low paid public sector jobs, with little or very poor work pensions, will be caught up in this situation. Many pensioners live alone in poorly insulated homes where there is an increased need for need heating to overcome the cold, and now face the double hardship in the loss of this payment at the time the cap on energy prices has been raised. It will undoubtedly lead to a rise in cold related illnesses, such as flu and bronchitis, and inevitably more winter deaths.

Conference notes that this shock decision has been met with fury by pensioners' organisations such as the National Pensioners' Convention, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum, Age UK, Independent Age as well as vocal opposition from unions such as Unite, GMB and CWU. Silver Voices launched a petition which at the time of writing had acquired over 50,000 signatures.

Yet Conference notes, with regret, that UNISON's response has been limited to signposting retired members to a benefits calculator on the UNISON website on 6 August, followed by a statement on 10 and an assurance that UNISON has "set out our concerns directly to the government.". At the time of the deadline for submitting Emergency Motions to the National Retired Members' Conference last year, there was no detail as to what these concern are, who expressed them, to whom in the government and precisely when, nor is there any mention whatsoever of the removal of the Winter Fuel Payment in the National Retired Members' Committee (NRMC) Annual Report, which was published on 29 August 2024, a month after the Chancellor's statement.

Whilst Conference recognises that it could be argued that, in the early stages of a new government's life, there is an option to criticise privately rather than express public disapproval in a statement or campaign, but if such as strategy was adopted it clearly failed as the vote in the House of Commons on 10 September showed. Conference believes the time for UNISON to stand idly by in mute disapproval of the abolition of the Winter Fuel Payment has passed. Whilst UNISON is generally supportive of the Labour government, it is now time for UNISON to campaign against this targeted and punitive attack on pensioners.

Conference notes that, despite the Commons vote of 10 September (which was called for by opposition parties), the changes to eligibility for Winter Fuel Payments has been made through secondary legislation, which means it is far easier to amend or repeal than if it were enshrined in primary legislation such as an Act of Parliament. Conference therefore believes the issue is far from determined and the fight against it must continue.

UNISON needs to show all retired members across the UK that they are concerned about their welfare and this dire situation by utilising all their powers to demand that this government retracts such an appalling decision. This is not how our members expected to be treated by a Labour government. Conference believes that the

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

decision to remove the Winter Fuel allowance was unfair and calls upon the National Executive Council to take this matter forward as a matter of urgency.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign on this issue and raise our concerns with:
 - a) The Labour Party via our Labour Link;
 - b) The TUC.
- 2) Work with Labour Link to call for the immediate reinstatement of the winter fuel payment, including payment of any arrears in the strongest possible terms;
- 3) Work with Labour Link to lobby the Labour government to institute a fair, equitable and simple system to help pensioners with winter fuel costs which ensures the poorest and most vulnerable pensioners in society have the necessary funds to stay warm in winter;
- 4) Campaign with other relevant pensioner organisations for the abolition of restrictions on the Winter Fuel Payment for 2024/5;
- 5) Work with regional and branch retired members groups to highlight this issue, raise awareness of the issues amongst retired members, encourage such groups to raise the matter of Winter Fuel Payments at branch and regional levels and provide regular campaign guidance and updates on progress;
- 6) Encourage retired members to participate in and support branch, regional, and national UNISON initiatives and campaigns by pensioner organisations to reinstate this essential benefit, and to lobby their MPs on the need for immediate reinstatement of the Winter Fuel Allowance for all those in receipt of the state pension.

National Retired Members' Committee

30.1

Delete twelfth paragraph beginning "Yet Conference notes,"

And replace with:

"Conference notes UNISON's response to the removal of the winter fuel allowance has included signposting members to support services, publicly condemning the removal on multiple occasions, lobbying government ministers on the issue, and calling for the reinstatement of the winter fuel allowance in our poverty strategy submissions. Conference believes we must continue to call for the reinstatement of the winter fuel allowance publicly in our anti-poverty work. Conference notes UNISON's support of a Unite motion at Labour Party conference 2025 explicitly calling on the government to reverse the decision. Conference believes we must campaign against this attack on pensioners."

National Executive Council

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

31. Tackling the Dangers of Online Pornography

Conference recognises that the rise of online pornography is proving to have a severe detrimental impact on young people and how they view relationships.

Information from a survey of 1,000 young people aged 18-21 undertaken by the Children's Commissioner for England shows the following:

- 1) Most children have viewed pornography as young as 13, and some are seeing it at the age of 8 or 9. By age 9 ten percent of children have seen pornography, 27 percent by age 11 and 79 percent have seen content including sexual violence by age 18. This leads to the real danger of young people viewing their relationships through the lens of, often sexually violent, pornography. These children are likely to have lower self-esteem as adults and struggle to form meaningful relationships;
- 2) 47 percent of young people stated that girls expect sex to involve physical aggression, and a further 42 percent stated that most girls "enjoy" acts of sexual aggression. With the increase in online pornography and the ease in which it can be viewed it is increasingly becoming the starting point for young people when it comes to sex - how to have sex and what to expect.

Pornography is not limited to dedicated adult sites; X (formerly Twitter) is the online platform where young people are most likely to view pornography and 13 year olds can register for an X account.

In today's world of online pornography depictions of degradation, sexual coercion, aggression and exploitation are commonplace and are disproportionately targeted against teenage girls. Consent is often absent from online pornography, A 2022 study found that 52 percent of teens exposed to pornography reported seeing violent forms of pornography such as choking (36 percent), someone in pain (37 percent) or depictions of what appears to be rape (19 percent).

This is extremely dangerous when this is being viewed by teenage, and pre-teen, boys who then think this is "normal" and that consent is not important.

The Online Safety Bill was passed in October 2023. However, it only takes a few minutes searching on X to find hard core pornography so clearly more needs to be done.

Artificial Intelligence is fuelling a rise in deepfake pornography. Since 2019 there has been a 550 percent increase in the volume of deepfake pornography – a staggering 99 percent of the individuals targeted are women. Seven out of the top ten pornography websites host deepfake content. Whilst the majority of deepfake pornography videos feature celebrities, there is nothing to stop someone creating a deepfake pornography video with the image of anybody's image. There has also been an increase in revenge porn where people distribute sexually explicit videos or photographs of ex-partners; a recent study showed that ten percent of victims of intimate image abuse in the UK were girls aged 16 years or younger. Many pornography websites allow anybody to upload videos which is extremely worrying.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

It is obvious that more needs to be done to tackle this epidemic and it needs to be done now. Tech companies cannot be trusted with our children's welfare as they will always put profits first, so regulators must do more as a matter of urgency.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with our Labour Link committee to lobby for much stronger regulations than the Online Safety Bill contains;
- 2) Work with all appropriate sections and groups within our union to campaign to raise awareness of the harm that online pornography causes;
- 3) Work with appropriate sections of our union to educate young people on this issue, to ensure they understand that what they see online is not real and the associated dangers with viewing online pornography.

East Lancashire Health

31.1

Delete action point 2) and replace with:

"2) Work with all appropriate sections and groups within our union to campaign to raise awareness of the harms that online pornography can cause;"

National Executive Council

Public Services

32. Public Services, Living Standards, and the Economy After the 2024 General Election

Conference notes the damage to public services caused by 14 years of austerity and Tory Government.

Local government, the NHS, education, social care and police and justice have all been starved of the funding and investment they need to serve our communities. School and hospital buildings have been left to crumble. Jobs have been lost. Pay and terms and conditions have been cut in real terms.

Conference agrees that the legacy of Tory government is not only felt by public service users and workers themselves, it also has an impact in the wider economy. The decline in public expenditure, public service jobs and careers and real terms pay has also had a chill effect on local high streets and the availability of decent work in our communities.

Conference recognises that the election of a new government in July 2024 has resulted in a limited change of direction for public services and the economy. Despite inheriting dire public finances, one of the incoming government's first acts was to implement the recommendations of the pay review bodies. It's first budget, in October 2024, delivered substantial increases in public spending and investment, funded through higher taxes and increased borrowing.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

In addition, new fiscal rules, also announced in the budget, will reclassify government borrowing for capital investment and infrastructure, which will deliver new schools and hospitals, as well as important rail, energy and housing projects.

However, Health and Social Care Secretary Wes Streeting is threatening an expansion of the role of the private sector in the NHS, something we are still paying for from last time. And the start of 2025 brought speculation about further cuts to a public sector that is already at breaking point.

Conference takes the view that government needs to be bolder and more radical if it is to reverse over a decade of destruction before it can successfully transform public services and the economy for the better. In addition, Conference is concerned that:

- 1) The increase in spending announced in the budget is front loaded, resulting in uncertainty about what might come later in the government's term of office;
- 2) The additional funding for local government is, after years of cuts, still only a sticking plaster;
- 3) Increases in interest payments on government debt caused by volatile global bond markets jeopardise further spending increases;
- 4) The decision to rule out increases in income tax for the highest earners and other progressive taxes has removed important sources of future funding, which could cause problems in future years;
- 5) The emphasis on the need for economic growth to fund future increases in spending on public services suggests that the government fail to properly recognise the virtuous circle whereby more spending on day to day public services itself contributes to growth;
- 6) The decisions relating to the two child benefit limit and the removal of universal winter fuel payments may lead to increased poverty levels and greater pressures on public services.

Conference also notes that the government seeks efficiency savings (which could lead to cuts) and reform. Previous experience suggests that such initiatives can be counter productive. The starting point for our public services must be increased funding so that we can provide the services our communities desperately need and deserve.

Conference believes that well funded public services are vital to increasing living standards and the alleviation of poverty. Conference firmly believes that public services and the welfare state must be rooted in the belief that we share a collective duty to each other, and that it should exist to serve and protect every citizen, regardless of background and identity. Conference further believes that the challenge of solving poverty is complex, with both properly remunerated work and well-funded social security being central to the eradication of poverty. The management of living costs, mitigation against poverty, and economic growth are also central to reducing poverty levels across the UK.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference welcomes the limited initial steps the Labour government has taken to reduce poverty and improve living standards in the UK, including beginning the rebuilding of public services, the extension of the Household Support Fund, the introduction of free breakfast clubs in schools, a significant increase in the National Minimum Wage (with rates for 18 to 20 year olds seeing a 16 percent rise), and the introduction of the Employment Rights Bill. However, Conference believes the Government has also made a number of mistakes in seeking to place the burden for financial divisions on children living in poverty, pensioners and WASPI women. It has also indicated that workers, many of them UNISON members could be made to accept unacceptable pay restraint, rather than impose genuine wealth taxes on those who continued to grow ridiculously wealthy. Conference opposes such decisions and believes it is essential to continue to push the government for bolder steps to improve living standards.

Conference agrees that UNISON, as the UK's largest trade union, is the voice of public services and has a major role to play in championing the case for sustained investment and explaining the benefits this will provide, not just to public service users but to the economy too. This is a role that the union will play in all four nations of the UK, recognising a wider political context in which the Tories, Reform UK, the right wing media seek to undermine public services at every turn.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Work with both sections of the political fund to support a campaign for long term, sustainable funding for all of our public services;
- b) Campaign for a compassionate welfare system that prioritises alleviation of hardship, decent living standards for all, and a well-resourced social safety net, including the return of winter fuel allowance and the abolition of the two-child benefit cap;
- c) Support service groups to engage with proposals for public service reform and address particular challenges faced by different sectors;
- d) Work with the TUC, STUC, TUC Cymru and Northern Ireland Committee of ICTU to ensure a cross union/cross UK approach to our campaign, at Westminster, Holyrood, the Senedd and Stormont;
- e) Undertake research in support of the campaign, demonstrating the challenges still faced by public services and public sector workers, making the case for further commitment from the government, setting out proposals and their economic benefits;
- f) Highlight the implications of Tory and Reform UK policies on UK public services;
- g) Provide campaign resources to branches, to support local level activity to engage MPs in discussions about investment needed in public services at constituency level;
- h) Conduct research into the experiences of UNISON members with regard to poverty, living standards, and the cost of living crisis;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- i) Help members in need by promoting UNISON's There For You charity, both by encouraging donations from branches and members, and by connecting struggling members with the charity's grants and support services;
- j) To call and organise a high profile national demonstration early in 2026 to demand the significant increases in spending on public services by taxing the rich, and business. Asking for support from TUC other unions and anti cuts campaigns.

National Executive Council

32.1

In point 6), after "two child benefit limit" insert ", welfare and disability benefits cuts,"

Insert new point 7) after point 6):

"7) the decision by the government to commit to increasing military expenditure at the cost of properly funding our public services and overseas aid."

In action point b), after "winter fuel allowance" add: ", provision of properly funded disability benefits,"

Insert new point k) at the end of motion:

"k) to oppose government proposals to ramp up military spending from 2.3 percent to 2.5 percent of national income by 2027."

Merseytravel and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

32.2

After point 6) insert new point:

"7) The decision by the government to commit to increasing military expenditure at the cost of properly funding our public services and slashing overseas aid."

After point j) insert new action point:

"k) To oppose government proposals to ramp up military spending from 2.3 percent to 2.5 percent of national income by 2027."

National Young Members' Forum Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health

32.3

In the tenth paragraph, after "in seeking to place the burden for financial divisions on children living in poverty, pensioners and WASPI women", add: "and migrants"

After "Conference calls on the....." add at the end of point b):

"and the abolition of No Recourse to Public Funds;"

Camden

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

33. The Future of Public Services

Public services are the foundation for a stable, safe, tolerant and equal society. Seven days a week, 24 hours a day, the backbone for everyday life, yet there is a lack of respect from those elected to govern our nations and administrations across the UK.

UNISON members know that the election of a Labour government at UK level is no panacea to protect these services from the greedy profiteers whose only interests are to line their pockets and that of their shareholders. We are faced with the double whammy of 14 years of UK Tory rule and a previous UK Labour government which opened so many public services to the private market.

For many years UNISON has been warning all governments and administrations about the cliff edge we face in public services – well the cliff edge is in sight and with no barriers in place, it would seem that we are leading to an inevitable catastrophe.

The rise of Reform should be a wake up call for us all, if we are to protect and improve the lifeline services our communities need - we must fight back.

Our members delivering these vital services are at breaking point, many having to rely on state benefits and food banks to supplement their wages, increased poor mental health, violence in the workplace and an expectation to just get on with it. The public sector is no longer stable employment. Still we see some of these employers resorting to “fire and rehire” to force terms and conditions changes.

The public sector is at breaking point with some only providing “statutory services” at a time of crisis. Increased charges, cuts, poor morale and low wages are hindering our local economies, community empowerment and cohesion. UNISON must be at the frontline in campaigning to ensure a well funded and well staffed public services.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Liaise with Labour Link to make a case to the UK government, other nations and administrations for public services;
- 2) Launch a significant campaign to save our public services, co-ordinate a UK wide response by providing materials and support to regions and branches;
- 3) Ensure resources/processes are ready and accessible to meet the challenges we might face;
- 4) Ensure that fighting for public services is at the heart of our campaigning across the union.

Renfrewshire

34. Campaigning for a Bailout for Public Services

Conferences notes:

- 1) Public services have been left to crumble. Tens of billions of pounds of funding shortfalls for NHS, education, housing and local authorities exacerbate the

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

enormous detrimental impact of years of underinvestment and privatisation of key services;

- 2) All of these services have been significantly worsened as a result and many are on the brink of collapse. One in four local authorities in England may go bust by 2026-2027, the NHS is constantly in crisis near full capacity, and the privatisation of rail has left the travel and shipping infrastructure in tatters;
- 3) Universities are facing a specific funding crisis with many in deficit, some at risk of bankruptcy, and most carrying out cuts and course closures affecting our members' jobs;
- 4) Corporate profits in the UK are at an all-time high. A 2024 study of 17,000 companies found that profit margins have increased by 30 percent since the pandemic, fuelled in part by profiteering off of the inflation crisis. A September 2024 statement by the Bank of England stated that the high level of corporate profiteering was actually fuelling the continuation of the cost of living crisis. At this time of an immense cost of living crisis and decaying services for the working class, companies in energy and water are prioritising record dividend payouts to shareholders.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Initiate a campaign calling for the government to organise a bailout for public services;
- b) That this campaign call for a £500 billion investment in public services, funded by a tax on corporations and the super wealthy, renationalisation of all services and insourcing of all associated work, and a mass recruitment and training programme for all understaffed services.

University of Brighton

34.1

Insert in final paragraph b), after "That this campaign call for a £500 billion investment in public services" add: "over the remainder of the current and next Parliament"

Then, after "funded by a tax on corporations and the super wealthy," add: "an international tax on speculative financial transactions, a Land Value Tax to capture the value of and increases in the value of land which currently only accrue to landowners,"

Then, after "renationalisation of all" add: "public"

West Sussex

35. Public Service Funding - a Time to Be Brave

UNISON activists worked hard to ensure a Labour party victory at the last election. We understand that the Tories left nothing but disaster in all areas of public services and that recovery from this will take time. However, funding for all public services is

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

not something than we can wait for. For fourteen years the continual running down of our services has had a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the country, whether it is children going hungry, families not being housed or victims of crime being let down, we have all been victims of austerity in some way. Whilst the current mantra from the Chancellor is that of 'growth', what does this actually mean or achieve? What we need is for people and communities to thrive and what this needs is proper funding for health, education, local government, social care, criminal justice, and all public services.

Conference calls on UNISON's National Executive Council and Labour Link to keep public service funding at the heart of the Labour party agenda and to remind them on an annual basis that this must be a priority for their term in office.

Eastern Region Probation

36. The Biggest Wave of Insourcing in a Generation

Conference welcomes the government's commitment to bring about the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation and notes the wide range of outsourcing and procurement related measures included in the Labour Party document Make Work Pay: Delivering the New Deal for Working People. These include commitments to:

- 1) End the Tories' ideological drive to privatise public services;
- 2) Extend the Freedom of Information Act to apply to private companies that hold contracts to provide public services;
- 3) Require public bodies to undertake a public interest test before outsourcing and when contracts come up for renewal to better consider the in-house option;
- 4) Reinstate and strengthen the last Labour government's two tier code to end unfair two-tiered workforces;
- 5) Ensure that the two-tier code and the public interest test apply to wholly owned subsidiary companies.

Conference agrees that for many UNISON members, the introduction of these measures is a matter of urgency.

Conference applauds the hundreds of UNISON members in East Suffolk and North Essex Foundation Trust who took industrial action as part of a legitimate trade dispute over failure to agree to UNISON's demands that they remain employed by the Trust.

For members who provide vitally important cleaning, catering, portering, security and maintenance roles right across public services, outsourcing means an unrelenting deterioration in terms and conditions. For public finances and service users it invariably leads to profit extraction and poorer services.

Conference notes that the Employment Rights Bill includes the first instalment of the Make Work Pay reforms. This includes the power for the minister to create a statutory code to prevent the emergence of a 'two tier workforce' when outsourcing occurs.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Whilst this is a welcome downpayment, conference agrees that problems encountered under the previous two-tier code (including poor enforcement and employers redesigning jobs to evade the code) are addressed as the regulations and code are finalised over coming months. It will also be important to think through the need for sector level considerations – how the code might need to be adapted in different parts of public services.

However, Conference also agrees that whilst the two tier code is important, the priority has to be preventing further outsourcing and bringing services back in house.

To these ends Conference calls on the National Executive Council to intensify the Bringing Services Home campaign. This should include:

- a) Working with the political fund to keep up the pressure on government to ensure that the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation can be delivered as a priority;
- b) Engaging with the policy development process so that the measures proposed by the government included within Make Work Pay are fit for purpose. This should include providing case studies, demonstrating the situation faced by outsourced workers;
- c) Making support available to service groups during the development of sector specific policy, guidance and interpretation of the Code and other measures instrumental to decisions about service provision;
- d) Working through appropriate channels within the UK government, devolved nations, and mayoral authorities to enable approaches to public service procurement that maximise direct employment;
- e) Keeping up the pressure on employers with contracts coming up for renewal, or contemplating further outsourcing, urging upon them the need to recognise the direction of travel;
- f) Supporting branches by providing updated information about the new measures that can be used to support local insourcing campaigns.
- g) Discussing with National Labour Link committee how best to ensure the Labour government delivers on its manifesto pledges regarding outsourcing.

Eastern Region

36.1

Add new eighth paragraph:

“Given the Labour manifesto commitments to insourcing, conference is disturbed by the call from the Chief Executive of NHS England to NHS Trusts to outsource swathes of functions to subsidiary companies (subcos) in order to make financial savings. This is despite savings through this model only coming through diluting pay and conditions and avoiding tax - which just means there is less funding available for the NHS anyway. This is why NHS England guidelines have actually restricted the use of these companies, as a result of UNISON campaigning”

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Add new action point at end:

“h) Work with the Health Service Group Executive to support their campaign against subcos, developing evidence of the negative impact on the NHS and supporting local organising campaigns to prevent transfer of NHS staff to subcos and for the insourcing of staff already within these companies.”

National Executive Council

37. Insourcing as the Best Model for Public Services in the UK

Conference, in the last couple of years, there is a growing tendency toward insourcing across much of the public sector. This is being driven by an increasing awareness of the value of public services in supporting local economies and businesses, providing better services for residents and business and directing resources more cohesively to where they are needed.

Within UNISON, we continue to make the case that insourcing services is a better option. The provision of high quality public services is essential to the well-being of our society in the United Kingdom. Under the Tory government, the outsourcing of public services to private companies became widespread, and most have not provided better value. The mantra under the previous Tory government claimed that outsourcing would improve efficiency, yet evidence has found that privatised services often lead to reduced quality, higher costs and reduced terms and conditions of workers and union members. In contrast, insourcing - the practice of bringing services back in-house under direct public sector control - has demonstrated that it is better for the following reasons:

- 1) Is cheaper in the long run and is better able to deliver efficiencies;
- 2) Gives greater scope to improve performance against benchmarked services;
- 3) Delivers greater flexibility and integration with existing services;
- 4) Provides better and more secure employment and leads to stronger local supply chains;
- 5) Are more democratically accountable, transparent and enhances local control of service delivery.

This motion calls for a renewed focus on insourcing as the best approach to delivering public services in the UK. Conference, we need to campaign for more insourcing as it provides the best model for the delivery of public services in the UK for the following reasons:

- a) **Improved Service Quality:** Public services that are insourced tend to offer higher quality because they are directly managed and monitored by public sector employees who are committed to the well-being of the community. Insourced services focus on the needs of service users over profit maximisation, resulting in better outcomes;
- b) **Enhanced Accountability:** When services are insourced, there is greater transparency and accountability as public sector workers are directly accountable

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

to elected officials and the public. This reduces the opportunity for private contractors to cut corners or prioritise profits over service delivery;

- c) **Cost-Effectiveness:** While private companies may claim to offer cheaper services through outsourcing, the hidden costs - including profit margins, management fees, and inefficiencies - often make these contracts more expensive in the long run. Insourcing can lead to greater financial efficiency as funds are directed to public services rather than private profits;
- d) **Better Working Conditions:** Insourcing gives better job security and better working conditions for public sector employees. By ensuring decent pay and terms of employment, public services can attract a dedicated and motivated workforce, leading to higher service standards and employee satisfaction;
- e) **Long-Term Sustainability:** Public services that are insourced are more likely to be sustainable over the long term because the priorities of the service are aligned with the public good rather than the financial interests of private contractors. This creates a more stable and reliable service model that is less susceptible to market fluctuations or short-term profit pressures.

Unions and the community have a critical role to play in advocating for insourcing and holding the government accountable for the quality of public services. Together, we can ensure that public services are run in the best interests of society, with a focus on quality, accountability, fairness, and long-term sustainability.

By bringing services back under public control, we can build a more just, equitable, and efficient system that serves the needs of all citizens.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Promote the UNISON insourcing guide and continue to campaign for more insourcing: to raise awareness of the benefits of insourcing by providing the public with clear information on how insourcing improves service quality, accountability and cost-effectiveness;
- ii) Advocate for policy change with MPs and politicians;
- iii) Support for workers campaigning for their service to be insourced back into the public sector;
- iv) Develop model motions for branches to cascade to local councils;
- v) To develop tools to help branches evaluate how insourcing can be used to support local economies and the environment, through jobs, skills, supply chain management and local spend.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

37.1

Insert at the end of the paragraph after e):

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

"We note with concern that local authorities, some under Labour control, faced with substantial financial pressures are looking at outsourcing of essential services as a way of reducing expenditure."

Birmingham

37.2

Add new sixth paragraph:

Given the Labour manifesto commitments to insourcing, conference is disturbed by the call from the Chief Executive of NHS England to NHS Trusts to outsource swathes of functions to subsidiary companies (subcos) in order to make financial savings. This is despite savings through this model only coming through diluting pay and conditions and avoiding tax - which just means there is less funding available for the NHS anyway. This is why NHS England guidelines have actually restricted the use of these companies, as a result of UNISON campaigning.

Add new point after v):

"vi) Work with the Health Service Group Executive to support their campaign against subcos, developing evidence of the negative impact on the NHS and supporting local organising campaigns to prevent transfer of NHS staff to subcos and for the insourcing of staff already within these companies."

National Executive Council

38. Defending Our NHS

Conference notes that the desperate state of our NHS, as a result of 14 years of Tory misrule, was amply illustrated by the number of critical incidents declared in the first days of 2025, along with record ambulance handover delays. Corridor care has become increasingly commonplace and hundreds of excess deaths occurring each week are reflective of the current state of the NHS. And Conference is appalled by the stabbing of a nurse whilst at work in the Royal Oldham Hospital.

Conference notes that decisions taken by the Westminster government have serious implications for UNISON members across the UK, not least in terms of NHS funding allocations.

Conference welcomes the extra money for the NHS that was included in the new government's first Budget but believes that this is insufficient to close the huge gaps in staffing and services that have opened up.

Conference wants to see action to bring down waiting lists and improve treatment for patients, but governments need to recognise that this can only be achieved when NHS organisations are fully staffed with a motivated and properly rewarded healthcare workforce. Currently services are understaffed, and staff feel demoralised and undervalued – this needs to change. And while Conference understands the focus on improving waits for elective care, the government cannot afford to ignore urgent and emergency care. Conference also wants to see mental health services given the prominence they deserve.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference believes that the NHS should be sufficiently funded to provide good quality healthcare for everyone in the UK so that patients do not feel forced by long waiting lists to try to fund private healthcare.

Conference also reiterates UNISON's existing policy that the priority for any government should be rebuilding NHS capacity not falling back on a parasitical private sector. The private sector sucks up public money while depending almost entirely on NHS staff to deliver operations and treatment. Conference therefore deplores the use of the "agreement" with the private sector outlined by the UK government as part of their January 2025 elective reform plan. Conference does not think this is the way out of this NHS crisis; public investment provides much better value for money.

Conference commits to redoubling its efforts to resist the outsourcing of services by trusts and integrated care boards, as seen with recent high profile cases involving UNISON members at East Suffolk and North Essex FT and Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB.

Conference notes the commitment in Labour's "Plan to Make Work Pay" to bring about the biggest wave of insourcing of public services in a generation. Conference wants to see this applied to the NHS, particularly for non-clinical services such as cleaning, catering and portering that have too often been the first to be outsourced.

Conference notes the new government's plans to produce a 10 Year Plan for the English NHS in 2025. Conference welcomes UNISON's forthright engagement in the process to date and believes that the Plan must represent a break from the failed policies of austerity and privatisation that belong in the past. The aims of the 10 Year Plan of moving towards prevention of illness, rather than treating sickness, delivering care closer to home and digital transformation of service delivery are all desirable, but can only be achieved through significant investment in the NHS.

Conference welcomes the pioneering "ICB Watch" project, organised by the NHS Support Federation and funded by UNISON's Campaign Fund, that is beginning to shed light on the behaviour of Integrated Care Boards in England. It is important that such initiatives are strengthened to help union members and health campaigners fight back against cuts and privatisation at the local level.

Conference restates the union's support for a publicly owned, publicly delivered and publicly accountable NHS.

The NHS is needed and used by every UNISON member and Conference calls on every member to be involved in campaigning for the NHS, and against privatisation of the NHS.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work in tandem with the union's service groups and Labour Link, as well as with UNISON Scotland, UNISON Cymru/Wales and UNISON Northern Ireland to:

- 1) Make the case for sustained increases in NHS funding as a way of rebuilding the NHS after the damage done by years of austerity;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Campaign for governments across the UK to prioritise rebuilding NHS capacity ahead of any expensive and counter-productive use of the private sector;
- 3) Campaign at the local and national level to make Labour's insourcing plans a reality in the NHS;
- 4) Work with UNISON branches and regions to solidify local campaigns to resist outsourcing, using all available political and industrial means;
- 5) Continue working with campaign groups such as SOS NHS, Keep Our NHS Public and the NHS Support Federation to solidify joint NHS work against cuts and privatisation in the shape of research, lobbying, rallies and demonstrations.

National Executive Council

38.1

After the third paragraph add new fourth paragraph:

"Conference notes the decision to shut down NHS England with the loss of thousands of jobs and with no notice or formal consultation prior to the announcement. Conference also recognises that many ICBs are seeing significant cuts to funding and that all services have to find significant efficiency savings (cuts)"

In the current fourth paragraph, first sentence, remove the words: "motivated and"

Delete fifth paragraph and replace with: "Conference believes that the NHS should be sufficiently funded to provide good quality healthcare for everyone in the UK so that patients do not feel forced down the private healthcare route. "

Delete seventh paragraph and replace with: "Conference commits to redoubling its efforts to resist the outsourcing of services by trusts and integrated care boards (ICB), as seen with recent high profile cases involving UNISON members at East Suffolk and North Essex FT and Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire ICB."

In point 1) delete final word "austerity" and replace with "underfunding."

The action point will now read "Make the case for sustained increases in NHS funding as a way of rebuilding the NHS after the damage done by years of underfunding".

After action point 5) add new action point 6):

"6) Support all consultative ballots and industrial action taken by UNISON members in health by widely publicising the action in the media and work with other trade unions involved to co-ordinate any action including local, regional and national demonstrations."

Northern Care Alliance

39. Respecting Our Police Staff Members

Conference notes the vital work which UNISON's police staff members undertake for police forces in England, Scotland and Wales. Police staff work alongside police

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

officers to solve crime, catch criminals and keep us from harm. They are not police officers, do not have powers of arrest and cannot carry firearms, but can be awarded most of the powers of their officer colleagues. Police staff perform many operational, operational support and organisational support functions. Our police staff members long ago rejected the derogatory name of 'civilian staff'.

Conference understands that the roles carried out by our police staff members, like many jobs in the public sector, are poorly understood and therefore under appreciated by the public, politicians and the media. The first voice you will hear if you call the police in an emergency will be a member of police staff working as a call-taker in a police control room. That call taker will assess the emergency and pass details to a police staff dispatcher who sends police officers. A police staff scenes of crime officer will then visit the scene to gather forensic evidence to help identify any perpetrator. Digital forensic staff will comb through phone and other records to help catch those responsible. A file preparation clerk will put the papers together to go to the Crown Prosecution Service. A witness protection officer will help victims and their families through the court process. There are literally hundreds of other specialist police staff roles, like these, involved in keeping our communities safe. 60 percent of police staff are women and bring a very important gender balance to policing, given that the officer workforce is predominantly male.

Police community support officers are also police staff and proud UNISON members. PCSOs were the backbone of neighbourhood policing under the previous Labour Government. They reconnected police forces to their communities in a way that police officers were unable to do. The community focus of PCSOs encouraged a far higher proportion of Black applicants to join the police service. But years of Tory cuts between 2010 and 2024 have seen the PCSO workforce cut by 55 percent.

Conference further notes that by 2019, Tory police cuts had left the Conservatives' reputation as the party of law and order in tatters. Boris Johnson tried to repair this reputation by promising to recruit 20,000 police officers to replace those cut previously by his own government. Police force budget deficits mean that 6,000 of these officers now sit in police staff jobs, as police forces hold staff vacancies open to manage their deficits.

Conference welcomes UNISON's 'We Are Police Staff' Campaign which seeks to raise the profile of our police staff members and to educate the public, politicians and media on the vital work that our members carry out to keep communities safe.

UNISON has a long history of challenging misogyny, sexism, racism and homophobia in the police service. Policing is no different to other parts of the public sector in these respects; many other public bodies having accepted that their internal culture requires serious reform. UNISON's police staff members and police branches are part of the solution to re-setting police culture. UNISON's self organised groups are strongly organised in policing and are part of the vital process of creating a police service which is more representative and more respectful of the communities it serves.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support UNISON's 'We Are Police Staff' Campaign;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Raise awareness of UNISON police staff members' work and vocation;
- 3) Champion the work of police staff in UNISON's internal and external media;
- 4) Work via the Labour Link and Campaign Fund to give MPs, MSPs, Senedd members and local politicians a much better understanding of the work of police staff;
- 5) Promote respect for our police staff members in UNISON.

*Kent Police
Surrey Police*

40. Police Staff Cuts

Following more than a decade of austerity due to the previous Conservative government's inability to manage the finances effectively and efficiently, the new Labour government are still struggling to fund policing adequately.

Conference recognises the hard work and commitment of Police Staff and PCSOs struggling to maintain services to keep the public safe and support our neighbourhoods and communities. The lack of adequate and sufficient funding is having a major impact on our Police Staff members because of complicated funding arrangements and the rules governing police officer recruitment.

Conference recognises that it is Police Staff and PCSOs that are the ones who bear the brunt of cuts because of the inadequate funding. It is Police Staff and PCSO members who end up losing their jobs as police forces struggle to balance the books; police officers cannot be made redundant.

We have seen recently, certain Police Forces ending the employment of PCSOs, removing them from the establishment and the communities they serve. These members are paying the price of underfunding.

Conference believes policing is a vital service which is essential to maintaining order and protecting the public. Conference is concerned that cuts to the Police Staff workforce has a direct impact on neighbourhood policing and the erosion of community based policing and the safety of the public.

Due to the binding targets on police officer numbers, spending on officer recruitment has meant a shortfall in funding for police staff and PCSOs, leaving police officers filling jobs formerly done by staff. This is a false economy as serving police officers are being taken off the streets to fill the gaps left by redundant police staff. This reduces operational resilience culminating in a reduced service to the public.

The inadequacy of funding has caused large budget deficits in forces across England and Wales and in Police Scotland.

Substantial investment is needed to rebuild the numbers of PCSOs in our communities and to fund police staff so the police officers are freed up to undertake much needed operational duties, ensuring people feel safe in their neighbourhoods and communities.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Raise awareness of the impact that the loss of Police Staff jobs has on the whole of the community and campaign to highlight the risks to public safety due to cuts and austerity;
- 2) Work with the Police Probation and CAFCASS Service group to campaign to save police staff jobs;
- 3) Campaign to restore essential funding to neighbourhood policing and champion the importance of the role of PCSOs and police staff within UK policing.

Leicestershire Police

40.1

In the fifth paragraph, first sentence, delete phrase “Conference believes policing is” at the start and replace with “Conference believes police staff provide”

National Executive Council

41. Defending Jobs in Higher Education

We are watching a crisis unfold in Higher Education across the UK, a crisis that was entirely predictable, it is bringing a wave of voluntary and compulsory redundancy and severance schemes to universities across the country. It is our understanding that as many as 85 HE Institutions nationally, (several in the Yorkshire and Humberside region), have initiated such schemes, many with little to no consultation with the trade unions.

Sector modelling of finances shows that 64 percent to 75 percent of institutions could be in deficit in 2024-25: 40 percent of institutions were already in deficit in 2023-24. After 15 years of being told pay could not increase in line with inflation as this would mean job losses, we are now at the point where job losses are imminent, if not already happening, in many institutions despite pay being held down, forcing many colleagues into “in-work poverty”.

And it is not just the staff being forced into redundancy who suffer, the colleagues left behind will see workloads increase, stress levels will rocket, leading to consequent deteriorations in mental and physical ill health. Student satisfaction will fall, and the numbers going to university will fall. It will be a self fulfilling downward spiral, reducing opportunities for all but those from the richest backgrounds, and short sighted as far as the country’s future prospects are concerned.

We recognise that some blame for this dire situation rests with successive governments and their refusal to properly fund and review HE provision in the UK. We also recognise that employers are finally taking the problem to the government to seek urgent consultations, but we cannot afford to await the outcomes of these initiatives, UNISON members in HE are at the most immediate danger of redundancy and must therefore be allowed and assisted to fight these attacks, in a co-ordinated and supported manner.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the Service Group Executive to:

- 1) Start a high profile, sector wide campaign, working in conjunction with HE branches across the country to resist all job losses;
- 2) Lobby government for urgent and serious consultations on the future of HE and funding for HE;
- 3) Push for the employers to consult and negotiate properly with the trade unions on this matter;
- 4) To run a national campaign highlighting HE and showing support and solidarity with members in the sector.

Leeds University

42. Higher Education in Crisis – Save Our Universities!

Conference notes:

- 1) The failure of central government and devolved national administrations to fund higher education properly has led to a major funding crisis across the UK. Many higher education institutions are struggling financially, and some are likely to be close to bankruptcy if student recruitment and retention does not improve;
- 2) The £9,000 tuition fee for UK undergraduate students, introduced a decade ago, temporarily gave universities financial stability at the expense of a generation of students, many of whom now have thousands of pounds' worth of debt hanging over their future prospects in life;
- 3) However, this money was not passed on to university workers, with many institutions choosing to spend it on buildings, marketing and vanity projects to entice future students to enrol. Marketisation of universities has created colossal amounts of waste and duplicated effort when public services could be so much more efficient if not forced to compete with each other;
- 4) Since the introduction of the £9,000 fee, it has increased twice. Once to £9,250 and then more recently, to a maximum of £9,535 for eligible institutions. This will leave more students in more debt, but will not solve the underlying funding problem, as the real fee value has been eroded by inflation and government teaching grants have been systematically cut in real terms;
- 5) University leaders are reacting by making cuts – closing down courses, campuses and limiting research and student choice. Students are relentlessly ripped off by university accommodation providers or private landlords, who rake in publicly funded student maintenance loans, just as housing benefit flows to rich property owners;
- 6) Our members' jobs depend on higher education being recognised as a public service with genuine value to society and funded as such. UNISON's policy is for an end to tuition fees and for general progressive taxation to fund childcare and

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

education at all levels, from nursery, to primary and secondary, to further and higher;

- 7) Good quality free education has the potential to benefit all, whether it's study for interest, learning skills for a profession, or quality research that advances human knowledge and understanding of the world. The Tories have sold off, privatised and limited access at all levels, making it harder for young, working class students in particular;
- 8) Our union expects and demands that this Labour government reverses the damage done and takes urgent steps to protect jobs and ensure that those working in education are properly rewarded.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Support all those branches and members campaigning to save jobs at higher education institutions across the UK;
- b) Reaffirm its commitment to campaign for higher education as a public service, an end to tuition fees and for general taxation to support proper funding of all universities and student grants;
- c) Publicise the situation facing universities, using its influence, including through Labour Link, to make the case for UNISON's agreed policy.

University of Brighton

43. Crisis in Higher Education and Specifically in Wales

Conference will be aware of the nightmare scenario that is unfolding across the UK which was discussed and agreed in the Higher Education Conference and is now finally being discussed in the media.

Here in Wales we have been watching a ticking timebomb with all eight universities proposing to drastically reduce costs on the backs of trade union members. Recently, Cardiff University announced an unprecedented attack on academic staff with over 400 posts to be cut and we know significant cuts are on the way for professional support staff and will therefore affect UNISON Members.

We have seen the University of South Wales, one of the largest widening access institutions in Wales, finishing consultations to remove over 10 percent of their workforce over a period of two to three years. In addition to removing support staff, they are now proposing to remove another 90 academics.

In the Cymru/Wales region we have seen some of our oldest universities such as Bangor and Aberystwyth in such significant financial difficulties that there are ongoing conversations across the sector on how they would survive. Swansea University has run an almost continuous voluntary redundancy programme to remove as much staff cost as possible.

We know that Cardiff Met and Trinity St Davids Universities are looking hard at their financial covenants and whether they can meet the conditions attached to them by the banks.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

This is similar to what is happening in other regions and we need a UK focused look here in our National Delegates Conference but in Wales with a remote geography in some parts, Universities are the beating heart of economic activity in extremely deprived areas and cuts to Universities have a big impact on the deprivation index.

Facing restructuring, voluntary severance, pay freezes and compulsory redundancies our members in HE are facing the brunt and all Governments across the UK seem to be doing very little other than talking about the need for a sustainable sector.

Sector competition rules enforced by the Competition and Market Authority (CMA) even prevents Universities from being able to have an honest conversation with each other about financial difficulties and how to collaborate.

Conference knows that the HE sector creates and develops the workforce that underpin all of our public services – Social Workers, Nurses, Teachers, Police, Paramedics, Doctors and much more.

We call upon Conference and our National Executive Council to :

- 1) Declare that the HE sector in the UK is not sustainable and work with the Higher Education Service Group Executive and other UNISON bodies such as Labour Link to call upon all governments (devolved and UK) to work with HE regulators and sector trade unions to address this. Making the argument that every £1 invested in HE generates £13 back in economic activity;
- 2) Lobby government in consultation with UNISON and Labour Link for appropriate financial support to steady the sector and bring institutions most at risk back from the brink;
- 3) Work across all regions to lobby UK government for a different and more sustainable funding system recognising devolved governments with powers over HE in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

University of South Wales

44. End the Housing Crisis

Conference recognises that everyone has a fundamental human right to a decent and genuinely affordable home. However, the worsening housing crisis, marked by rising homelessness and overcrowding, is pricing increasing numbers of people out of this basic right. The cost of temporary accommodation is now exacerbating financial crises to cash-strapped councils.

This crisis has been exacerbated by a combination of factors, including failed housing and planning policies, chronic underinvestment in council and social housing, and the loss of council homes through the Right to Buy. These factors have created a severe housing shortage, driving up rents and house prices and making genuinely affordable housing increasingly inaccessible for people on modest incomes.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Many working class people live in substandard, unsafe housing. This has been highlighted by the cladding scandal. There are still thousands of homes that need urgent safety work. Shockingly, eight years after the Grenfell disaster where 72 people were killed, no-one has been held to account and the families and communities affected are denied any justice. Profit has no place in housing.

UNISON research reveals that a significant number of our members, particularly women and low-paid workers, face severe housing insecurity. Rising housing and living costs have outstripped wage growth, placing immense financial strain on our members, especially those who privately rent. Many struggle to afford rent, mortgages, food and basic necessities. This crisis disproportionately affects those working in critical sectors like the NHS, social care, and education, often forcing them to relocate due to unaffordable housing. This displacement of key workers hinders recruitment and retention, jeopardising the delivery of essential public services to communities. In some inner city boroughs, we are seeing school closures and job losses because of falling school rolls as people are forced to move out to cheaper areas.

Decent and genuinely affordable homes should not be a privilege reserved for the wealthy. The Labour government must prioritise the creation of genuinely affordable homes for all. This is crucial for reducing poverty and homelessness, and improving health and educational outcomes. New developments must be integrated with sustainable transport and community infrastructure. Significant investment is necessary to retrofit existing homes, improving their energy efficiency and reducing energy bills. Finally, a robust welfare state is crucial to provide a safety net for those who cannot afford adequate housing. This will ensure that everyone has the fundamental right to a decent and genuinely affordable home, regardless of their income.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for significant investment in a national mass house building programme to deliver new, quality and energy-efficient, sustainable council homes at scale. These homes should be built by democratic and accountable councils, be accessible to all workers and residents on modest incomes, meet at least the 'accessible and adaptable' building regulations standard, and contribute to economic recovery, job creation, reduced housing costs, and the mitigation of the climate change crisis;
- 2) Campaign for new council homes that meet the highest environmental, building, and safety standards, with adequate space, and high energy efficiency; and good public transport links to support the government's climate change objectives;
- 3) Campaign for a new "green standard" to make all new homes "zero carbon" and improve the energy efficiency of existing homes to make them safe and warm by retrofitting efficient insulation, double glazing, efficient energy technologies, to reduce bills and lower overall housing costs;
- 4) Campaign to restore direct investment in public housing through upfront capital grants from government to enable the building of a new generation of council homes, and reverse all cuts to general council funding from central government

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

since 2008 to enable decent maintenance of existing council housing and good quality services for its residents. These should be funded by taxing the rich and big business.

- 5) Continue to work with alliances, including Defend Council Housing, Shelter and Generation Rent to call for solutions to housing challenges faced by our members and citizens;
- 6) Campaign for the Right to Buy to be abolished in England, aligning with Scotland and Wales, to empower councils to address housing need and tackle homelessness;
- 7) Campaign for the restoration of the link between local housing allowance, housing benefit and rent to provide immediate relief to those facing acute housing affordability crises, whilst calling for a comprehensive reform of the welfare system.
- 8) Continue to call for improvements to the Renters' Rights Bill (England) to ensure it includes:
 - a) Measures to improve affordability in the private rented sector including rent controls;
 - b) Empower councils with funding, resources and capacity to effectively regulate the sector and hold bad landlords to account;
 - c) End anti-migrant discrimination in housing by abolishing "Right to Rent" checks and nationality requirements;
 - d) Convert all existing and future residential tenancies from fixed-term to open-ended.

Camden

44.1

Add a new third paragraph that reads:

"Conference also notes that there is a serious lack of homes being built that are accessible for disabled people. Part M of the building regulations sets our minimum standards for all homes and along with other standards for homes for people who have additional access needs. These standards are not part of the planning process but part of the building regulation sign-off process. Since the introduction of private building regulation companies' compliance with these standards has fallen with many housing developments being approved by private building regulation companies despite not meeting even the basic standards, as set out in Part M of the building regulations."

Add new action point 2) that reads:

"2) Work with Labour Link to campaign for building regulations to be brought back into local councils and for increased penalties to be imposed on developers who do not meet the standards set out in Part M."

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Renumber the remaining action points accordingly.

National Disabled Members' Committee

45. Council Housing is the Solution to the Housing Crisis

Conference notes with concern that:

- 1) The housing crisis across the UK continues to grow;
- 2) The housing crisis is becoming more visible in our towns and cities with the ever-growing number of rough sleepers;
- 3) The shortage of council housing means many local authorities are forced into using expensive Bed and Breakfast solutions or the expensive private rental sector;
- 4) The unseen housing crisis of sofa surfing or children not leaving their parental home until late in adulthood continues to grow alongside increasing waiting lists for what little council housing is available;
- 5) The building of new homes across the UK has been insufficient for decades and remains so;
- 6) The first budget under this Labour government only allocated limited funds for the building of council housing.

Conference believes that:

- a) The housing crisis has been created after 45 years of government's reducing the amount of council housing and relying upon the free market to meet housing need;
- b) Relying upon the free market to meet housing needs has created the currently affordability crisis;
- c) Relying upon the free market to solve the crisis of its own making is doomed to disappoint;
- d) The only solution to meeting peoples housing needs is a massive building programme of council housing over a sustained period;
- e) A mass programme of building council housing can be accompanied with a programme to train the young builders of tomorrow, providing skilled jobs in localities and helping the economy grow. It can also help build the green homes needed for the UK to reach net zero on carbon.

Conference welcomes the Labour government's restrictions placed upon the 'right to buy' that limits further reductions in council housing.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- i) Campaign and lobby for a mass council house building programme;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- ii) Campaign for the Labour Party, through Labour Link, to see the mass building of green council housing as the means to resolve the housing crisis, stimulate training for skilled jobs, providing growth in communities in most need;
- iii) Campaign alongside other interested organisations seeking the construction of more council housing.

Sandwell General

46. Homelessness

Conference believes that in 2025, everyone deserves an affordable and secure place to call home. Additionally, it is crucial for local authorities to take more proactive measures to eradicate homelessness.

In towns and cities across the UK, homelessness has seen a dramatic increase year on year. There are currently more families living in temporary accommodation and the number of people rough sleeping has shot up. Local authorities are under a lot of pressure to rehome people, but the key factor is they need to provide all homeless people with permanent affordable housing. Instead, they put people into temporary poor housing and/or uproot people and move them miles away into temporary accommodation into other counties, uprooting them from their support network and children from their school.

Legislation such as The Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977, Housing Act 1996, the Homelessness Act 2002 and The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, places a statutory duty on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their area. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to all those affected, not just those who have 'priority need' such as households with dependent children, pregnant women, people who are vulnerable, children aged 16 or 17 and 18 to 20 year olds who were previously in care.

Conference notes:

- 1) In September 2024, there were 9,079 people estimated to be rough sleeping over the month, up eight percent since September 2023 and up nine percent compared to June 2024. Rough sleeping is increasing across most local authorities in England by 53 percent.
- 2) In 2024 there was 326,000 people in temporary accommodation, which is a 17 percent increase from 2023. On 31 March 2024, 117,450 households were affected, which is the highest number since data collection began in 1998.
- 3) If the local authority determines that the applicant meets the criteria for the main housing duty, they are obligated to provide suitable temporary accommodation until the applicant can secure longer term housing. In April to June 2024, local authorities made 27,570 main duty decisions for eligible households. 18,000 households were accepted as having a main duty in April to June 2024 which is a 15.9 percent increase from the same period in 2023.

Conference further notes:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- a) Multiple factors have led to the surge in homelessness. Local authorities lack enough housing to rehome everyone, private rental sector evictions are on the rise, and the number of repossessions by private landlords has surpassed pre-pandemic levels. Furthermore, the shortage of affordable housing, insufficient mental health services, and limited job opportunities have substantially contributed to the growing homelessness rates across UK communities;

- b) Non-UK nationals such as migrant workers can also find themselves affected by homelessness and share similar support needs with the broader homeless population. However, their unique experiences, immigration status and associated lack of entitlements can exacerbate their situation. Problems created by government laws favouring profiteering and exploitation by unscrupulous agents and employers have exacerbated the predicament that innocent and naïve migrant workers find themselves in, lured by false promises. These employers and agents should lawfully be made to provide sureties with regards to the welfare and finance of migrant workers. Additionally, accessing benefits that offer essential housing cost assistance is a significant challenge. This issue impacts both individuals who lack entitlements and those erroneously excluded due to incorrect decisions.

- c) Increasing funding to local authorities, will contribute towards affordable housing projects and will have a positive impact in reducing homelessness by:
 - i) Providing affordable housing;
 - ii) Expanding access to mental health and addiction services;
 - iii) Implementing job training and placement programs for homeless individuals;
 - iv) Establishing partnerships with local businesses and non-profit organisation to provide support services.

Conference recognises that this is an issue that does not just affects those UNISON members who work in housing and homelessness services but that all UNISON members and their families can be directly affected and at risk of homelessness. It is therefore an issue that UNISON must take up.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Challenge all political parties and interest groups to establish a coherent core policy position to tackle homelessness and to develop a consensus around a national strategy to address homelessness;

- B) Continue to campaign for a significant increase of funding for local government generally and specifically for housing and homelessness services;

- C) Continue to campaign for the building of council and other social housing that is affordable for the homeless and low income households.

Essex

47. Grenfell Never Again

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

On 14 June 2017 a fire broke out in the 24 storey Grenfell Tower in North Kensington and burned for 60 hours. 70 people died at the scene with another two dying in hospital and many more injured. The worst residential fire since the Blitz of World War two. 223 escaped but will never escape the terror and fear of being trapped that evening and the devastating loss of life as well as of their homes.

The findings of the first Grenfell Tower inquiry in 2017 affirmed that the fire was started by an electrical fault in a domestic appliance on the fourth floor, but the building's exterior cladding did not comply with regulation and was the main reason the fire spread.

Conference reiterates its solidarity with the bereaved, survivors and residents of the Grenfell Tower fire. We also recognise the contribution of public sector workers from fire fighters, emergency paramedics at the London Ambulance workers to housing officers, social workers and others on the ground who supported residents on that fateful night, and those who continue to provide support more than seven years on, including UNISON members in our UNISON Kensington and Chelsea Branch.

Conference is appalled that since 2017 the lessons have not been learnt and the cladding crisis continues with four million people living in residential buildings over 11 metres high in fear of their safety. Conference is shocked that half of the known buildings affected have not started remedial action on the cladding.

Conference has no doubt that years of austerity and the Tory government at the time policies of deregulation and austerity were central reasons for the failures. The Grenfell Inquiry's final report published in September 2024 set out the chain of failures from government and the private sector that led to the disaster. It highlighted those concerns about cladding fires had been raised back in 1992, with safety tests in 2001 reiterating the cladding was of concern and burned violently. Furthermore, the policies and direction of the coalition government of 2010 (determined to cut regulations and red tape) led to even safety matters of life being ignored, delayed or disregarded with the housing dept being labelled badly run with fire safety led to a junior member of staff.

Conference is clear this is criticism clearly directed towards the council leadership and not UNISON members doing their jobs. The report noted that the Tory council at the time had outsourced its social housing to a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) who had poorly managed the refit of Grenfell and trust, and relations had broken down between residents and the TMO with them consistently showing a lack of concern and disregard for resident safety including not replacing self-shutting fire doors. It is time the Labour government and local authorities prioritise justice for Grenfell and that everyone has a safe home to live in.

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2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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Therefore, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Highlight and campaign on the inquiry recommendations and ensure that UNISON members as residents as well as public sector workers get their voices heard in the consultations that follow;
- 2) Campaign for sustained investment in local government, particularly around housing;
- 3) Provide guidance to branches in negotiating with local authorities to ensure that building control is only carried by local authority staff and services are not outsourced to private contractors;
- 4) Send a message of solidarity and support to the Kensington and Chelsea branch as well as Grenfell Tower residents.

Kensington and Chelsea

48. Grenfell Never Again

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223 escaped but will never escape the terror and fear of being trapped that evening and the devastating loss of life as well as of their homes.

The findings of the first Grenfell Tower inquiry in 2017 affirmed that the fire was started by an electrical fault in a domestic appliance on the fourth floor, but the building's exterior cladding did not comply with regulation and was the main reason the fire spread.

Conference reiterates its solidarity with the bereaved, survivors and residents of the Grenfell Tower fire.

We also recognise the contribution of public sector workers from fire fighters, emergency paramedics at the London Ambulance workers to housing officers, social workers and others on the ground who supported residents on that fateful night, and those who continue to provide support more than seven years on, including UNISON members in our UNISON Kensington and Chelsea branch

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2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

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It is time the Labour government and local authorities prioritise justice for Grenfell and that everyone has a safe home to live in.

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- 4) Send a message of solidarity and support to the Kensington and Chelsea branch as well as Grenfell Tower residents.

Housing Associations

49. Artificial Intelligence in Public Services

Conference notes that artificial intelligence (AI) and automated systems are being rapidly deployed across UK public services.

Conference recognises that AI and automation offer significant opportunities to transform public services. These technologies could help address many longstanding challenges by streamlining administrative processes, providing better

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

data insights for decision-making, and freeing up worker time to focus on complex tasks requiring human judgment and interaction.

However, Conference notes that without appropriate intervention, the introduction of AI systems across public services presents risks to services and workers. The potential impacts of AI on workers are numerous, and include work intensification, risks to health and safety, discriminatory and unfair outcomes, lack of control over data, loss of privacy, lack of human agency and freedom over work, and the degradation of human judgement and skill.

There is also the risk of AI to causing harm to citizens if systems go wrong, with worrying implications for equalities. When algorithmic systems are introduced into our public services, the consequences of mistakes in those algorithms can be catastrophic for vulnerable individuals reliant on services, including those with protected characteristics.

Conference further notes that procurement spending on digital technologies continues to rise substantially across the public sector, where major contracts are being awarded to private sector technology companies. The public sector holds some of our most sensitive data as citizens, and conference believes careful consideration must be given to maintaining public control over essential infrastructure and sensitive data.

The integration of AI into public services raises important questions about governance, accountability and the changing nature of public sector work. As these technologies become more sophisticated and widespread, their impact on jobs, skills requirements and working conditions will likely increase. While some routine tasks may be automated, new roles and responsibilities will emerge. This transition must be managed carefully to ensure workers are supported to adapt and develop new skills rather than being displaced.

Conference believes that realising the benefits of AI while protecting workers and public services requires a balanced and inclusive approach. This means ensuring meaningful worker involvement in system design and implementation, so that AI complements and enhances rather than replaces human capabilities. It requires proper investment in training and support so workers can effectively use new technologies and develop their skills for the future. Clear governance frameworks are needed to maintain democratic oversight while enabling innovation, along with strong safeguards for data protection and privacy.

UNISON Cymru/Wales recognises that the successful integration of AI into public services relies on building effective partnerships between government, employers, workers and unions. These partnerships should aim to harness AI's potential to improve services while protecting jobs and working conditions. They should ensure that productivity gains benefit both service users and workers, while maintaining public control over essential infrastructure and data. This requires developing comprehensive frameworks for worker consultation, skills development, impact assessment and ethical AI use. As such it has, in Social Partnership co-produced guidance on Managing Technology that Manages People with public sector employers and Welsh government. This guidance outlines three critical elements: the checks and balances required for the purpose or development of new algorithmic

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

management systems, guidance for the responsible implementation of AI as a workforce management tool and ongoing post-adoption evaluation. Implementation is being piloted in a number of public sector organisations. UNISON Cymru/Wales continues to work in partnership with Welsh government, employers and the Centre for Digital Public Services to develop wider guidance and advice for the public sector.

Conference recognises that unions have a vital role to play in shaping how AI is implemented in public services as demonstrated through the work in Wales. Through collective bargaining, consultation and social partnership, unions can help ensure that technological change benefits workers and services rather than simply driving efficiencies and cost reduction. This includes negotiating over the impacts on jobs and working conditions, securing proper training and support, establishing clear data protection safeguards, and ensuring workers have a meaningful voice in how systems are designed and deployed.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Establish AI and digitalisation in public services as a key policy, campaigning and organising issue for UNISON;
- 2) Lobby UK governments for AI use in public services that prioritises the engagement, consultation and consent of workers;
- 3) Work with service groups to develop sector-specific campaigns on AI and new technologies;
- 4) Develop guidance and training for branches on negotiating on AI and data in public sector workplaces;
- 5) Campaign for procurement requirements requiring transparency, workers' rights protections and public ownership safeguards in AI contracts;
- 6) Work with the relevant self organised groups and regions to mitigate any unintended consequences, for example, diluting the quality of British Sign Language.

Cymru/Wales Region

49.1

After fourth paragraph, insert an additional paragraph as follows:

"The environmental impact of artificial intelligence should also be noted and taken into account. Training AI models and operating data centres require substantial computing power, leading to increased greenhouse gas emissions and a growing carbon footprint. In addition, data centres require significant amounts of water for cooling the servers and infrastructure. These environmental impacts are another significant reason that AI should be used wisely, and not to replicate tasks that could easily be done by a worker. Instead it should be reserved for problem solving where it brings a valuable addition to a task only, and consideration be given to the environmental impact of its use."

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Homerton Hospital

50. Artificial Intelligence in Public Services

Conference notes that artificial intelligence (AI) and automated systems are being rapidly deployed across UK public services.

Conference recognises that AI and automation offer significant opportunities to transform public services. These technologies could help address many longstanding challenges by streamlining administrative processes, providing better data insights for decision-making, and freeing up worker time to focus on complex tasks requiring human judgment and interaction.

However, Conference notes that without appropriate intervention, the introduction of AI systems across public services presents risks to services and workers. The potential impacts of AI on workers are numerous, and include work intensification, risks to health and safety, discriminatory and unfair outcomes, lack of control over data, loss of privacy, lack of human agency and freedom over work, and the degradation of human judgement and skill.

There is also the risk of AI to causing harm to citizens if systems go wrong, with worrying implications for equalities. When algorithmic systems are introduced into our public services, the consequences of mistakes in those algorithms can be catastrophic for vulnerable individuals reliant on services, including those with protected characteristics.

Conference further notes that procurement spending on digital technologies continues to rise substantially across the public sector, where major contracts are being awarded to private sector technology companies. The public sector holds some of our most sensitive data as citizens, and conference believes careful consideration must be given to maintaining public control over essential infrastructure and sensitive data.

The integration of AI into public services raises important questions about governance, accountability and the changing nature of public sector work. As these technologies become more sophisticated and widespread, their impact on jobs, skills requirements and working conditions will likely increase. While some routine tasks may be automated, new roles and responsibilities will emerge. This transition must be managed carefully to ensure workers are supported to adapt and develop new skills rather than being displaced.

Conference believes that realising the benefits of AI while protecting workers and public services requires a balanced and inclusive approach. This means ensuring meaningful worker involvement in system design and implementation, so that AI complements and enhances rather than replaces human capabilities. It requires proper investment in training and support so workers can effectively use new technologies and develop their skills for the future. Clear governance frameworks are needed to maintain democratic oversight while enabling innovation, along with strong safeguards for data protection and privacy.

The successful integration of AI into public services relies on building effective partnerships between government, employers, workers and unions. These

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

partnerships should aim to harness AI's potential to improve services while protecting jobs and working conditions. They should ensure that productivity gains benefit both service users and workers, while maintaining public control over essential infrastructure and data. This requires developing comprehensive frameworks for worker consultation, skills development, impact assessment and ethical AI use.

Conference believes that unions have a vital role to play in shaping how AI is implemented in public services. Through collective bargaining, consultation and partnership working, unions can help ensure that technological change benefits workers and services rather than simply driving efficiencies and cost reduction. This includes negotiating over the impacts on jobs and working conditions, securing proper training and support, establishing clear data protection safeguards, and ensuring workers have a meaningful voice in how systems are designed and deployed.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Establish AI and digitalisation in public services as a key policy, campaigning and organising issue for UNISON;
- 2) Lobby UK governments for AI use in public services that prioritises the engagement, consultation and consent of workers;
- 3) Work with service groups to develop sector-specific campaigns on AI and new technologies;
- 4) Develop guidance and training for branches on negotiating on AI and data in public sector workplaces;
- 5) Campaign for procurement requirements requiring transparency, workers' rights protections and public ownership safeguards in AI contracts;
- 6) Continue to work with the TUC, TUC Cymru, STUC, ICTU and other civil society organisations as appropriate to build a coordinated campaign for responsible, sustainable, worker-led AI transition in our public services.

Isle of Wight Local Government

Health

51. Let's Talk About Assisted Dying

Conference, assisted dying is an emotive and complex issue. People, including our members, hold differing and strong views and the issue can be polarising.

But what assisted dying means is often unclear. Is it do not resuscitate (DNR), withdrawal of treatment, assisted suicide, voluntary euthanasia or does it have another meaning?

Common arguments against assisted dying are often based on the rights of disabled people, religious, moral or political arguments, lack of funding for palliative care or

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

the possibility of some people feeling pressured to make a decision that is not what they really want.

In 2009, UNISON's retired members conference discussed a motion seeking to campaign for 'physician assisted suicide' based on an individual's right to dignity and choice to end life. The motion was carried (as amended). However, UNISON still has no policy position on assisted dying.

In 2018, a poll by disabled charity scope found 64 percent of disabled people were against proposals by the Director of Public Prosecutions to relax the guidance on assisted suicide as they were concerned it would blur the legal position.

A YouGov poll in 2021 found 73 percent of those polled supported a form of doctor assisted death for those terminally ill. 50 percent supported a similar option for people who experienced unbearable suffering but who were not terminally ill. The same year the British Medical Association changed its policy position from opposition to neutrality.

In 2022, a survey of disabled rights organisations by Public Medical Central noted that different organisations took different stances on the issue. 84 percent remained silent or had no position, four percent were neutral and four percent opposed. This reflects the sensitivities around the issue. It is likely that rather than reflecting a strong opinion some organisations did not want to be seen as on the 'wrong side' of the debate.

In 2024, Opinium Research carried out a poll of 10,000 people (the largest on the subject in the UK) on behalf of Dignity in Dying. The poll found that 75 percent of all respondents supported making assisted dying lawful. This figure rose to 78 percent for respondents who identified as disabled people.

In May 2025, Jersey's States Assembly debated and agreed proposals to allow assisted dying for those with a terminal illness that causes or could cause unbearable suffering. Legislation is currently being drafted to implement the decision and is expected to come into force in 2027.

At the time of writing the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life Bill) is before Parliament. If this passes it could impact members who are terminally ill. It could also have an impact on members who, as part of their job, could be asked or expected to have a role in the end of life process. Both of these groups of members could turn to UNISON, as an organisation they trust, for advice or support. UNISON currently has no position on how or what advice or support would be available.

The similar, but not identical, Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill is also currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament.

Even if these Bills fail to become law it is unlikely to be the end of the debate, with some reports speculating that there could be a royal commission on the issue.

The debate on assisted dying is happening, whether we're part of it or not. Our members, including our disabled members, are amongst those most likely to be

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

affected by any changes to the law. Is it not time that UNISON has a clear policy position on this issue so that our voice can help shape the wider debate?

Conference re-affirms its commitments to the social model of disability and to properly and sustainably funded palliative care; but these commitments and having a clear policy on assisted dying are not mutually exclusive.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Disabled Members Committee to:

- 1) Develop and carry out a comprehensive study of members views on assisted dying as a starting point to informed discussion in the union. This should include but not be limited to:
 - a) Whether UNISON should have a policy position on a change to the law on assisted dying and, if yes, what that position should be;
 - b) What support or advice UNISON should provide for those affected by any possible changes to the law. This should include support for those who may be expected to have a role in implementing the decision;
 - c) Views of disabled members who could feel increasingly vulnerable or excluded as a result of any changes to the law;
 - d) Views of members in devolved nations where the law may be different;
- 2) Publish a report on the findings of the study before National Delegate Conference 2026;
- 3) Based on the findings of the study submit a motion that includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Proposed national policy on assisted dying;
 - b) Details of any support or advice that UNISON could offer members affected by changes to the law.

National Disabled Members' Committee

52. Let's Talk About Assisted Dying

Conference, assisted dying is an emotive and complex issue which people hold differing and strong views about. The issue can be polarising.

Common arguments against assisted dying are often based on religious, moral, and political arguments. Many medical organisations that have contributed to early calls for views have limited their responses to professional and legal aspects.

In 2024, the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill and the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, mark the resurgence of debate on this issue across the UK and devolved nations. Conference it is important to recognise that there are distinct differences between these Bills.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

While UNISON has no national policy position, in 2009 the National Retired Members carried a motion as amended supporting 'Physician Assisted Suicide' based on an individual's right to dignity and choice to end life. In 2024, the National Disabled Members Conference carried a motion calling for a survey on the issue to ensure that our union's policy reflects the collective voice of its entire membership.

Both are groups that are vulnerable to the abuses that could arise from a shift in legislation, but both know the debate on assisted dying is happening, whether we are part of that and are not shy from debating the subject.

It is important that as a union we have a clear policy position and that it is informed by the membership. This is particularly important for our disabled and retired members, but also, our members in health and social care and judicial settings that may be affected in their work by legislative changes.

This is a union issue.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council:

- 1) To conduct a national member survey on assisted dying as a starting point to an informed discussion of the issue;
- 2) To compile a report from the survey findings, including breakdowns by region to reflect devolved positions, by service group and by equalities;
- 3) To use the report findings to inform any UNISON contribution on the current Bills as well as any contributions relating to subsequent guidance that may be published;
- 4) To use the report's findings as a basis for a considered, respectful debate within UNISON with a view to achieving a national policy position.

Scotland Region

53. Addressing the Social Determinants of Health Inequalities

Conference acknowledges the ongoing discussions on inequalities, health disparities, and the resulting reduction in both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy faced by many marginalised groups, including our LGBT+, Black, and disabled members. These disparities are deeply rooted in the social determinants of health - factors such as income inequality, discrimination, housing conditions, and access to healthcare. However, instead of seeing progress, we have witnessed these inequalities worsen. The time for collective action is now.

Across the UK, there is a clear and alarming link between deprivation and reduced life expectancy. Those born in the most deprived areas are expected to live significantly shorter lives and spend a larger portion of their lives in poor health compared to those in the least deprived areas.

In Scotland, the differences are particularly stark. Men living in the most deprived 10 percent of areas live, on average, 13.3 years less than those in the least deprived areas. Women face a similar gap of ten years. The disparity in healthy life expectancy is even more alarming - 25 years for men and 21.5 years for women.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

This trend is mirrored in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, though to a slightly lesser extent.

These figures underscore the profound impact of social and economic inequalities on health outcomes. The widening gaps in both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy are not merely public health issues; they are also trade union issues. Our members from marginalised groups, including those with protected characteristics, are disproportionately affected by these inequalities. As a union, we must act to address these disparities and advocate for changes that will enhance the health and wellbeing of all our members.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with all relevant parts of UNISON to:

- 1) Advocate for urgent action on health inequalities by addressing the social determinants of health, including income inequality, discrimination, and access to quality healthcare, housing, and education. These issues impact not only LGBT+ members but also Black, disabled, and other marginalised communities;
- 2) Raise awareness across all UNISON regions, branches, service groups, and self-organised groups about the growing gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, particularly among those in the most deprived areas;
- 3) Encourage all parts of UNISON to integrate actions addressing health inequalities into their organising, bargaining, and campaigning efforts, supporting members who are disproportionately affected by these issues;
- 4) Campaign for policy change to tackle the root causes of health disparities, including government action on the structural drivers of inequality, such as poverty and deprivation, which are closely linked to lower life expectancy and poor health outcomes;
- 5) Collaborate with other trade unions, the TUC, public health bodies, policymakers, and civil society groups to drive this change;
- 6) Engage with external organisations to build partnerships aimed at addressing the social determinants of health, ensuring the voices of LGBT+, Black, disabled, and other marginalised members are heard in public health and social policy debates.

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

Environment

54. Climate Change in UNISON 2025 – Turning Commitments into Actions

Conference welcomes UNISON's proactive engagement on climate change and the recognition that trade unions, and UNISON particularly, have a key role to play in combating this global, national, and local threat.

Conference also welcomes the commitments made in Motion 63 at last year's Conference acknowledging the impact on all members, service groups and equality strands and the commitment to supporting the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (NFPT).

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

However, for UNISON to take this activity, and this important organising opportunity seriously, words and worthy statements of intent are not enough.

UNISON's commitments can only be fully realised if adequately resourced and prioritised within the union.

Conference welcomes the UNISON led motions passed at the 2024 TUC Congress:

- 1) Declaring that the climate emergency will affect all jobs and all workers adversely and is a key trade union issue for us all;
- 2) Calling for heat strikes in the face of rising workplace temperatures;
- 3) Calling for a year of trade union climate action including engagement with community and climate justice groups.

Conference also recognises that:

- a) UNISON members are particularly impacted due to:
 - i) Public services being expected to provide the necessary social infrastructure to address the devastating immediate and future impacts of climate change; and
 - ii) Because of the huge workplace and workforce transformations needed to meet the UK and devolved nation government's commitment for all public services to get to Net Zero by 2050 or earlier.
- b) Workers are already at risk from extreme weather, flooding and high fossil fuel energy bills;
- c) These risks are increasing, with the 2024 floods in Spain highlighting how the UK is underprepared for climate disasters;
- d) A rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels is needed globally to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown;
- e) UK national and global financial investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including the necessary public sector infrastructure, should be funded by the public purse and not thrown to the perverse profit-driven incentives of private companies.

Conference believes it is imperative that the Labour government review its disproportionate reliance and investment in inappropriate new technology such as Carbon Capture (CC). While CC will likely be a necessary, short-term, option in a wider array of more enduring solutions, it is a project that is unproven at the envisaged scale of use with no clear evidence about long-term harms. The current proposal to invest disproportionately vast amounts of public money in CC at the cost of wider investment in proven, necessary, safer and cheaper technologies and infrastructure must be challenged.

Conference resolves to support TUC UNISON year of trade union climate action as well as supporting and adequately resourcing, our own UNISON Year of Green

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Activism in 2026, with COP30 in Brazil (10-21 November 2025) as a key mobilising moment of unity.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Bring climate issues to the forefront of the union's activity: including green bargaining in all activist training; establishing national and regional networks of green reps; identifying heat and extreme weather hazards in the workplace and working with extreme heat campaigns; establishing an National Executive Council committee to take these initiatives forward;
- B) Ensure adequate internal structures and resource to support the new Environmental Officer (EnvO) role. Looking to how other branch officer roles are currently supported and specifically with reference to how the Health and Safety branch officer, and other similar branch officer role activity, is resourced and supported;
- C) Support union branches in organising relevant outreach events, including in branches and in workplaces, and in joint local activities with other unions and with wider civil society groups including climate activists, healthcare campaigners, housing campaigners and anti racist activists;
- D) Work with others in the run up to and during the Brazil COP as a key mobilising moment for trade union climate action. Supporting global solidarity initiatives ahead of COP30, including: continued support of the campaign in support of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty; supporting the 'polluter pays principle' in funding essential climate finance for the Global South, such as Brazil's proposal for a global two percent tax on billionaires;
- E) Ensure that where our climate policy, and the commitments we have made by signing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (FFNPT), come into conflict with UK or devolved nation government actions that we speak out (for example: if there is a proposal to issue new fracking licences in the UK).

National Executive Council

54.1

In "Conference also recognises that", add after point e):

"f) That repressive anti-protest legislation passed by previous governments has not been repealed by the current government, and that climate campaigners, along with anti-racists and Palestine protesters, have been particular targets, for example being arrested in a place of worship, refused bail or given long prison sentences for non-violent protests."

At the end of the paragraph beginning "Conference believes", add:

"The right to peaceful protest is essential in a democratic society. Repressive measures against peaceful protesters have a disproportionate impact on those, including Black people, with reasons to fear harsher treatment by the police, courts and prison system, and if unchallenged will be used more widely against trade

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

unionists. Elected officials to whom the police are accountable should make clear that the police should be facilitating rather than repressing peaceful and non-oppressive protest."

At the end of "Conference calls", add:

"F) Campaign for the repeal of repressive legislation which restricts the right to peaceful and non-oppressive protest over climate and other issues. Ensure that material defending the right to protest and opposing repression is available on the UNISON website and circulated to activists and members;

G) Consider what support can be provided, in line with Rules, for members arrested, charged or incarcerated under repressive anti-protest legislation."

Greater Manchester Transport

54.2

After seventh paragraph "Conference believes it is imperative.....infrastructure must be challenged" add new paragraph:

"Conference also notes with disappointment the announcements by the Labour government of airport expansion, in the name of economic growth. The airport industry is reliant on the fossil fuel industry, and so expansion is in direct conflict with UNISON policy of a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels."

In point E) add after "new fracking licences in the UK" add: ", and against airport expansion."

Camden

55. Climate Change in UNISON 2025 – Turning Commitments into Actions

Conference welcomes UNISON's proactive engagement on climate change and the recognition that trade unions, and UNISON particularly, have a key role to play in combating this global, national, and local threat.

Conference also welcomes the commitments made in Motion 63 at last year's Conference acknowledging the impact on all members, service groups and equality strands and the commitment to supporting the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (NFPT).

However, for UNISON to take this activity, and this important organising opportunity seriously, words and worthy statements of intent are not enough.

UNISON's commitments can only be fully realised if adequately resourced and prioritised within the union.

Conference welcomes the UNISON led motions passed at the 2024 TUC Congress:

- 1) Declaring that the climate emergency will affect all jobs and all workers adversely and is a key trade union issue for us all;
- 2) Calling for heat strikes in the face of rising workplace temperatures;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 3) Calling for a year of trade union climate action including engagement with community and climate justice groups.

Conference also recognises that:

- a) UNISON members are particularly impacted due to:
 - i) Public services being expected to provide the necessary social infrastructure to address the devastating immediate and future impacts of climate change; and
 - ii) Because of the huge workplace and workforce transformations needed to meet the UK and devolved nation government's commitment for all public services to get to Net Zero by 2050 or earlier;
 - iii) Workers are already at risk from extreme weather, flooding and high fossil fuel energy bills;
 - iv) These risks are increasing, with the 2024 floods in Spain highlighting how the UK is underprepared for climate disasters;
 - v) A rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels is needed globally to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown.
- b) UK national and global financial investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including the necessary public sector infrastructure, should be funded by the public purse and not thrown to the perverse profit-driven incentives of private companies.

Conference believes it is imperative that the Labour government review its disproportionate reliance and investment in inappropriate new technology such as Carbon Capture (CC). While CC will likely be a necessary, short-term, option in a wider array of more enduring solutions, it is a project that is unproven at the envisaged scale of use with no clear evidence about long-term harms. The current proposal to invest disproportionately vast amounts of public money in CC at the cost of wider investment in proven, necessary, safer and cheaper technologies and infrastructure must be challenged.

Conference resolves to support TUC UNISON year of trade union climate action as well as supporting and adequately resourcing, our own UNISON Year of Green Activism in 2026, with COP30 in Brazil (10-21 November 2025) as a key mobilising moment of unity.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Bring climate issues to the forefront of the union's activity: including green bargaining in all Reps training; establishing national and regional networks of green reps; identifying heat and extreme weather hazards in the workplace and working with extreme heat campaigns; establishing an National Executive Council committee to take these initiatives forward;
- B) Ensure adequate internal structures and resource to support the new Environmental Officer (EnvO) role. Looking to how other branch officer roles are

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

currently supported and specifically with reference to how the Health and Safety branch officer, and other similar branch officer role activity, is resourced and supported;

- C) Support union branches in organising relevant outreach events, including in branches and in workplaces, and in joint local activities with other unions and with wider civil society groups including climate activists, healthcare campaigners, housing campaigners and anti racist activists;
- D) Work with others in the run up to and during the Brazil COP as a key mobilising moment for trade union climate action. Supporting global solidarity initiatives ahead of COP30, including: continued support of the campaign in support of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty; supporting the 'polluter pays principle' in funding essential climate finance for the Global South, such as Brazil's proposal for a global two percent tax on billionaires;
- E) Ensure that where our climate policy, and the commitments we have made by signing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (FFNPT), come into conflict with government actions that we speak out (for example: if there is a proposal to issue new fracking licences in the UK). We will continue to campaign to save the planet regardless of who is in government.

Scottish Electricity
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
South Lanarkshire

56. UNISON's Year of Climate Activity

Conference welcomes UNISON's proactive engagement on climate change and the recognition that trade unions, and UNISON particularly, have a key role to play in combating this global, national, and local threat.

Conference also welcomes the commitments made in Motion 63 at last year's conference acknowledging the impact on all members, service groups and equality strands and the commitment to supporting the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (NFPT).

However, for UNISON to take this activity, and this important organising opportunity seriously, words and worthy statements of intent are not enough. Commitments can only be fully realised if adequately resourced and prioritised within the union.

Conference welcomes the UNISON-led motions passed at the 2024 TUC Congress:

- 1) Declaring that the climate emergency will affect all jobs and all workers adversely and is a key trade union issue for us all;
- 2) Calling for heat strikes in the face of rising workplace temperatures;
- 3) Calling for a year of trade union climate action including engagement with community and climate justice groups

Conference also recognises that:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- a) UNISON members are particularly impacted due to:
 - i) Public services being expected to provide the necessary social infrastructure to address the devastating immediate and future impacts of climate change and
 - ii) Because of the huge workplace and workforce transformations needed to meet the UK and devolved nation government's commitment for all public services to get to Net Zero by 2050 or earlier;
- b) Workers are already at risk from extreme weather, flooding and high fossil fuel energy bills;
- c) These risks are increasing, with the 2024 floods in Spain highlighting how the UK is underprepared for climate disasters;
- d) A rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels is needed globally to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown.

Conference notes with disappointment the recent statements from the Labour government about wanting to build a third runway at Heathrow, saying that it is needed for economic growth, and the recent moves to make legal challenges against such proposals harder. This is taking place against a backdrop of outrageous prison sentences being handed out to climate protestors.

Conference resolves to support TUC UNISON year of trade union climate action as well as supporting and adequately resourcing, our own UNISON Year of Green Activity in 2026, with COP30 in Brazil (10-21 November 2025) as a key mobilising moment of unity.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Bring climate issues to the forefront of the union's activity: including green bargaining in all Reps training; establishing national and regional networks of green reps; identifying heat and extreme weather hazards in the workplace and working with extreme heat campaigns; establishing an NEC committee to take these initiatives forward;
- B) Ensure adequate internal structures and resource to support the new Environmental Officer (EnvO) role. Looking to how other branch officer roles are currently supported and specifically with reference to how the Health and Safety branch officer, and other similar branch officer role activity, is resourced and supported;
- C) Support union branches in organising relevant outreach events, including in branches and in workplaces, and in joint local activities with other unions and with wider civil society groups including climate activists, healthcare campaigners, housing campaigners and anti-racist activists;
- D) Support global solidarity initiatives ahead of COP30, including: continued support of the campaign in support of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty; supporting the 'polluter pays principle' in funding essential climate finance for the Global South, such as Brazil's proposal for a global 2% tax on billionaires.

2025 National Delegate Conference

UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Camden

57. Climate Change

Conference reaffirms that climate change and environmental degradation are, and will become more and more, urgent issues for all workers and the whole working class.

We welcome the policy passed at TUC Congress, proposed by UNISON and PCS, which:

- 1) Recognised “that the climate emergency will affect all jobs and all workers adversely [and] is a key trade union issue for us all”;
- 2) Recognised “that climate change is an immediate industrial issue for many sectors”;
- 3) Called for “a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels to prevent catastrophic climate breakdown”;
- 4) Agreed “a year of green trade union activity including engagement with community and climate justice groups.”

Events globally since then have reinforced how vital this is, and why workers must take a lead.

Conference calls for much stronger climate action by governments here and internationally. We must fight against backtracking from the government’s climate pledges and for a strengthening and expansion of commitments. We advocate measures that address climate change while improving living standards and rights (eg free or much cheaper public transport).

We need to campaign for and win stronger immediate measures while also seeking to gain greater leverage to tackle the climate crisis through changes redistributing wealth and power (taxing the rich, a rebuilt and expanded public sector, expanded public ownership, greater democratic and workers’ control). Even as we fight for limited immediate changes, our approach should be shaped by the goal of comprehensively transforming society along the lines of equality and democracy, to ensure sustainability of the planet.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Ensure UNISON actively supports and mobilises for the year of action, pushing for it to start in September, and organising events and activities from then - with COP30 in November key;
- b) Organise a national event in 2025 for branch representatives to contribute to and plan activities for the year of action and beyond; and encourage regional events;
- c) Encourage branches to organise outreach events to generate activities for the year of action, in workplaces and communities, wherever possible together with other trade unionists, climate activists and campaigns;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- d) Strive to bring climate issues to the forefront of the union's activity, including through green bargaining in all reps' training and strengthening networks of green reps;
- e) Support global climate solidarity initiatives, including signing up to the campaign in support of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, and proposals to make high-emitting corporations and the rich fund climate finance for poorer countries and regions, eg a global tax on billionaires;
- f) Work with and encourage UNISON organisations and members to engage with labour movement-connected climate and environmental campaigns, including: Campaign Against Climate Change TU Group; Climate Justice Coalition; Greener Jobs Alliance; Heat Strike; Energy for All.

London Fire Brigade

58. GB Energy and the Impacts on the Energy Sector

Conference notes that the transition to sustainable and renewable energy sources is essential for combating climate change, fostering economic resilience and is crucial to understanding how this transition affects existing industries, workforce dynamics and community wellbeing.

We all know the energy sector in Aberdeen has historically been dominated by oil and gas, the shift towards green energy presents both challenges and opportunities for local businesses, workers, stakeholders and our members within the energy industry.

The recent announcement regarding GB Energy initiatives indicates a timeline of 20 to 30 years for job creation in Aberdeen, this raises concerns that a just transition for workers is just lip service. UNISON has been at the forefront on the call for a just transition with no worker left behind. There is a growing concern that renewable roles for our members within carbon intensive industries will be no longer be available when the time comes.

Conference, this does not help our industry to plan ahead. We all know to support the transition to net zero we need to increase the number of employees in the industry. UNISON's Grid Locked Report clearly outlines the benefits of decarbonisation with economic growth, creation of tens of thousands of jobs in installation, maintenance, manufacturing, and research as well as promoting skills development and training programmes to equip workers with expertise.

The establishment of GB Energy has the potential to significantly impact the energy sector by promoting renewable energy, enhancing competition and addressing social equity. However, it also faces challenges related to financial viability, efficiency and market dynamics. A balanced approach that considers both the advantages and disadvantages is essential for ensuring that GB Energy effectively contributes to a sustainable energy future for the UK.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Work with Labour Link to lobby government to engage with trade unions, energy companies and relevant stakeholders on a regular basis regarding the short, medium and long term strategy of the energy industry and GB Energy's role, and to set a clear plan for a net zero timeline and milestones.
- 2) To engage with branches in the Energy service group to understand their concerns regarding their future within the industry and use this information to create an action plan for impacted branches to discuss management regarding upskilling and training;
- 3) Report back to any progress to National Delegate Conference 2026.

Northern Energy

Pensions

59. Pay Compensation to the WASPI Women Now!

Conference welcomes the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman report dated 21 March 2024 entitled 'Women's State Pension Age' which considered the impact of the arbitrary change in state pension age and its effect on women born after 6 April 1950.

We note the level of compensation recommended by the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman recommended Level 4 compensation (£1000 - £2950) due to "the lasting impact on someone affected";(paragraph 504 of the report which is estimated to total between £3.5 billion and £10.5 billion). While recognising that this does not meet the expectations of many WASPI (Women Against State Pension Inequality) women it is nevertheless a major step forward.

Conference expected the new UK government to instruct the Department of Work and Pensions to pay the recommended compensation as a matter of urgency. However, on 17 December 2024, the government announced that no compensation would be paid to WASPI women.

This decision was a cruel blow to a generation of women, some of whom are now suffering severe financial distress. It came as a shock particularly given pre-election support from Labour for the WASPI campaign, including those in leadership positions.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with National Retired Members' Committee and the National Labour Link Committee to lobby and campaign for immediate payment of the compensation that WASPI women expected.

National Retired Members' Committee

59.1

In the third paragraph, after the sentence: "However, on 17 December 2024, the government announced that no compensation would be paid to WASPI women", add the following text:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

"The government's language unequivocally suggests that funding is unavailable to compensate the affected women. Pensions are funded through National Insurance, with contributions from workers representing deferred wages. Consequently, WASPI women are demanding what they have rightfully paid into. Any mismanagement of public funds is not the fault of those who contributed their deferred wages."

National Women's Committee

Equalities

60. Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWAG)

Conference notes with alarm the 2024 National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) report acknowledging that violence against women is a 'national emergency' in England and Wales. Although their analysis revealed that two million women a year are estimated to be victims of male violence, they admitted that this was an underestimate because many if not most offences were not reported. One of their spokespersons said that the real figure for victims was more like four million.

Unsurprisingly, this report fails to mention that police violence against women has massively dented trust in the police from victims themselves. Conference also recognises the disappointingly low conviction rates for these types of violent crimes against women.

VAWAG highlights in an extreme form the oppression of women supported and enabled by sexist and misogynist ideology. This ideology is fuelled by extreme material on the internet and misogynistic 'influencers'.

In campaigning to protect and extend women's sex based rights, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to ensure the effective monitoring of the prevalence and nature of domestic violence and sexual harassment, including racialised forms of sexual harassment to which Black women are subjected;
- 2) Demand that employers prevent and respond to sexual harassment and victimisation at work including in the precarious job sector;
- 3) Campaign to reverse the effective decriminalisation of rape and ensure access to justice for all sexual and domestic violence survivors;
- 4) Campaign to ensure that migrant women can access the support, welfare systems and legal tools they need to escape abuse, and can report violence without fear of immigration enforcement;
- 5) Work with our international partners to ensure women's sex based and reproductive rights are protected globally;
- 6) Campaign for fully funded support services, staffed by women, for women fleeing violence and domestic abuse;
- 7) Campaign for measures to prevent violence against women and girls, including resources and support for schools to address harmful sexual behaviour;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 8) Campaign to eradicate the cultural, economic and social norms that are the root causes of violence against women and girls;
- 9) Challenge any violence against our female members in public sector workplaces. Violence at work is never acceptable;
- 10) Report annually on UNISON's activities to end VAWAG.

North West Region

61. Enough is Enough

UNISON with over one million women members is the largest women's organisation in the UK. It is therefore incumbent upon us to use all our power to make inroads to eradicate misogyny, sexism, violence and aggression towards women and girls.

The growing scale of abuse in all its forms is staggering and is a national shame. We owe it to all women and girls now and in the future to make a more concerted effort to educate and empower and eradicate abuses of power. Bad behaviours and attitudes are on the rise, especially through the realm of social media platforms, in addition to mainstream media. This in turn leads to these behaviours and attitudes as being perceived as "normal." They are not "normal," they are increasingly dangerous to women and girls. A danger which affects the way women and girls live their daily lives. In many cases it causes physical and mental trauma. In the most extreme cases it causes loss of life. The distorted perceptions of what constitutes acceptable behaviours, be that in the use of language, physical attacks, coercive control, or abuses of power present a bleak vision of the future.

How do we fight back? The false narratives/ideologies of the right must be countered, as so much of this rhetoric forms the basis from which misogyny and sexism grows. We need to have a more unified drive within our union to make sound progress which will ensure that the future is a better place for our women and girls.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop and resource a national campaign which focuses on work to eradicate misogyny, sexism and violence and aggression towards women and girls;
- 2) To produce a toolkit that can help branches, regions and self organised groups in their campaigning and negotiating work to improve workplace policies and procedures.

Renfrewshire

62. Fight Caste Oppression and Discrimination

Conference notes:

- 1) That sections of the UK's South Asian communities are subjected to caste based discrimination in employment, service provision and education;
- 2) That then UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues Rita Izsák-Ndiaye, in her 2016 report, noted that: "Discrimination based on caste and analogous systems is a global phenomenon, affecting more than 250 million people worldwide. This

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

serious human rights violation infringes upon the basic principles of universal human dignity and equality, as it differentiates between ‘inferior’ and ‘superior’ categories of individuals because of their inherited caste status”; and that: “Discrimination on the basis of caste and analogous systems is a major cause of poverty, inequality and social exclusion of affected communities”;

- 3) That following campaigning by affected communities, the Labour government in April 2010, inserted a ministerial ‘power’ (Section 9 (5)(a)) in the Equality Act 2010 to make caste a protected characteristic under its section on race;
- 4) That ministers did not act on this provision, despite pressure from UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;
- 5) That during the passage of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013, the then Conservative-Lib Dem coalition government accepted a House of Lords amendment that made the ‘power’ a legal duty on ministers to make caste a protected characteristic in the Equality Act;
- 6) That the post 2015 Conservative government did not act on this legal duty but instead ran a consultation in 2017, announcing in 2018 it would repeal the duty, saying it wanted to rely on case law developing in the courts. However it did not repeal the law by the time of the 2024 General Election;
- 7) That the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination reiterated again in 2024 that the UK should outlaw caste discrimination.

Conference further notes:

- a) That the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s 2018 criticism of the government’s decision, arguing that reliance on case law would provide victims of caste discrimination with only “limited legal protection”, and that the decision to repeal the yet to be implemented legal duty was “inconsistent with the UK’s international obligations to provide for separate and distinct protection for caste in our legislation”;
- b) That in South Asia, several constitutions include caste/“untouchability” as grounds for prohibited discrimination – including those of Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Constitutional references to “caste” examples also include the constitutions of Burkina Faso and Mauritius;
- c) That a number of jurisdictions in the US and Canada have recently outlawed caste discrimination, and the Australian Human Rights Commission is developing a national anti-racism framework that includes caste discrimination.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Use appropriate opportunities to campaign for the Equality Act to be amended so caste becomes a protected characteristic;
- ii) Raise the issue with the National Labour Link Committee and request that the issue is raised with the Labour party;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- iii) Work with the Anti Caste Discrimination Alliance (ACDA) to develop educational/training courses and materials for UNISON activists that would increase understanding of caste oppression and discrimination.

Lambeth

63. Ensure Rights for People with Disabilities in the UK

Conference notes:

- 1) There have been years of stigmatising and dehumanising language used against people with disabilities, where they are seen as a problem to overcome as opposed to human beings having a right to live with dignity;
- 2) Following on from a United Nations report in 2016 where it found grave and systematic violations of Disabled people's rights due to austerity and welfare reform, disability rights organisations in 2024 have said there has been little progress;
- 3) The new government is continuing the use of language that portray people with disabilities as inherently untrustworthy. They are seeking legislation to be able to look at bank accounts without permission for those claiming financial support for their disability;
- 4) People with disabilities are incredibly concerned that the above risks potentially 'criminalising' benefit claimants and making marginalised people and those with disabilities fear they will see their benefits removed due to unavoidable errors made by the Department of Work and Pensions. This is something we have already seen, with unpaid carers currently paying back huge overpayments through no fault of their own, because of DWP bureaucratic failings. According to the government's own figures, disability fraud is about one percent and yet there has been a disproportionate focus made on this by the government.

Conference asks the National Executive Council to:

- a) Reiterates its support for the rights of people with disabilities and challenges all government attempts to marginalise and scapegoat;
- b) To ensure that UNISON implements within its own policies and practices a fully inclusive trade union that listens to the voices of people with disabilities;
- c) Ensure that conferences and other UNISON events are accessible to and inclusive of all, so that people with disabilities are fully able to take part and have a say in how UNISON is run. This includes ensuring appropriate ventilation for conferences, training and events exist and options for video participation.

Solihull Local Government

63.1

After "Conference asks the National Executive Council" add: "to work with the Disabled Members Self Organised Group"

At the end of point c) add: ", where possible"

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

National Executive Council

64. Unite for More Rights

Conference notes:

- 1) That in recent years LGBT+ people, and particularly Trans people, have been at the sharp end of attacks. This has been a conscious part of scapegoating by politicians with the 'war on woke' as they seek to divide and weaken us;
- 2) Anti-Trans rhetoric leads to physical assaults. Home Office statistics in 2023 revealed that hate crime against Trans people increased 11 percent from the previous year, and 186 percent in the previous five years;
- 3) The continual attack on Trans people, their identity and their right to exist from individuals and groups who describe themselves as gender critical. This is often co-ordinated on social media platforms;
- 4) That gender critical groups and individuals often organise around women only spaces and the idea that Trans people having rights means that women will lose rights. This is a reactionary idea that has always been used when those facing discrimination organise and fightback.

Conference believes:

- a) That Trans women are women and Trans men are men, all our LGBT+ comrades must be respected;
- b) That Trans equality is a trade union issue. Trade unions are about uniting us to make us stronger and we oppose all divisions amongst our class;
- c) Women's rights are not diminished by Trans people having more rights. Rights are not in finite supply. In fact, when we unite and organise together, we can often win more rights for all;
- d) Therefore, that women have a vested interest in standing alongside our Trans comrades in solidarity and in resistance and all of us fighting back together.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to work with the National Women's Committee and the National LGBT+ Committee to:

- i) Co-produce a myth busting factsheet, with all the self-organised groups in UNISON, to counter the idea that an increase in Trans rights would mean a decrease in the rights of others;
- ii) To work with all other relevant bodies in UNISON such as, but not limited to, the Labour Link Committee as part of a campaign for the Labour government to introduce self-ID for Trans people as they had originally pledged to do in 2019;
- iii) Work with all our intersectional self organised groups to ensure all our rights are protected, respected and strengthened;
- iv) To continue to roll out the UNISON Trans ally training into branches.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

National Women's Committee

65. Adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism

Conference believes that minority groups (including race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability etc.) should be the ones to determine what is and is not offensive to them.

Conference notes the motion 'Have a clear definition of transphobia, homophobia and acephobia in UNISON' which was passed in the 2024 National LGBT+ Conference and called on the national LGBT+ committee to "work with the equality liaison of the National Executive Council to agree a clear definition of LGBT+ phobia". Conference notes that this motion rightfully sets a precedent that minority groups should be the ones to determine their own definitions of offensive behaviour and/or language.

In the absence of a Jewish Members' self organised group which could advise on what constitutes antisemitism, Conference must turn to the organisation which most broadly represents the interests of the British Jewish Community, which is the Board of Deputies of British Jews (BOD). The BOD is made up of 300 deputies elected by Jewish organisations, both religious and cultural. Like all minority groups, the British Jewish community is not a monolith, but the BOD is representative of the vast majority.

Conference recognises that the Jewish community is a tiny minority in the UK. The 2021 census recorded 271,327 Jewish people in the UK, which is 0.5 percent of the total population of the country. For comparison, there are nearly five times as many UNISON members as there are British Jews. Conference believes that a minority community this tiny should be respected and uplifted, not disregarded.

The BOD, as stated on their website, recommends that the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism be used as guidance for organisations and governments. Therefore, as the leading representative body of the British Jewish community, the BOD's recommendation must be accepted in line with the belief that minority groups should be the ones to determine what is and is not offensive to them.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism;
- 2) Collaborate with the BOD to determine best practices for supporting and uplifting Jewish members and use this collaboration to produce guidelines for branches.

Bucks Area

65.1

Insert new fifth and sixth paragraphs as follows:

"The working definition of antisemitism states: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” Conference notes that the IHRA clearly states that “criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic”.

“Conference is concerned that according to a recent report into workplace antisemitism by the BOD and others found that 64 percent of Jewish workers had experience antisemitism in the workplace and of those who are members of unions that 28 percent had experienced antisemitism within their union.”

National Executive Council

Employment Rights

66. Backing the Employment Rights Bill

Conference welcomes the new substantial Employment Rights Bill for Great Britain. The Bill was, as promised, published within 100 days of the Labour government being elected and is currently in Parliament.

The Bill repeals restrictions on trade union activity including our ability to take strike action and strengthens our rights to access workplaces, recruit and organise members and expand collective bargaining. For too long, employers have had all of the advantages and the balance must be shifted towards safe and secure employment that pays fairly so there is also an increase in individual employment rights too for all workers. A high wage and high skill economy should be within reach as the UK has suffered from poor employment practices for too long.

The Bill is a success for longstanding trade union campaigns and will implement many of the measures in the Labour Party’s New Deal for Working People and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1) Repeal of the Strikes Act 2023 and the Trade Union Act 2016;
- 2) Ending exploitative zero hour contracts; with guaranteed hours contracts, a right to reasonable notice of shift changes and payment for cancellation of shifts at short notice;
- 3) Introducing basic day one rights – sick pay, parental leave, unfair dismissal;
- 4) Sectoral collective bargaining – fair pay agreement and negotiating body in adult social care (England), reinstatement of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB, England);
- 5) Strengthening family friendly rights and flexible working, making it much harder for employers to refuse employee requests as it is too easily done at the moment;
- 6) Extension of the time limit from three to six months for all workers bringing employment tribunal claims;
- 7) Reintroducing the two tier workforce prevention code in public procurement;
- 8) Political fund opt in restored – trade union members no longer have to expressly ask to opt in;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 9) New protections against 'fire and rehire', with it being automatically unfair to dismiss an employee for refusing a contract variation and a very limited exception for genuine need to avoid serious financial issues that may threaten the business (making it necessary to go through genuine consultation with trade unions first);
- 10) Strengthening facility time – when requests are denied the burden of proof will be placed on the employer, who must demonstrate that the time off requested was unreasonable;
- 11) Provide equality reps with facility time;
- 12) Introduction of electronic balloting;
- 13) Improved access rights for trade unions to workplaces for recruitment and collective bargaining purposes, union recognition made less onerous, and thresholds reduced;
- 14) Protection from detriment for taking part in industrial action, bringing into law UNISON's win in the UK Supreme Court for our member, Mrs Mercer's case;
- 15) Protection from dismissal for taking strike action is being extended – the basic 12 weeks is being removed and instead it is extended for the length of the strike action;
- 16) Measures to tackle blacklisting of activists by employers;
- 17) Strengthening collective redundancy rights, lifting the cap on protective awards and the introduction of interim relief to protect workers in this situation, and consultation based on total business redundancies;
- 18) Increased protection from sexual harassment, introducing gender and menopause action plans and strengthening rights for pregnant workers.
- 19) Strengthening statutory sick pay;
- 20) Creating a Single Enforcement Body to ensure employment rights are upheld – a new 'Fair Work Agency'.

Conference welcomes the proposals in the Bill and will seek to improve it. Conference notes that measures in the Bill from tackling fire and rehire, zero hours contracts and day one rights to claim unfair dismissal have come under heavy fire from the 'right wing', the press and deregulators. Conference asserts that it will seek to protect the Bill from business and Tory attacks whilst trying to improve measures in the Bill in line with UNISON policy and leave no loopholes for avoidance (particularly for employers still willing to attempt to fire and re-hire).

Conference further commits to campaign to bring forward as soon as possible other measures in the New Deal such as insourcing, ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting, a right to disconnect, single status of worker and limits on surveillance technology.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes that even after Royal Assent in 2025 there will be work to be done in some areas in getting effective implementation as soon as possible through statutory instruments.

Conference also notes that pressure is being exerted by business and the Tories to drop the commitment to the repeal of the 2016 Trade Union Act.

Conference also notes that in Northern Ireland, the Executive and Assembly have devolved powers over employment, equality and trade union laws. Conference therefore supports the ongoing campaign by UNISON Northern Ireland, working alongside the ICTU, for comprehensive new Employment Rights legislation to be introduced. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to continue to support these ongoing efforts.

Conference therefore will remain vigilant and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue to campaign to make working life better;
- b) Campaign against insecure work and one-sided flexibility and for repeal of the anti-union laws;
- c) Track all measures in the New Deal that are not in this initial Bill for implementation through the quickest and easiest means possible;
- d) Work with the TUC to improve the Bill and fend off opposition attacks;
- e) Work with activists, young members and self-organised groups to maximise the workplace benefits and spread awareness amongst the wider UNISON membership of how the Bill will positively impact them;
- f) Campaign for the adoption of UNISON's Disability Employment Charter and to close both the disability employment gap and the pay gap;
- g) Plan to expand our membership in schools and social care and work with regions to maximise recruitment and retention opportunities arising from the Bill;
- h) Work with service groups to consider bargaining implications, particularly of measures to prevent the two tier workforce;
- i) Monitor and push for effective implementation at workplace level by employers;
- j) Campaign to ensure that migrant workers can meaningfully access these expanded employment rights;
- k) Continue to identify and respond to any devolution implications and work with ICTU, STUC and TUC Cymru and our UNISON colleagues in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to ensure care workers and school support staff in those nations are placed at no disadvantage to their counterparts in England by the passage of the Bill;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- l) And continue to highlight the importance of effective enforcement by the new Fair Work Agency as well as through Tribunals, including the ability of unions to interact with the Agency on members' behalf;
- m) To organise a campaign of lobbying and protests, including work with Labour Link, to ensure repealing of the 2016 Act remains part of the legislation.

National Executive Council

66.1

Replace action point e) with:

"Work with our self organised groups and Young Members Forum to raise awareness of the new rights and opportunities within the Bill to our members, including how the Bill can positively impact them and their experience within the workplace, with particular attention to addressing the intersectional challenges faced by marginalised groups such as Black and/ or disabled LGBT+ workers."

National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender plus Committee

66.2

In k), after: "...and work with ICTU, STUC and TUC Cymru and our UNISON colleagues in NI, Scot and Wales to ensure care workers and school support staff in those nations are placed at no disadvantage to their counterparts in England by the passage of the Bill."

Insert: "and will support UNISON Cymru/Wales in lobbying the UK government and Welsh governments for a Wales-only SSSNB following the overwhelming vote of Cymru/Wales school members in favour of such a body."

Cymru/Wales Region

66.3

After "...Tories to drop the commitment to the repeal of the 2016 Trade Union Act."

Insert new paragraph:

"Conference is concerned the government may delay the repeal of the requirement for 50 percent turnouts in ballots until after electronic balloting for industrial action has been introduced. Secondary legislation necessary to fully implement the Employment Rights Bill must be prioritised."

Portsmouth City

67. Welcoming the Employment Rights Bill and Building for a Stronger Future

Conference welcomes the Employment Rights Bill laid before Parliament by the new Labour government as a significant step forward in advancing workplace rights and equality. The Bill represents the culmination of years of tireless campaigning by trade unions and activists, particularly through the Labour Link section of UNISON, who championed these policies while Labour was in opposition.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes the following key provisions of the Employment Rights Bill:

- 1) Repeal of the Trade Union Act 2016, which restores balance to industrial relations and affirms the importance of trade union activity in a democratic society;
- 2) Improved rights to access workplaces for the purpose of forming trade unions, removing barriers to organising and empowering workers to stand together.;
- 3) Faster routes to union recognition, ensuring workers can achieve collective bargaining rights more efficiently;
- 4) Day one employment rights, including protection against unfair dismissal, which guarantees fairness and dignity from the very start of employment.

Conference particularly celebrates the creation of the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB), a long-standing objective of UNISON. Once re-enacted, the SSSNB will grant unprecedented recognition to the vital role of school support staff, establishing their right to bargain collectively for pay and conditions, and ensuring their voices are heard at the national level.

Additionally, the Bill introduces the first-ever sector-wide Fair Pay Agreement in adult social care, a ground-breaking development that acknowledges the critical contributions of care workers and begins to address longstanding inequities in the sector.

While these achievements are significant, Conference acknowledges there is more to be done. The Bill, though transformative, must include stronger mechanisms for enforcing individual rights and enhanced powers for trade unions to address imbalances of power in workplaces effectively.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Continue lobbying the government to strengthen the Bill in its passage through Parliament, ensuring it delivers on its full potential for workers;
- b) Provide training and resources for UNISON activists to maximize the opportunities presented by the Bill in building and strengthening our union;
- c) Promote awareness of the new provisions among members, enabling them to understand and use their rights fully.

Finally, Conference recognises the outstanding role played by Angela Rayner MP, Deputy Prime Minister, a proud member, and former activist of UNISON. Angela has dedicated her life fighting to deliver fairness for working people. Her leadership to drive forward the Employment Rights Bill serves as a fitting testament to her dedication to working people and the union movement.

East Midlands Region

67.1

In point 1) add at the beginning:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

"The pre-election pledge to" and after "Repeal" delete "of"

At the end of point 1) add: "However, Conference opposes the delaying of this following the election of the Labour government."

Delete the final paragraph.

National Executive Council

68. Ensuring the New Two Tier Code Delivers for UNISON Members

Conference notes that the government's Employment Rights Bill creates a power for a minister to impose a duty and create a statutory code to prevent the emergence of a 'two tier workforce' when outsourcing occurs.

The regulations created under this provision will cover the transferring workers and ensure that any subsequent workers employed to deliver the contract are treated no less favourably than those who have been transferred.

Whilst welcoming this development, Conference notes that the previous two tier code, introduced by the last Labour government, was not as effective as it should have been in preventing two and multi-tier workforces. The code was not properly enforced and unscrupulous employers got round it by redesigning jobs to evade the requirement to provide protections for workers.

Conference agrees that the government need to learn the lessons from the past and listen to UNISON to ensure that the new regulations and code address difficulties faced by outsourced workers today, including those employed under framework agreements, by wholly owned subsidiary companies and local authority trading companies (LATCs).

Conference also notes the importance of the wider package of insourcing and procurement related reforms that the government has committed to in it's Make Work Pay document. These include a requirement for contracting authorities to carry out a public interest test before outsourcing and when contracts come up for renewal, making social value mandatory in contract design and using public procurement to raise employment standards. The government's goal is to bring about the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation.

Conference agrees that ensuring that the new two tier code and wider procurement related measures are all implemented effectively is a priority and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Ensure that the union is fully engaged in the consultation around the introduction of the new two tier code and that the experiences and views of members who have been outsourced is fed into the process;
- 2) Develop materials and other support measures to help branches and members subject to outsourcing to navigate and make best use of the new regulations and code;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 3) Work with the TUC and, where appropriate, the WTUC, STUC and NIC ICTU to campaign for the speedy introduction of the wider insourcing and procurement related Make Work Pay measures.

Private Contractors' National Forum

69. Developing the Migrant Workers Network

Conference notes the publication in July 2024 of UNISON's partner organisation the Joint Council for Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) report "Work it out: advancing migrant worker's rights".

This report outlines that "in the care sector in particular, we are seeing a record number of workers without enough hours or pay, having their visas curtailed due to sponsorship revocations, and at real risk of destitution and being made undocumented.

These dangers are compounded by a wider landscape of a fragmented, underfunded labour enforcement system alongside increasingly precarious, outsourced and unregulated work in which all workers, regardless of where they are from, lack adequate regulatory protections."

Conference also notes that as a result of the introduction of the Health and Care Visa there has been a surge in cases of Modern Day Slavery and UNISON activists, across a range of service groups, are finding ever increasing cases of bad practice. Migrant Workers are too often the victims of exploitation including poor accommodation and bad employment practices like the illegal deduction of wages, high agency fees, not paying the minimum wage, trade union victimisation and inadequate health and safety.

Conference additionally notes the launch of the North West Migrant Social Care Workers Charter which proposes a comprehensive response to the treatment of migrant care workers, their accommodation, victimisation/discrimination including threat of deportation if dismissed, and ethical recruitment.

Conference recognises that a high proportion of Migrant Workers will also be Black members. For many, UNISON's structures will be new and unfamiliar, and they will unaware that self organised group structures are in place to support them and assist with developing their organising, bargaining, and campaigning agendas.

Conference, therefore, calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with the National Executive Council Black Seat Representatives, Strategic Organising Unit, Bargaining Unit and other appropriate stakeholders to highlight the issues confronting Black Migrant Workers;
- 2) Work with the Service Group Liaison Committee and Private Sector Members Forum on issues of joint concern experienced by Black Migrant Workers;
- 3) Work with Regional Black Members' structures to promote UNISON's Migrant Workers Network and their inclusion within regional work streams;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 4) Work with UNISON's Migrant Workers Network to promote Black Members' Self Organisation to their members.

National Black Members' Committee

70. Certificate of Common Sponsorship

Conference notes migrant workers on Tier 2 visas, particularly those on health and social care visas, are essential to maintaining our health and social services. However, current visa rules make their lives incredibly difficult and leave them vulnerable to exploitation. To obtain a visa, a migrant worker must have a job offer from an approved UK employer, known as a sponsor. The worker remains tied to their sponsor for the duration of their visa. This places employers in an incredible position of power, creating a significant power imbalance, allowing employers to withdraw their sponsorship and put migrant workers at risk of being sent home if they cannot find a new sponsor within 60 days. Employers may arbitrarily withdraw sponsorships from migrant workers for raising concerns, whistleblowing, or even complaining about their poor treatment. Migrant workers are constrained to keep quiet and not speak out in the face of discrimination, sexual harassment, and even rape for fear of losing their certificates of sponsorship and being sent back home.

When migrant workers lose their jobs, they risk financial hardship, debt, and even the loss of residency rights. This creates immense stress and insecurity not just for the migrant workers but also for their families who depend on their visa status and are consequently affected. These conditions leave them trapped and powerless, unable to challenge unsafe and unfair practices without fear of deportation. Ideally, migrant workers who come to the UK should be seen and treated as serving the country, not individual employers.

UNISON South West lobbied Parliament and these issues were shared with MPs present. To address them, UNISON proposed a Certificate of Common Sponsorship for health and social care workers on Tier 2 visas. This has produced a significant result, with an Early Day Motion now tabled in Parliament calling for reform of the current situation. This includes introducing a Certificate of Common Sponsorship, which would allow migrant workers to change employers within the sector without risking their visa status.

The Certificate of Common Sponsorship is a system where multiple organisations and entities in the health and social care sector jointly sponsor migrant workers, breaking the exclusive link between a single employer and a worker's visa status. Benefits of this system include:

- 1) Worker empowerment: Migrant workers would have the freedom to change employers within the sector, reducing fear of retaliation;
- 2) Improved working conditions: Employers would need to maintain fair practices to retain staff, fostering safer and more equitable workplaces;
- 3) Sector resilience: Allowing mobility within the health and social care sector could alleviate staffing shortages and improve workforce management.

The implications of this are as follows:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- a) Political: Supporting this reform aligns with the government's commitment to ethical labour practices and workforce resilience, enhancing the UK's reputation as a fair employer;
- b) Economic: Better working conditions and improved retention would reduce turnover costs and support a stable and productive workforce in health and care;
- c) Social and public health: Health and social care workers who feel secure in their roles are more likely to provide better care, improving outcomes for patients and clients and reducing the risks associated with high turnover.

Conference, therefore, calls on the National Executive Council to:

- i) Work with service groups, regions, self organised groups, Migrant Workers' Network, Overseas Nursing Network, and other relevant structures of UNISON, as well as other organisations and allies including the TUC, to launch a campaign to contact Members of Parliament to publicly endorse UNISON's campaign for Tier 2 visa reform and support the Certificate of Common Sponsorship proposal;
- ii) Lobby the government and Members of Parliament to initiate a parliamentary debate on Tier 2 visa reforms and work towards legislative changes supporting ethical immigration policies for critical sectors like health and social care;
- iii) Continue to develop guidance around migrant worker rights and encourage self organised groups, Migrant Workers' Network, regions and branches to continue organising and engaging migrant workers.

South West Region

70.1

Add at end new bullet point:

"iv) Establish the annual UN international migrant workers day of 18 December as an annual UNISON Day of Action in support of migrant workers delivering UK public services and plan a unionwide mobilisation including a UK parliamentary lobby on 18 December 2025 in support of the UNISON campaign for changes to the social care visa."

North West Region

71. End the Exploitation of Migrant Workers

As a result of a regional social care project, Northern region experienced a higher level of engagement from migrant workers in 2024 than previously. This included members attending a regional social care network, some going on to be trained as UNISON workplace stewards, and one becoming a regional representative on the newly formed national social care committee.

From this work we have heard testimonies of migrant worker's experiences. These are wide ranging but at best can be described as exploitation, at worst, modern slavery. This includes employers simply not paying staff for their work for lengthy periods of time, after workers have paid significant sums of money to come to the UK

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

for work, and employers threatening to deport employees who escalate the issue. The testimonies include inappropriate accommodation provided employers as part of migrant workers employment arrangement, including shared rooms. When accommodation bills are not paid by the employer, this has resulted in UNISON members being chased for money they do not owe by HMRC and the local authority. This puts migrant workers into increasingly vulnerable positions, often having to rely on local communities and churches for support to live.

The importance of UNISON's new visa campaign for these members cannot be overstated. The current sponsorship system results in migrant workers being afraid to raise concerns regarding their employment, for fear of being deported. Some unscrupulous employers take advantage of this and threaten deportation to silence migrant workers. This very real fear also presents a barrier to migrant workers getting active in UNISON. Increasingly we are supporting migrant workers to secure alternative sponsorship arrangements through new employment before we are able to provide support to challenge the practices of the previous employer. Often by that point it is too late and so bad, sometimes illegal, employment practices go without challenge.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for employers to be removed as the sponsor and to be replaced with a sector wide public sponsor;
- 2) Work with Labour Link to apply political pressure to win the visa campaign;
- 3) Work with branches and regions to organise migrant care workers and increase our migrant worker activist base.

Northern Region

71.1

After the third paragraph insert:

“Conference recalls the terms of the 2023 motion “Organising to Win” and welcomes the unprecedented gains made to date.

Conference therefore commits to focus the power of Organising to Win on the challenge of empowering migrant workers in the campaign for the security, equity and fairness that all public services workers should enjoy, regardless of nationality, race or ethnic origin.

UNISON will end the enslavement and exploitation of our migrant worker members through the power of workplace organising.”

Add new bullet point 2) and re-number accordingly:

“2) To identify and target the specific legislation, policies and employer practices that enslave and exploit UNISON members.”

Add new bullet point 5):

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

“5) To train, mentor and empower members, activists and leaders among our migrant workers and anti-racist allies, and equip them with the organising and campaign methods required to build power and deliver radical change.”

Scotland Region

72. Migrant Care Workers: Improving Rights and Preventing Exploitation by Unscrupulous Employers

Conference, migrant care workers play a crucial role in maintaining the care and wellbeing of individuals, particularly the elderly and those with disabilities, within the UK. Despite their essential contribution to the workforce, some migrant care workers face exploitation. This exploitation is exacerbated by unscrupulous employers who take advantage of their migrant status and the often precarious legal position of these workers under the tight sponsorship requirements that are placed on them. It is, therefore, essential that migrant care workers should be allowed to work under fair and dignified conditions, free from abuse and exploitation. Migrant care workers deserve the same rights and protections as any other worker. It is imperative when they come to work in the UK that they can work safely, with dignity and without fear of exploitation. Conference, this motion highlights the critical need for improved rights for migrant care workers and calls for concerted action to stop unscrupulous employers from exploiting vulnerable workers in this vital sector.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign to promote the value of migrant care workers in the UK;
- 2) Develop and roll out an agreed UNISON migrant workers charter to get employers to sign up to;
- 3) Campaign to change the sponsorship requirements for migrant care workers;
- 4) Campaign for fair wages and benefits for migrant care workers;
- 5) Campaign for safe and respectful working conditions to ensure that the workplace is free from abuse, harassment, or neglect. Migrant care workers must be entitled to clear and fair contracts with transparent terms regarding working hours, tasks, and responsibilities;
- 6) Campaign to ensure that migrant care workers can access legal support and safe channels to report abuses without fear of retaliation, deportation, or losing their livelihood;
- 7) Campaign for Mobility rights so that workers should not be tied to one employer through exploitative contractual arrangements or sponsorships that limit their ability to change employers when necessary, particularly in cases of abuse or poor working conditions.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

73. End the Exploitation of Migrant Care Workers in the United Kingdom

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Migrant care workers give invaluable contribution and play an essential role in the UK's health and social care system, providing critical support to elderly and vulnerable individuals.

Many migrant care workers face exploitative working conditions, including long hours, unpaid overtime, and wages below the legal minimum.

Employer sponsored visas often tie migrant care workers to a single employer, making it difficult for them to report abuse or seek better employment.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Work with regions, branches and service groups to build and strengthen union membership of migrant workers across different employers in the UK;
- 2) Work with relevant organisations to lobby UK government for reform of the visa system to allow care workers greater flexibility to change employers without fear of deportation;
- 3) Campaign to improve the rights of migrant workers and work with the Strategic Organising Unit to organise and build UNISON's migrant workers' network across all regions;
- 4) Ensure that all migrant care workers have access to information, advice and assistance on how and where they can access support, legal advice, and whistleblower protection.

Cardiff County

74. UNISON Stands With Migrant Workers

Conference is opposed to the hostile environment and to political and legislative attacks by politicians against migrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers. Conference asserts that it stands with migrant workers in the workplace and beyond.

Whether its workers on skilled worker visas or low paid members in outsourced services, UK government policies on no recourse to public funds, hikes to visa fees and the health surcharge, salary thresholds and more have all had a devastating impact on people's lives.

Conference welcomes the work done at all levels by UNISON to respond to this challenge, especially by self organised groups, branches and activists to challenge exploitation and injustice, support migrant worker members from destitution and the threat of deportation.

This work has been supported by the provision of free immigration advice through the helpline run by Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI). This service has supported members dealing with the hostile environment, ever-changing immigration rules, employers using visa conditions to exploit workers and more. It has also supported branches and activists dealing with complex immigration rules affecting workplace rights. The UNISON charity 'There for you' has also played an invaluable role in supporting members who have been left in poverty due to the UK's immigration rules.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference also welcomes the launch of a new migrant worker network, a new informal network that enables the union to improve our communication with migrant worker members and strengthen our organising and recruitment activity. This is vital to building an organising and bargaining agenda that responds to the priorities of all our members.

In order to support with work Conference believes it is critical for branches to map its migrant worker members. Identifying where our migrant worker members are located and the visas they are on will allow key resources and targeted advice to be developed. Surveys of our migrant worker members will enable better identification of what should be on our trade union agenda.

Conference therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support the work of branches and regions mapping and surveying our migrant worker members;
- 2) Produce resources and advice to support our campaigning and negotiating agenda;
- 3) Produce specific guidelines for activists undertaking casework involving migrant workers;
- 4) Promote awareness of the free JCWI immigration advice helpline for UNISON members;
- 5) Campaign to improve the rights of migrant workers and to dismantle the hostile environment, working with the union's migrant worker network, Labour Link, and the service groups.

Isle of Wight Local Government

75. Urgent Steps to Back Migrant Workers

Conference believes:

- 1) The recruitment and organising of migrant workers, on a foundation of fighting racism and xenophobia, is essential to the health and power of our union and the wider cause of the whole working class. We cannot avoid the reality that immigration status intersects critically with matters of exploitation, bullying and harassment;
- 2) Immigration control measures have infiltrated all areas of public services – our workplaces. Access to advice and support on immigration-related matters is of critical importance to our migrant members and those who are unexpectedly challenged over their status as the Windrush generation were, and as those on indefinite leave, settled EU migrants and refugees may be in future. Knowing your immigration rights is as important as knowing your employment rights, but too often members rely on small organisations and charities rather than UNISON;
- 3) Building up our collective knowledge, experience, and expertise on immigration-related matters, as we do with equalities-related and other cases, is a must. It can put UNISON in a stronger position to consider strategic litigation and develop

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

the tools needed for branches and regions to fight off the exploitative and racist abuse of our migrant members and the threats to any Black members seen as 'not belonging' here.

Conference notes:

- a) In June 2024 a strategic victory was won by a healthcare support worker from the Whittington Hospital (where UNISON organises, but this case was led by the charity ramfel.org.uk). Her case set a precedent for all migrant workers on 3C leave: the Home Office was ordered to provide them evidence to confirm their legal rights. 3C leave refers to when an in-time application is made to replace an expiring visa and while awaiting a Home Office decision the legal right to work as normal continues. The problem was that without something to show an employer (who only has the expired visa to go by), people were losing their jobs and being left in serious hardship. Shockingly by September 2024, under a Labour government, the Home Office went on to apply to appeal the decision, pausing the requirement to roll out a digital status for 3C leavers, and restoring the destitution.

Conference further notes:

- i) That for some years now, UNISON's National Black Members Conference have repeatedly debated and voted emphatically in favour of a motion raised from Northern Ireland Region, seeking to make immigration advice part of UNISON's offer to members;
- ii) The JCWI-run helpline for UNISON members who seek advice about immigration issues has been in place for a number of years now.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- A) Conduct an analysis of the numbers and nature of the enquiries coming through the JCWI-run helpline; this should include (and is not limited to) identifying common patterns and considering the following questions:
 - I) Who are the key groups of members and service groups affected by immigration issues and approaching UNISON's helpline, and what can be learn from this?
 - II) Of the types of enquiries coming in, which ones can and cannot be dealt with, what does it show us in terms of members expectations, and what happens with calls for help that are outside the scope?
 - III) How quickly is the helpline able to respond to calls, with consideration to the timescales imposed on member's cases?
 - IV) What examples from the data suggest potential areas by which a focus on winning a change could benefit a large number – whether this were through campaigning, casework or strategic litigation?
- B) Report back on the findings to regional Black Members Self Organised Groups at the earliest time possible (either a full or interim report), and to the National Delegate Conference in 2026.

76. Protecting Jobs in the Age of AI

With Artificial Intelligence (AI) predicted to affect almost 40 percent of jobs around the world, replacing some and complementing others now is the time for our union to take proactive steps to protect the jobs of our members.

A report by PwC (2021) estimates that "around 7 percent of existing UK jobs could face high (over 70 percent) probability of automation over the next five years, rising to around 18 percent after 10 years and just under 30 percent after 20 years". This will leave 30 percent of the working population displaced in one way or another, potentially needing to retrain or face unemployment.

A study by Learning and Work (Avanzo Windett et al, 2023) - commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission - researched the impact of three long-term British labour market trends on people with protected characteristics. This showed that people with disabilities, younger people, women and ethnic minorities are much more likely to be employed in jobs at high risk of replacement by AI.

The government response to the consultation 'a pro-innovation approach to AI regulation' acknowledges that AI is developing quicker than legislation to regulate it. It is also interesting to note that the only union that appears to have responded to the consultation is the National Union of Journalists and that the National Taxpayers Union Foundation, Centre for Policy Studies and Labour for the Long Term have responded.

In the face of this significant shift in the workforce, Conference calls on the National Executive Council to take the following steps to protect our members now:

- 1) Lobby government for an automatic right to retraining (at the cost of the business) for staff whose roles are made redundant by AI;
- 2) Lobby for protections for staff whose workloads are reduced by AI;
- 3) Join public debates on AI so that the workers' voice can be heard in the discussion and not be drowned out by vested interests;
- 4) Work with Labour Link and the Labour party to formulate legislation that safeguards the rights of workers whose roles are threatened by AI.

There is no time to waste. Unions must work together and act now to protect jobs and workers' rights and ensure that AI has a positive effect on future working conditions rather than being left behind.

East Hampshire

International

77. Time for the UK to Promote Universal Quality Public Services in the Global South

Just as our members bravely save lives during climate change crises, natural disasters, pandemics and conflict, and are essential to the development of our

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

country, so too do public service members worldwide. The last Labour government recognised the importance of quality public services in the global South, but this was cynically reversed under the Tories who ideologically used the budget to promote privatisation.

Unsurprisingly, investigations by Public Services International and partners like Oxfam repeatedly expose shocking cases where private equity and other corporations owned by billionaires win development aid to make a profit. They do this by channelling our taxes through tax havens that then create or invest in, run and profit from what are frequently sub-standard private health, education and utilities throughout the global South. Shamefully, when development agencies and banks are forced to investigate scandals, workers' rights are almost always excluded from the investigations.

With nearly 80 percent of UNISON members being women, we know what it is like for women globally to experience the discriminatory effect of privatisation compared to quality public services. Public services are essential in overcoming exclusion and systemic discrimination because women's reduced economic and political power means they are often less likely to be able to afford privatised services. When public services are diminished and delivered at a profit, women are also forced to fill in the gaps of delivering health and social care, acquiring water and energy and so provide an unpaid subsidy to the state and economy. Consequently, privatisation increases the gendered burden of unpaid work.

UNISON passionately believes it is therefore the responsibility of the state to ensure women enjoy their human rights and that outsourcing that obligation to corporations leads to human rights violations and is fundamentally at odds with the principles that underpin human rights and democratic obligations.

UNISON welcomes the UK Parliament's 2023 International Development Select Committee report which recommended that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) increase its oversight of British International Investments (BII) and take a non-voting seat on the BII board to ensure: that its strategy and operations are consistent with the International Development Strategy and the FCDO's objectives; to protect taxpayers' interests; and to ensure that BII's investments help the world's poorest people. To undo the harm caused by Private Finance Initiatives and Public Private Partnerships. UNISON believes that the Labour Government must fully implement these recommendations.

The government should stop BII investments in the private provision of health and other essential public services and repurpose BII money earmarked to support privately provided public services to build universal quality public services for women everywhere including in countries where gender apartheid exists. This should be done by bringing together the department's existing funding and work on health and care, education, energy and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) under a new Unit for Public Services that ensures the work is coordinated and focused on strengthening the public sector.

Further, the unit should formulate the FCDO's policies based on robust evidence and best practice on public services delivery, provide demand-driven advice and support best practice for developing universal public services as well as coordinate all

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

bilateral and multilateral Overseas Development Assistance spend on public services.

Conference therefore instructs the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Support Public Services International and Oxfam to expose how BII uses UK taxpayers' money to invest in private health care rather than in building the public sector;
- 2) Call on the international development minister to end BII's investments in private health and education and promote and protect universal public services and equality of access linking with the demands of the Global South at COP30 related to climate crisis resilience, climate mitigation and adaptation;
- 3) Work with allies to further develop the ideas for an FCDO unit for public services.

***National Executive Council
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
South Lanarkshire***

78. Building Support for a Palestinian State

Conference welcomes the January 2025 ceasefire agreement between the Israeli Government and Hamas. We urge the international community and all parties to the agreement to do all they can to ensure the ceasefire holds, humanitarian aid is fully available and all hostages are released.

Conference recognises that the demand for a contiguous, viable Palestinian state alongside a safe and secure state of Israel is central to UNISON's position on Palestine. The demand is fundamental to securing human and workers' rights for the Palestinian people, including the right to decent work and quality public services.

Whilst grounded in international law and successive United Nations (UN) resolutions, international governments and agencies have failed to in their responsibility to support the establishment of a Palestinian state for 58 years.

Conference notes that whilst the 2024 Labour manifesto pledges to recognise "a Palestinian state as a contribution to a renewed peace process," 146 member states of the United Nations have already officially recognised Palestine, leaving the UK in a small minority who have not. Conference calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for the UK government to recognise the State of Palestine immediately and to demand full recognition by the United Nations.

Conference welcomes and supports the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion of 19 July 2024, on the "Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem".

The opinion confirms that the State of Israel's continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is unlawful and that the State of Israel is under an obligation to end the 58 year long occupation as rapidly as possible, immediately cease all new settlement activities and evacuate settlers. It confirms that all states and international

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

organisations, such as the United Nations, have a responsibility not to recognise the occupation as legal, and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining it.

The opinion also confirms UNISON's longstanding position that Israel's policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory amount to segregation or apartheid, in violation of article three of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

Conference calls on the UK government to fully comply with its obligations arising from the advisory opinion. In addition to officially recognising the State of Palestine, the government should ban trade with the illegal settlements, suspend the UK Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement, until international law is respected, and support measures by the UN Security Council to end the occupation.

Conference condemns the Israeli military assault on Gaza. At the end of 2024 the UN reported that over 45,500 Palestinians have been killed and a further 108,000 injured. Approximately 70 percent of structures have been damaged or destroyed, over 90 percent of the population have been displaced, 80 percent of Gaza is under evacuation orders, and 91 percent face high levels of food insecurity, or worse. The rebuilding of Gaza will require a colossal international effort. It must embed the principles of decent work and quality public services and address the needs and hopes of the Palestinian people and their representatives, including trade unions.

Conference reaffirms UNISON's condemnation of the heinous attack by Hamas on 7 October 2023, during which over 1,200 people were killed, 14,970 injured and 252 taken hostage.

Conference welcomes the UK government's decision to suspend approximately 30 arms licences for items used by the Israeli Defence Forces in the conflict in Gaza, due to the risk that they might be used in serious violations of international humanitarian law. We are concerned however that this represents a small proportion of the approximately 350 UK arms licences to Israel and does not include the indirect supply of UK manufactured components for the multi-national F-35 joint strike fighter programme. Conference reiterates its call for the UK Government to fully suspend the arms trade with Israel, excluding the supply of protective equipment used for humanitarian, diplomatic and United Nations purposes.

Gaza's fragile health system remains on the brink of collapse, according to the UN. At the end of 2024, 1,057 health workers had been killed, some have been detained, and just 47 percent of hospitals and 38 percent of primary health facilities were partially functioning due to the relentless bombardment, military raids, major shortages of critical medical supplies and shortage of health workers. Conference urges the UK Government to support action at the UN and in the international courts to demand that the Israeli Government adhere to international law. The sick and wounded must be protected and respected and health facilities must never be attacked in any circumstances.

Conference condemns the Israeli Knesset's decision to ban the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) from working in areas under Israeli sovereignty and prohibit Israeli authorities from having any contact with the agency. UNRWA provides a critical lifeline 2.5 million Palestinian refugees in the occupied Palestinian

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

territories, providing essential health, education and social services and the impact of its closure in Gaza has been described by UN and humanitarian agencies as catastrophic. Conference welcomes the UK Government's resumption of funding for UNRWA, following its suspension under the previous Conservative government, but calls for further action to ensure sufficient quantities of aid enter Gaza.

Conference further condemns the continued annexation of the West Bank, including the establishment and expansion of illegal settlements. The situation in the West Bank further deteriorated in 2024, with over 500 Palestinians killed and 3,000 injured. The year also saw the highest levels of settler violence, displaced people and destroyed structures recorded in the West Bank, since the UN began documenting them.

Conference welcomes UNISON's work on divestment and engagement and the withdrawal of the Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill. We support the call for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) to divest from companies which continue to supply weapons and military technology to the Israeli Government used in violations of international law. We also support the call for funds to begin the process of divestment from companies on the United Nations list of business enterprises involved in or with the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and for time limited engagement with companies involved in the occupation, but not on the UN list. The LGPS should be invested in scheme members interests and funds should use their influence to encourage the companies they invest in to protect human and workers' rights, adhere to international law and protect the environment.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for the UK government to officially recognise the State of Palestine as a contribution to a two state solution;
- 2) Continue to call for international governments to support a permanent ceasefire leading to lasting peace in Gaza, and ensure full access to humanitarian assistance, the immediate and safe release of hostages, and the release of Palestinians wrongfully held in Israeli prisons, including under administrative detention;
- 3) Campaign for the principles of decent work and quality public services to be central to international efforts to rebuild Gaza, based on the demands of Palestinian people and their representatives, and for trade unions to play a key role in the process;
- 4) Call on the UK government to fulfil its responsibility not to recognise the occupation as legal, and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining it, including by banning trade with the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank;
- 5) Call on the UK government to suspend the arms trade with Israel and the UK Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement until international law is respected;
- 6) Call on the UK government to uphold justice and accountability by respecting and implementing the rulings of the international courts.

2025 National Delegate Conference

UNISON FINAL AGENDA

National Executive Council

78.1

In first paragraph change "Conference welcomes" to: "Conference deeply regrets the breakdown of the January 2025 ceasefire"

Second sentence of first paragraph, change "ensure the ceasefire holds" to: "reinstate the ceasefire"

End of the second sentence of the first paragraph insert: "Conference is appalled by the killing of 15 health and rescue workers in March 2025 in Gaza, many of whom were working for the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. They were driving clearly marked ambulances, with their lights flashing. Conference notes the attempted cover up of these killings, later contradicted by video footage found on the mobile phone of one of the deceased aid workers"

Homerton Hospital

78.2

Delete first paragraph and replace with new first and second paragraphs:

"Conference is gravely concerned that the January 2025 ceasefire agreement between the Israeli Government and Hamas collapsed. We urge the international community and all parties to the agreement to ensure a ceasefire is reinstated, humanitarian aid is fully available, and all hostages released.

Conference believes that the resumption of air strikes on Gaza including the bombing of infrastructure such a water and electricity supply, the severe restrictions of humanitarian aid to Gaza, the approval of new settlements in the West Bank and complicity of the Israeli military with settler violence against Palestinian villages in the West Bank indicates the Israeli government is not currently interested in a peace agreement. Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to campaign for the UK government to use diplomatic pressure and the withholding of all UK arms exports to Israel to encourage the Israeli Government to engage in meaningful peace negotiations."

Add new point 7):

"7) Inform UNISON members of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign's 'Don't Buy Apartheid' campaign that calls for the boycott of Israeli produce like avocados, oranges, herbs and dates and the boycott of Coca-Cola and its brands Schweppes, Sprite, Fanta, Innocent, Appletiser, Smart Water and Costa Coffee."

Portsmouth City

78.3

After: "The LGPS should be invested in scheme members interests and funds should use their influence to encourage the companies they invest in to protect human and workers' rights, adhere to international law and protect the environment." insert new paragraphs:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

“Conference notes the work of Standing Together (Naqef-Ma’an/Omdim be’Yachad), a grassroots Arab-Jewish social movement in Israel, which calls for Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories, for the creation and recognition of a Palestinian state alongside the Israeli state, which fights against war, occupation and racism, and for social justice and equality. Standing Together has formed ‘Arab-Jewish Solidarity Committees’ in mixed cities, to mobilise both Palestinian and Israeli residents to take action against incitements to racism by far-right figures in the Israeli government. Standing Together has also organised protests against the war, calling for a ceasefire agreement and the return of hostages.

Conference further notes the UK Friends of Standing Together network, aiming to promote and build support in the UK for Standing Together’s work.

Conference believes that social change within Israel itself is vital for winning lasting equality and justice in Israel/Palestine, and that we should directly support the work of those fighting for this.”

At the end of: "Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:" insert further point after point 6):

"7) Publicise the work of the UK Friends of Standing Together network, and hear a speaker at an National Executive Council meeting."

Cheshire and Wirral Community Health

79. Justice for Palestine – UNISON Solidarity in Action

Conference notes existing UNISON policy in support of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement and the excellent work done across UNISON branches and regions. However, more work needs to be done to strengthen our ethical procurement procedures.

Conference believes that the past two years have been harrowing to watch as the atrocities in Gaza unfolded on our screens coupled with horrendous settler violence in the Occupied West Bank. Conference recalls with deep regret that in Gaza to date 63,000 people have been killed, over 100,000 seriously injured, and 1.9 million displaced and without adequate food, water or shelter. The entire infrastructure has been destroyed by the constant bombardment by Israeli warplanes, including all schools, hospitals and universities.

The International Court of Justice concluded in July 2024 that Israel’s continued presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is unlawful. Furthermore, the International Court of Justice delivered the following interim judgement in the South African case against Israel under the Genocide convention in January 2024 – “In the Court’s view, the facts and circumstances... are sufficient to conclude that at least some of the rights claimed by South Africa and for which it is seeking protection are plausible”.

Conference agrees that we must ensure that our union is not in any way complicit in these acts by buying goods or services from those operating illegally or profiting from illegal occupation, apartheid or Genocide. Conference notes that on many occasions

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

we have reaffirmed our commitment to the BDS movement most recently through passing motion 72 at National Delegate Conference 2023.

Conference agrees that to ensure that we are not funding companies linked to arms manufacture, dual use goods or any companies profiting from illegal occupation, apartheid or genocide, we must strengthen and resource our ethical procurement procedures across the union.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to take the following actions:

- 1) Dissemination of relevant materials and information on Boycott Divestment and Sanctions to all branch officers and everyone involved in procuring UNISON goods and services at central, regional and branch level;
- 2) Direct briefings for all involved in paragraph 1 above, on businesses that are complicit in or benefiting from illegal occupation, genocide or apartheid to support them in making these ethical procurement decisions;
- 3) In line with current UNISON policy that 'Local Government Pension funds engage with the companies they invest in and to demand they end their involvement in the occupied Palestinian territory and in the violation of Palestinian human rights', further training should be organised for all UNISON nominated pensions officials/trustees or representatives on pensions divestment. Clear guidance should be issued that all such officials/trustees or representatives will seek the exclusion of companies complicit in or benefiting from illegal occupation, genocide or apartheid in Palestine. The list of these companies includes all those on the Boycott divestment and Sanctions list, and in detailed reports by the United Nations, and other human rights organisations such as Human Rights Watch, Who Profits and Don't Buy into Occupation';
- 4) Commitment to ensure that all companies providing UNISON Services to Members are not complicit in or benefiting from apartheid, genocide or illegal occupation in Palestine;
- 5) That UNISON negotiators continue to lobby for the exclusion of companies complicit in or benefiting from occupation, apartheid or genocide in all public sector procurement.

Northern Ireland Region

79.1

Point 2) add after "illegal occupation":

"... violations of human or workers' rights or international law, including the crimes of ..."

Point 3) add after "illegal occupation":

"... violations of human or workers' rights or international law, including the crimes of ..."

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Point 4) amend as follows after “from:”:

"... illegal occupation, the crimes of genocide or apartheid and violations of human and workers' rights"

Point 5) delete and replace after “from:”:

"... illegal occupation, the crimes of genocide or apartheid and violations of human and workers' rights in all public sector procurement."

National Executive Council

Northern Ireland

80. UK Government Must Honour its Commitments as Co-Guarantor of Peace Agreement in Northern Ireland

Conference recognises that it is now nearly 18 months since the restoration of devolved government in Northern Ireland and agrees that with two years left in this current NI Assembly mandate, devolved Government must urgently deliver for our members in Northern Ireland, their families and their communities. We continue to call for the NI Executive to function within a rights-based framework and take the actions required to improve the social and economic conditions of all.

However, Conference agrees that in order to ensure that devolved government delivers, a new deal on funding for public services in Northern Ireland must be put in place. We recall the major cuts to public services imposed in Northern Ireland by previous UK governments, particularly during the years of austerity and the significant cuts to public spending imposed by the last Conservative government in the absence of the institutions at Stormont from 2022 onwards.

Conference is concerned that despite the return of devolved government and the election of a new Labour UK government, the funding crisis affecting public services in Northern Ireland remains unresolved. Adjustments have been made to the Barnett Formula, which will provide some additional funding for Northern Ireland on the basis of need. However, Conference is aware that these arrangements are an interim step, do not provide a long-term solution and further recognises that reliance on the Barnett formula to fund public sector pay awards in Northern Ireland has led to significant delays in implementation of awards for our members and continuous industrial struggle.

Conference agrees that the UK government must ensure that sufficient, sustained, needs based funding is available for public services in Northern Ireland, and that investment in public services in Northern Ireland to improve the social and economic outcomes for all the people is an essential aspect of fulfilling the promise of the peace agreements.

Conference reaffirms its support for the implementation of the commitments made within the peace agreements on equality and human rights and recognises that the long overdue commitment for an inclusive and enforceable Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland remains outstanding by the UK Government via Westminster legislation. Conference agrees that the UK government must progress this matter without delay.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes the commitment made by the UK government to repeal and replace the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act. We recall that this Act was introduced by the last Conservative government despite widespread concerns from victims and survivors, human rights NGOs and wider civic society in Northern Ireland. Conference further calls for the UK government to reconsider the role and status of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery as part of dealing with the legacy of the past.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to support UNISON Northern Ireland in engaging with the UK government in taking forward the priority issues outlined within this motion.

Northern Ireland Region

Decentralisation

81. English Devolution White Paper

Conference notes that local government in England continues to face unprecedented challenges and changes. While Westminster's devolution agenda promises greater local powers, concerns remain about both implementation and funding.

Conference believes that the 2024 English Devolution white paper represents the biggest proposed transfer of power from Westminster to England's regions in decades. The white paper outlines comprehensive changes to mayoral and strategic authority powers across England. The government's stated aim is to achieve "Universal coverage" of Strategic Authorities, led by directly elected mayors wherever possible. Mayors are set to receive significantly expanded powers across multiple areas such as transport, housing, and skills. Public service responsibilities will also grow - in areas where geographies align, mayors will automatically become Police and Crime Commissioners and lead Fire Authorities, while also taking on new roles in health through Integrated Care Partnerships. Local government reorganisation has the potential to impact on the services our members provide and their roles and responsibilities across the whole of the public sector at a local level, as well as the organisation of our members within UNISON's democratic frameworks.

Conference believes that the white paper's proposal to abolish two tier authorities and create unitary councils must not lead to a reduction in both jobs and local services. Conference notes recent proposed devolution deals in East Anglia highlight these concerns, with Suffolk and Norfolk facing major reorganisation despite local opposition and without guarantees about service provision or workforce protection. Current local tax varying powers remain unfair and inadequate, with council tax still based on 1991 property values and business rates disadvantaging physical businesses compared to online companies.

Conferences notes that while central government civil service numbers have increased substantially, local government workforce numbers have declined dramatically under successive Conservative governments. The white paper acknowledges significant recruitment and retention problems in local government, and conference notes the proposed creation of a workforce development group.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference believes that greater devolution of power from Westminster is welcome, the current approach presents both opportunities and challenges for UNISON, and conference further believes that there must be meaningful consultation with unions and local communities for devolution to be successful. Conference notes that at present Whitehall still controls approximately 95 percent of UK tax revenue and 75 percent of public spending – far higher than any comparable country.

Conference reaffirms UNISON's principles for English devolution:

- 1) Devolution deals must be developed from the bottom up, not through backroom deals in Whitehall;
- 2) Public service workers and their unions must be involved in developing plans;
- 3) Deals should draw powers from the centre, not reduce local community power;
- 4) No devolution deal should result in job losses, erosion of terms and conditions, outsourcing of services, or reduction in collective bargaining rights;
- 5) Deals must include predictable, secure, and sufficient funding based on need;
- 6) Regional and city level devolution should enhance union representation on regional bodies.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- a) Campaign against any threats to local government jobs, terms and conditions, service delivery;
- b) Support branches and regions in England to engage in local discussions on devolution deals and reorganisation proposals, providing resources for local campaigns based on UNISON's principles;
- c) Engage with the government to demand trade union representation in devolution planning and workforce development, and to respond to government consultations on English devolution;
- d) Work with the TUC and other unions to develop progressive alternative models of local taxation and make the case for greater redistribution based on need;
- e) Continue to make the economic case that public service pay and jobs are key to sustainable regional economic growth;
- f) Offer appropriate support to the Local Government service group, regions and branches fighting any attempt to introduce non-NJC pay and conditions in new local government structures.

Eastern Region

82. Protecting Public Services in a Devolution Context

Conference notes the publication of the new Labour government's White Paper on English devolution. UNISON welcomes the government's ambition to democratise

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

decision making and bring power closer to communities. We recognise that well-designed devolution can revitalise local economies, enhance service delivery, and empower citizens.

Conference recognises that the greatest direct impact of the proposals will be on our members in the local government sector. However, regional devolution in England is not “just” a local government issue with existing devolved authorities covering a range of services including police, fire and transport. The proposed abolition of district councils and the rapid creation of large, combined authorities, run by directly elected mayors, is the biggest change in the governance of the English regions in 50 years. Mistakes made now will have a long lasting legacy for decades to come.

Conference, therefore, remains concerned about certain aspects of the White Paper. While it seeks to address the existing patchwork of responsibilities among combined authorities, metro mayors, and local councils, it does not resolve the democratic deficits and funding challenges created by over a decade of austerity. We believe that the success of any devolution settlement hinges on robust financial support for local authorities, as well as clear and consistent frameworks for accountability and service coordination.

Conference also notes that recent history has shown how reduced central funding, alongside increasing demand, has pushed many local authorities to the brink of financial collapse. Although the White Paper acknowledges these issues, it must go further in ensuring that councils have the resources to deliver vital public services. UNISON insists that new responsibilities conferred by devolution must be matched with adequate funding, preventing any erosion of service quality or workforce capacity.

Furthermore, Conference recognises the importance of preserving national collective bargaining arrangements. In previous debates on regional devolution, proposals to introduce regional pay threatened to undermine national pay standards and terms and conditions. It is essential that the White Paper clearly rules out any fragmentation of national bargaining, safeguarding staff from a potential “postcode lottery” in wages and employment protections.

UNISON’s core principles remain central to evaluating devolution reforms:

- 1) **Democratic Renewal:** Local communities must have genuine oversight of decisions, not only through elected mayors or combined authorities but also via transparent consultation and accountability structures;
- 2) **Better Government:** Devolution should demonstrably improve the coordination, quality, and efficiency of services;
- 3) **Devolving Power:** Decision making must take place at the appropriate local or regional level, rather than being retained in or recentralised by Westminster;
- 4) **Economic Imperative:** Devolution must help drive sustainable local and regional prosperity, delivering benefits to all communities;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 5) **Equitable Settlement:** No region should be financially disadvantaged by devolved arrangements, nor should public service reforms be used to impose cuts;
- 6) **Consultation and Stakeholder Input:** Full engagement with local people, staff, and their trade unions must precede and shape any new governance structures.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with the Service Group Executives and Labour Link to lobby the Labour government to:

- a) **Secure Funding:** Commit to properly resourcing local authorities, reversing cuts and ensuring any new powers come with matching revenue streams;
- b) **Protect Jobs and Pay:** Guarantee that national collective bargaining is upheld and that devolved authorities cannot introduce inferior terms and conditions;
- c) **Enhance Accountability:** Implement transparent structures, ensuring local people genuinely shape and scrutinise how services are run.

By adopting this motion, UNISON reaffirms its commitment to a fair, inclusive, and democratically accountable approach to devolution, one that invests in public services, empowers local government staff, and ensures stronger communities across England.

South West Region

83. Realising Democracy in Devolution

Conference acknowledges that Devolution brings opportunities to strengthen participatory democracy by bringing decision-making closer to communities.

The publication of the English Devolution White Paper signals significant changes to the governance of local authorities across the country. In considering UNISON's response, Conference reiterates its concerns of the potential of the directly elected mayoral model to:

- 1) Concentrate power and influence into the hands of just one person, leading to less accountability and transparency;
- 2) Prioritise the vested interests of the private sector in decision-making; and,
- 3) Further remove powers from ordinary councillors, which may do little to promote active engagement in local democratic processes.

The North East has already undergone substantial restructuring, with no district councils remaining. In addition, all twelve local authority areas are now part of either the North East Combined Authority or the Tees Valley Combined Authority.

One of the most important changes for the region, as outlined in the White Paper, is the introduction of Integrated Settlements. This will consolidate budgets across key areas such as housing, regeneration, local growth, transport, skills, retrofit, and employment support. The aim is to offer greater flexibility in allocating funding across these policy areas, along with more streamlined reporting on their outcomes.

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Conference notes the success of UNISON's bargaining guides and charters and identifies a need to consider similar resources to assist regions and branches in influencing Combined and County Combined Authorities, in line with UNISON's priorities.

In the Northern Region, there is a stark contrast in terms of UNISON's working relationship between The North East and Tees Valley Combined Authority Mayors, which reinforces the strategic importance of having an incumbent that shares our interests.

Building strong working relationships with Mayors and local authorities is essential to ensure that decision-making reflects community needs. A prime example is the work of the North East Mayor in establishing the North East Child Poverty Reduction Unit and investing in The Crown Works Studios development in Sunderland.

While the governance framework for devolution in the North East and other regions is now in place, continued trade union influence on mayoral strategies is necessary to drive economic growth in line with our bargaining agenda. This, in turn, will benefit local authorities and public sector workers.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Campaign for full funding for devolution, urging the Government to address the £3.4 billion funding gap and invest in the future of public services and good jobs;
- 2) Where devolution deals are in place, support branches and regions to scrutinise proposals and, if necessary, provide alternatives in line with UNISON's bargaining priorities;
- 3) Develop model UNISON charters specifically for Combined and County Combined Authorities to aid bargaining at this level;
- 4) Collaborate with the TUC and other unions to develop progressive alternative models of local taxation and advocate for greater redistribution based on need;
- 5) Through Labour Link, work with metro mayors to ensure UNISON's influence in policy making.

Northern Region

83.1

Amend action point 3) to read:

"Where they exist, work with UNISON Combined Authority branches to develop model" ... (then continue the rest of the bullet point as from "UNISON charters ...").

West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport

84. Local Government Reorganisation is an Attack on Local Democracy

Conference notes that Labour's English Devolution white paper proposes reorganising large parts of local government. Merging many district councils into larger unitary authorities will impact local democracy and public services. Over half

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

of the 21 county councils that had elections planned this year applied to postpone them as a result.

Councillors across many counties, have requested their councils be consolidated into a combined authority. These requests for devolution may also request inclusion of an elected mayor. Conference believes that this artificial formation of combined authorities will reduce accountability and transparency. There will be fewer elected representatives making decisions on vital services which affect people's livelihoods. Workers in one level of council can currently be elected as councillors at another level (separate employers) – this opportunity will not be possible in the proposed single tier mega-councils, effectively removing the workers' voices.

Council services have suffered from over a decade of cuts. Without councillors fighting for the resources needed things will continue down that path. Under these plans, services could lose specialised knowledge and it will reduce the already limited democratic accountability. We will have combine authorities dictating the fate of services distant from them and the communities that rely on them.

The government has exalted the need for reorganisation to take advantage of new economic opportunities. But who will benefit the most? Outsourcing corporations that facilitate the privatisation of public services and make profits from what used to be public services. For example, Southampton's council touts the Solent Freeport as an example of investment that has benefited local communities. In reality, these special tax zones are most beneficial to the private sector. When businesses move into areas like Solent due to more attractive tax arrangements, the rest of the region is deprioritised.

If the English Devolution Bill is intended to make local government more democratic, why does it enable one of the most valuable resources of local government, our public services, to be kept out of public control? Larger councils will be able to sell off more services to the highest bidder and, with fewer elections, face less scrutiny for doing so.

Conference also notes the issue of local government debt. With councillors accepting the previous Tory government's austerity programme and unsuccessful building ventures, Woking council has £2 billion of debt. Councils across Surrey have £5.5 billion of debt. Any new unitary authorities will come into being weighed down by massive debts and tasked with administering services cut to the bone by austerity.

Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Highlight the negative impact of local government reorganisation on all public services and local democracy;
- 2) Support branches in the affected areas to campaign around the defence of jobs and services and local democracy;
- 3) Step up the campaign nationally for all privatised services to be brought back in house, for the billions taken by central government from councils over the past 15 years to be re-invested in local government;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 4) Demand the cancelling of the massive debts owed to central government by local government.

Surrey County

Communications

85. X Marks the Spot

Social media is a great way for people to discuss issues of the day. Social media is an excellent way to keep in touch with friends and family. Social media is a fantastic way for UNISON to communicate with its membership.

However, there are some very dark aspects too. Social media is used to propagate ludicrous conspiracy theories. Social media is used by the extreme right to spread their hate filled bile. Social media has become a great place for libertarian billionaire tech moguls to make even more money.

X is a social media channel that has become very controversial since purchased by Elon Musk. Under the banner of 'free speech' Mr Musk has allowed people previously banned from the channel, such as Donald Trump, to once again use it to spread their radical views.

Elon Musk is anti-union. In December 2023 he stated at the New York Times Deal Book Summit that: 'I don't like unions.....I don't like anything that creates lords and peasants...unions naturally create negativity in a company,' He is, at the time of writing, in a long running dispute with Swedish union IF Metall, after Tesla refused a collective bargaining agreement.

Elon Musk in the past has liked antisemitic posts on his channel, on 17 November 2023 the Guardian reported 'A tweet posted by @breakingbaht on Wednesday night read: "Jewish communities [sic] have been pushing the exact kind of dialectical hatred against whites that they claim to want people to stop using against them." The billionaire owner and CTO of X, formerly Twitter, responded the same evening: "You have said the actual truth."'

During the extreme right wing riots in the summer of 2024, Musk accused the UK government of 'two tier policing' and claimed that in Britain 'civil war was inevitable.'

Conference believes that anyone using X is helping to generate money and publicity for Elon Musk, money that he used to fund Donald Trump's Presidential campaign.

Conference also believes UNISON should not be helping to generate cash for this man.

Conference future believes UNISON should not be associated with the hate that some users spout on X.

Conference therefore asks the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Investigate other social media channels that can be used to communicate with members with a view to making recommendations/suggestions across the union

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

to move to platforms owned and run by people whose attitudes, behaviours and beliefs are more in line with UNISON's.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Transport

Efficient and Effective Union

Industrial Action

86. Building on Our Wins: How We Resource our Industrial Action

Conference notes the significant increase in UNISON membership achieved over the past two years. This is due in part to the clear success of Organising to Win campaigns across the union, the results of which include 31,000 Health Care Assistants being re-banded with a £46 million annual pay uplift and £110million being secured in backpay.

There has also been a significant increase in the last few years in other disputes where members have had to resort to strike action, including strikes defending jobs, services and fighting for better pay. Conference applauds and congratulates every one of those members who have taken strike action in recent years, successfully winning disputes.

However, Conference also notes that successful industrial action naturally comes with a cost to the union. This includes the strike pay members receive, the cost of balloting members, campaigns around disputes, and the increased volume of work for members, activists and staff.

For the union to continue successfully implementing the Organising to Win strategy and ensure we can continue winning disputes for members, it is vital that we are in the strongest position financially and organisationally.

Conference notes that due to the increased number of disputes and strike action since 2022, over £12million has been spent from the National Industrial Action Fund on balloting costs and strike pay, to assist members in achieving the success they have in their disputes.

Conference also notes that the National Industrial Action Fund is not an inexhaustible pot of money. So, to ensure we are prepared for the long term to ballot for industrial action, authorise strike pay and win disputes, the union needs a long term plan to build our national Industrial Action Fund. We must be able both to continue to support members in undertaking their fundamental right to enter a dispute and take strike action against their employer (in line with UNISON's rules and procedures) and be prepared to extend this support to greater numbers of members if needs be.

Conference believes, however, that we must ensure we deliberate and consult over proposals for change, to ensure that when plans for change are debated they are informed by a full consultation and understood across the union.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 1) Develop a future proof plan that ensures the health, sustainability and longevity of the National Industrial Action Fund going forward;
- 2) Consult with branches, regions, service groups and all nations to ensure all corners of the union are involved;
- 3) Involve our self organised groups and young members and retired members to ensure all members voices are heard in the consultation process;
- 4) Bring a comprehensive plan back to National Delegate Conference 2026.

National Executive Council

Finances

87. Building for the Future: How We Resource What We Do

Conference notes that the union's subscription fee system has not changed since 2003. Our subscription system has served our union well and provides a bedrock of financial stability to our union. It is transparent to our members and well understood. Moreover, it is a subscription system where the income of a member determines what they pay. This is both fair and accepted by members, and this founding principle of our membership subscription system has stood the test of time since 2003. Our subscription system also allows lower paid members to pay a rate appropriate to what they earn, which helps the union to retain its lowest-paid members.

However, Conference also recognises that over time, with the gradual impact of inflation, the union has seen an ever greater concentration of members in its top subscription band, Band K, for members earning over £35,000. It is now the case that more subscription income is collected from Band K than any other subscription band, and that Band K contains the second highest number of members of any subscription band. Members are concentrated in ever higher numbers in Band K as salaries increase with pay awards over time. And members earning more than £35,000 all pay the same £22.50 rate, whether they work on the shop floor or are the Chief Executive.

This is impacting on the equitability of our subscription system, and means we are in danger of not having a subscription system fit for purpose in the long term future. Conference believes it is time to take a closer look at our subscription system to see if it can be made fairer and made future proof, whilst at the same time raising more income for our union and ensuring that low paid members pay no more for their UNISON membership.

Conference also accepts, however, that with any change to subscription fees comes risk. Therefore, we must ensure we deliberate and consult over proposals for change, to ensure that we continue to grow our membership and income and minimise the risk of loss of membership.

Conference therefore calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Develop a future proof plan that ensures the health, sustainability and longevity of our membership subscription system;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

- 2) Consult with branches, regions, service groups and all nations to ensure all corners of the union are involved;
- 3) Involve our self organised groups and young members and retired members to ensure all members voices are heard in the consultation process;
- 4) Bring a comprehensive plan back to National Delegate Conference 2026.

National Executive Council

88. UNISON, Fund UNISON Welfare

Conference is concerned about the decision of the National Executive Council reduce its funding to our charity 'There for You', the trading name for 'UNISON Welfare'. Conference is aware of the significant financial challenges the union is facing year on year, and how these impact on the work that we are committed to undertaking for our members.

Conference understands that UNISON's finances need to be carefully managed with the intention of moving to a balanced budget. Conference does not believe it is right for this to be at the expense of the help we give our most vulnerable members and their families through our support for UNISON's charity "There for you". In the 2024/25 financial year the donation from our union to the charity was reduced by over £100,000. This was said to be justified because the charity had significant reserves.

There was no acknowledgement or understanding that the reserves are required to keep the charity functioning in a sustainable way or for the charity to meet its obligations to the charities commission, nor that the charity's reserves are invested to generate further income for the benefit of UNISON members, and their families, who are in need.

When donations are reduced the reserves must be used to fund the activity of the charity to ensure that children have school uniforms through its School Uniforms Grant program, ensure our vulnerable members are able to heat their homes through its Winter Fuel Grant programme, help women and children flee domestic abuse by assisting with rent deposits and white goods...our charity does all this and so much more. A reduction in donations means the Board of Trustees could be forced to use reserves to meet the needs of our members. This then threatens the charity's income from investments as well as its future sustainability. Both these factors could lead to a reduction in the benefits that can be paid to members at their time of need.

UNISON is the largest donor of funds, and the donation is decided on by the National Executive Council on behalf of members in the whole union. Conference believes that the annual donations to UNISON Welfare "There For You" should be sufficient to ensure the charity and our members can be certain of its future. Conference does not expect the National Executive Council to meet all the financial needs of the charity as there is a real need to highlight and support the other income streams such as the lottery, fundraising collections in regions and branches, and direct donations from members. Even with all the other sources of income, it is absolutely necessary for there to be a clear expectation of a minimum donation level

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

that UNISON Welfare can expect from its largest donor to give certainty and allow forward planning.

Our charity is widely described as one of our crowning glories, including by those who chose to reduce the funding, our National Executive Council. 'There for You', needs your support.

Conference calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Review the decision made and consider reinstating the donation to UNISON Welfare in line with the levels made available prior to the financial year 2024/25;
- 2) Work with the UNISON Welfare Board of Trustees and officers to ensure that future national funding of our charity is sufficient to ensure it can undertake and continue its work without any reduction of its services or criteria;
- 3) Encourage members, branches and regions to regularly donate to UNISON Welfare 'There for You'.

West Mercia Police Staff

Resources

89. Form Format

Conference believes that members should have access to form produced by the national union in an accessible and executable format. Many documents are available on the national web page as PDF files. Completing these forms without the appropriate software proves difficult. Conference is therefore calling on the National Executive Council to produce all national forms in an executable Word format to assist members and branches in completing them.

Leicestershire Police

89.1

In first line, add "and branches" after "members"

In existing final sentence, delete "an executable Word format" and replace with: "a range of appropriate formats, including accessible editable versions,"

Add two new final sentences: "Updated forms should be distributed to all branches. This work should be completed as part of the National Executive Council's Member Engagement Programme and progress reported by the National Executive Council to National Delegate Conference in 2026."

National Executive Council

Rules

Rule C Membership

1. Rule C Ceasing to be a Member

Rule C 7.4.2

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

In the first sentence after: "In cases of alleged financial irregularities" insert: ", or any acts of harassment, sexual harassment, physical assault or sexual assault; including any such acts based on discrimination as defined in law"

Lancashire Police

Rule F Regions

2. Rule F Regions

Rule A.1 Name of the Union

In Rule A 1 delete the second sentence after "the Union"

Rule F 1 List of Regions

In Rule F 1 delete: "Cymru/Wales" and replace with: "Cymru"

Rule Q Definitions

REGIONS delete: "Wales" and replace with: "Cymru"

DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS delete: "the National Assembly for Wales" and replace with: "Senedd Cymru"

Cymru/Wales Region

Rule J The Political Fund

3. Rule J The Political Fund

Where appropriate:

Replace: "Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, Lower Ground Floor, Fleetbank House, 2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8JX" with: "8th Floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL"

Where appropriate:

Replace: "his/her" with "their"

"her/his" with "their"

"she/he has" with "they have"

"she/he is" with "they are"

"she/he shall" with "they shall"

"she/he wishes" with "they wish"

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

“she/he may” with “they may”

“she/he objects” with “they object”

“her/his notice” with “their notice”

“her/his willingness” with “their willingness”

“he thinks” with “they think”

“he may” with “they may”

"her/him" with "them"

National Executive Council

Rule Q Definitions

4. Rule Q Definitions

RESERVED LOW PAY SEATS are seats reserved for women members who earn below a defined basic hourly rate. This rate is updated annually by the increase in median earnings, as defined by the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings in the December immediately preceding the election. The rate is currently £12.70 (24 June 2024). The rate excludes all supplements, e.g. London Weighting Allowance, recruitment Rule Q Definitions 100 supplements, overtime, etc. Each member shall continue to occupy her reserved seat notwithstanding that her pay may increase to a rate above the said basic hourly rate, provided that the increase does not arise as a result of the member choosing to change her job.

After: "immediately preceding the election"

Add: ", plus an additional 10 percent above that updated amount."

National Executive Council

Amendments Ruled Out of Order

Conflicts with an Existing Rule

Motion 71 End the exploitation of migrant workers

Add point 4) at end of motion:

"4) To waive the four week rule for migrant workers."

Kirklees Local Government

Could Place the Union in Legal Jeopardy

Motion 32 Public Services, Living Standards, and the Economy After the 2024 General Election

Remove fourth paragraph and replace with the following:

"The Starmer Labour government in its first budget did increase spending on public services however the increases were not sufficient to prevent many councils

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

throughout the UK making further cuts to their budgets and the increase for the NHS was the equivalent of a rain shower in the desert! While one of Labour's first acts was to implement the recommendations of the pay review bodies this was done not out of altruism for our members but to prevent further public sector strikes at that time. Since then Labour is seeking to impose 2.8 percent pay limit for public sector workers and we have seen the withdrawal of winter fuel payments, the maintenance of the two-child limit for universal credit, the ditching of support for WASPI women that Labour supported before the election and the most recent proposed vicious attack on disability benefits. These attacks on our class clearly indicate in whose interests the Labour government is acting Big Business is the puppet master and the Labour government are the puppet."

Remove fifth paragraph and replace with the following:

"Working within the confines set for it by Big Business and international finance Labour are unlikely to hit many if not most of the modest targets it has set for itself including the number of 'affordable' homes it wants built as has been seen with the revision and reduction of the money to be spent on a green transition. Rachel Reeves mantra of adhering to the fiscal rules is an attempt to reassure international finance but it will not encourage Big Business to invest in the economy on the scale needed. The money is there to fully fund public services but it is in the wrong hands. It is clearly demonstrated through the actions of the Labour government that the super-rich want to reduce finance to the public sector and welfare state. The wealth should be taken out the hands of the super-rich through taxation and nationalisation. While Labour acts within the confines of capitalism in crisis they will always be dancing to the tune of global finance."

Seventh paragraph after: "radical" add a full stop and replace with the following:

"However, given that Labour is acting in the interests of big business it is unlikely to change direction on any of its above decisions or stop attacking our members and the services we provide unless UNISON and other unions take coordinated action to prevent these attacks."

In bullet point b) in first line take out a and add: "fully funded"

In bullet point g) at end after "level" add: "Instruct MPs sponsored by UNISON that they should vote against any attacks on our members including the proposed Disability Benefit cuts;"

In bullet point j) in the first line after nations add: "weekend" and at end of bullet point add: "To unite struggles across the public sector, developing in the direction of legal future coordinated public sector strike action."

Southwark

Motion 32 Public Services, Living Standards, and the Economy After the 2024 General Election

Remove fourth paragraph and replace with the following:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

“The Starmer Labour government in its first budget did increase spending on public services however the increases were not sufficient to prevent many councils throughout the UK making further cuts to their budgets and the increase for the NHS was the equivalent of a rain shower in the desert! While one of Labour’s first acts was to implement the recommendations of the pay review bodies this was done not out of altruism for our members but to prevent further public sector strikes at that time. Since then Labour is seeking to impose 2.8% pay limit for public sector workers and we have seen the withdrawal of winter fuel payments, the maintenance of the two -child limit for universal credit, the ditching of support for WASPI women that Labour supported before the election and the most recent proposed vicious attack on disability benefits. These attacks on our class clearly indicate in whose interests the Labour government is acting. Big Business is the puppet master and the Labour government are the puppet.”

Remove fifth paragraph and replace with the following:

“Working within the confines set for it by Big Business and international finance Labour are unlikely to hit many if not most of the modest targets it has set for itself including the number of ‘affordable’ homes it wants built as has been seen with the revision and reduction of the money to be spent on a green transition. Rachel Reeves mantra of adhering to the fiscal rules is an attempt to reassure international finance but it will not encourage Big Business to invest in the economy on the scale needed. The money is there to fully fund public services but it is in the wrong hands. It is clearly demonstrated through the actions of the Labour government that the super-rich want to reduce finance to the public sector and welfare state. The wealth should be taken out the hands of the super-rich through taxation and nationalisation. While Labour acts within the confines of capitalism in crisis they will always be dancing to the tune of global finance.”

Seventh paragraph, after "radical" add a full stop and replace rest of seventh paragraph with the following:

“However, given that Labour is acting in the interests of big business it is unlikely to change direction on any of its above decisions or stop attacking our members and the services we provide unless UNISON and other unions take coordinated action to prevent these attacks.”

In bullet point b) in first line take out "a" and add: "fully funded".

In bullet point g) at end after "level" add: “Instruct MPs sponsored by UNISON that they should vote against any attacks on our members including the proposed Disability Benefit cuts.”

In bullet point j) in the first line after "nations" add: “weekend” and at end of bullet point add: “To unite struggles across the public sector, developing in the direction of legal future coordinated public sector strike action.”

Hounslow Local Government

Motion 32 Public Services, Living Standards, and the Economy After the 2024 General Election

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

Remove fourth and fifth paragraphs and replace with the following two new paragraphs:

"The Starmer Labour government in its first budget did increase spending on public services however the increases were not sufficient to prevent many councils throughout the UK making further cuts to their budgets and the increase for the NHS was the equivalent of a rain shower in the desert! While one of Labour's first acts was to implement the recommendations of the pay review bodies this was done not out of altruism for our members but to prevent further public sector strikes at that time. Since then Labour is seeking to impose 2.8% pay limit for public sector workers and we have seen the withdrawal of winter fuel payments, the maintenance of the two-child limit for universal credit, the ditching of support for WASPI women that Labour supported before the election and the most recent proposed vicious attack on disability benefits. These attacks on our class clearly indicate in whose interests the Labour government is acting Big Business is the puppet master and the Labour government are the puppet.

Working within the confines set for it by Big Business and international finance Labour are unlikely to hit many if not most of the modest targets it has set for itself including the number of 'affordable' homes it wants built as has been seen with the revision and reduction of the money to be spent on a green transition. Rachel Reeves mantra of adhering to the fiscal rules is an attempt to reassure international finance but it will not encourage Big Business to invest in the economy on the scale needed. The money is there to fully fund public services but it is in the wrong hands. It is clearly demonstrated through the actions of the Labour government that the super-rich want to reduce finance to the public sector and welfare state. The wealth should be taken out the hands of the super-rich through taxation and nationalisation. While Labour acts within the confines of capitalism in crisis they will always be dancing to the tune of global finance."

In seventh paragraph after "radical" add a full stop and delete "if it is for the better. and replace with the following:

"However, given that Labour is acting in the interests of big business it is unlikely to change direction on any of its above decisions or stop attacking our members and the services we provide unless UNISON and other unions take coordinated action to prevent these attacks."

In bullet point b) in first line take out "a" and add "fully funded"

In bullet point g) at end after "level" add new sentence:

"Call on MPs part of the UNISON group to vote against any attacks on our members including the proposed Disability Benefit cuts"

In bullet point j) in the first line after "national" add "weekend" and at end of bullet point add:

"To unite struggles across the public sector, and develop in the direction of legal coordinated public sector strike action."

**2025 National Delegate Conference
UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Hackney Local Government

Motion 64 Unite for More Rights

Not printed.

University of Brighton

Introduces Substantial New Subject Matter

Motion 63 Ensure Rights for People with Disabilities in the UK

Replace "people with disabilities" with "Disabled People" throughout,

In 4) amend the last sentence by removing the word "about" and replacing it with "less than", so it now reads: "According to the government's own figures, disability fraud is less than one percent and yet there has been a disproportionate focus made on this by the government."

Insert new points 5) and 6) and renumber:

"5) the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, has announced savage cuts to disability benefits. The main proposals are:

- i) An overhaul of disability benefits to make only the most severely disabled eligible;
- ii) Cuts to the health element of Universal Credit, including making people under 22 ineligible;
- iii) And more face-to-face assessments;

6) Over a million disabled people could lose eligibility for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and 900,000 for the disability element of Universal Credit. Currently only one quarter of disabled people claim in and out of work benefits. Many may also lose eligibility for the disability premium of pension credit, council tax rebates and housing benefit disability premiums. Disabled people's families may also be impacted by unpaid carers no longer being eligible for carers allowance. The government's own figures show that hundreds of thousands more families will be forced into poverty, where already 48% of those households living in poverty include a disabled person in their household."

Insert new points after c):

"d) Support campaigns organised in line this motion, linking with and supporting other UNISON branches and regions and with groups such as Disabled People Against Cuts, Crips Against Cuts, trades councils, and Unite Community branches;

e) Work with democratic disabled people's organisations and other trade unions to promote demands for a welfare system that truly meets the needs of disabled people;

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

f) Campaign for assessments to be taken out of the hands of the private sector and returned to public sector delivery in the DWP with a complete overhaul of the system to support claimants;

g) Oppose the government plans to merge the PIP and working age assessments which are based on cost cutting, reducing benefits to individuals and a harsher benefit regime for disabled people;

h) Campaign for an end to the target driven regime within the DWP which damages the quality of services to the public;

i) Put the emphasis on getting a quality decision right at the outset to reduce the need for the public to go through the hardship and length of time to dispute and appeal decisions."

"Conference further asks the National Executive Council to call upon the TUC Disabled Workers' Committee to organise a weekend demonstration in support of these demands."

Northern Care Alliance

Motion 63 Ensure Rights for People with Disabilities in the UK

Replace "people with disabilities" with "Disabled People" throughout.

In 4) amend the last sentence by removing the word "about" and replacing it with "less than", so it now reads: "According to the government's own figures, disability fraud is less than one percent and yet there has been a disproportionate focus made on this by the government."

Insert new points 5) and 6) and renumber:

"5) The Secretary of State for work and pensions, has announced savage cuts to disability benefits. The main proposals are:

- i) An overhaul of disability benefits to make only the most severely disabled eligible;
- ii) Cuts to the health element of Universal Credit, including making people under 22 ineligible;
- iii) And more face-to-face assessments.

6) Over a million disabled people could lose eligibility for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and 900,000 for the disability element of Universal Credit. Currently only one quarter of disabled people claim in and out of work benefits. Many may also lose eligibility for the disability premium of pension credit, council tax rebates and housing benefit disability premiums. Disabled people's families may also be impacted by unpaid carers no longer being eligible for carers allowance. The government's own figures show that hundreds of thousands more families will be forced into poverty, where already 48% of those households living in poverty include a disabled person in their household."

Insert new points after c):

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

"d) Support protests organised by Disabled People Against Cuts, Crips Against Cuts, trades councils, Unite Community branches and other organisations;

e) Work with democratic disabled people's organisations and other trade unions to promote demands for a social security system that truly meets the needs of disabled people;

f) Campaign for assessments to be taken out of the hands of the private sector and returned to public sector delivery in the DWP with a complete overhaul of the system to support claimants;

g) Oppose the government plans to merge the PIP and working age assessments which are based on cost cutting, reducing benefits to individuals and a harsher benefit regime for disabled people;

h) Campaign for an end to the target driven regime within the DWP which damages the quality of services to the public;

i) Put the emphasis on getting a quality decision right at the outset to reduce the need for the public to go through the hardship and length of time to dispute and appeal decisions.

Conference further instructs the National Executive Committee to call upon the TUC Disabled Workers' Committee to organise a weekend demonstration in support of these demands."

Surrey County

Not Competent

Motion 4 Building UNISON in the Private Sector

Insert at the end of the fourth paragraph:

"Conference is aware that Branches employ caseworkers to provide support to members in the private sector and though essential this is often based on a servicing model rather than to build effective union organisation by recruiting accredited workplace stewards and securing recognition agreements that include trade union facility time."

New item 10):

"Call on the SGE to launch a national campaign with targeted publicity to recruit accredited workplace stewards and expand the number of recognition agreements in the private sector."

Renumber existing 10) to 11).

Birmingham

Motion 21 Gender Pensions Gap

In the Second Paragraph, add a new sub-paragraph:

2025 National Delegate Conference UNISON FINAL AGENDA

"6) Some Public Service Pension schemes still need to remedy differences of treatment where the husband or male civil partner of a female scheme member is treated less favourably than other surviving spouses or civil partners."

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

Motion 54 Climate Change in UNISON 2025 – Turning Commitments into Actions

Add new second paragraph:

"Climate change is rolling towards us, will impact badly on our members' work and lives. It will cost more to do nothing and it is not too late to act. UNISON need to protect our members' interests through this and seize the opportunities of new jobs and better ways of doing things that can greatly improve our members' lives. There are members interested in this who might be interested in becoming active if they see the union care about this. This is a fundamental 'bread and butter' trade union issue, and we must integrate it into all our work."

Add at the end an additional action point:

"F) In order to underpin this absolutely crucial priority for our members, their families and their communities, both in our day to day lives and for our futures, we develop and build from our existing policy a strong narrative that emphasises how this will improve the lives of our members and the services we serve to urgently combat the resurgence of fraudulent political climate-denial in the form of Reform UK, and now the back tracking of the Conservative leadership which is particularly being targeted at working class audiences."

North West Region

Motion 1 Organising to Win and Delivering a Decade of Growth

After the paragraph beginning "Conference believes that the Organising to Win strategy", add a new paragraph:

Conference recognises that employers try to get as much work out of workers for as little as possible, and that therefore believes that employers and workers have conflicting interests. A key aspect of effective organising is identifying issues that workers are angry about and taking collective action to win change. Conference believes that while members expect their representatives to build professional relationships with employers, the ideology of partnership, that the interests of workers and employers are shared, is a barrier to effective organising. Conference further believes that many practices associated with partnership, such as raising issues with management before engaging workers or failing to communicate with workers independently of the employer, conflict with our organising agenda.

In the "Conference calls upon the National Executive Council" section, add at the end:

7) Review UNISON communications to remove positive references to partnership;

8) Encourage branches and service groups to review agreements to ensure they reflect UNISON's organising agenda rather than a partnership approach.

**2025 National Delegate Conference
UNISON FINAL AGENDA**

Greater Manchester Transport

Not Sufficiently Clear

Motion 39 Respecting Our Police Staff Members

In sixth paragraph, second sentence, delete "Policing is no different to other parts of the public sector in these respects;"

National Executive Council

Motion 23 Rise of the Far Right

At the end of the seventh paragraph and before the full stop, add:

", which mobilised larger total numbers across the country. Trade unions should urgently consider how they can develop democratically organised local defence committees capable of organising opposition to the threats and actual violence of far-right thugs in local communities"

After "Conference therefore calls on....." add at the end of point 1):

"including developing democratic committees to mobilise trade unionists to prevent attacks from far-right thugs and protect counter-protests;"

In point 2) after "raise awareness of their risks and" delete the rest of the point and replace with:

"campaign to unite all workers by campaigning for an alternative of jobs, homes and services for all, not racism and division;"

Camden

Received Past the Deadline

Motion 41 Defending Jobs in Higher Education

University College London