

Northern News

National Delegate Conference



Tuesday 14 June 2022

Welcome to NDC 2022!

Welcome to all delegates and visitors attending the 2022 National Delegate Conference.

We hope you enjoy your visit to Brighton for our first in person NDC since 2019! Nicky Ramanandi and Linda Hobson are your Regional Delegates and Paul Foy is the Regional Staff Lead this year and we are here to assist all delegates and visitors during the Conference.

The region has two motions at this year's conference. Motion 67: Levelling up, which is scheduled for Wednesday; and Motion 46: The Future of the

National Minimum Wage. Motion 46 is on 'the snake', these motions are debated after the tabled order of business has been completed. We are confident it will make it onto the agenda as it's quite near the top!

We would encourage delegates to consider speaking in debates. If any delegates require any help and support in preparing speeches, then please contact us.

We hope you enjoy Conference and look forward to seeing you all.



Nicky Ramanandi



Linda Hobson



Paul Foy

Tuesday Fringes

Membership Engagement Programme
(Syndicate 2)

Tuesday lunchtime 12.45 - 1.45

Speakers:

Emilie Oldknow, AGS; Clare Williams, National Secretary, Regions; Beth Bickerstaffe, Member Participation.

Lunch provided

Labour Link: Rally with Rayner
(The Restaurant)

Tuesday evening 5.15 - 6.15

Speakers:

Angela Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party; Linda Hobson, Chair of UNISON Labour Link.

Misogyny as a Hate Crime
(Auditorium 2)

Tuesday evening 5.15 - 6.15

Chair:

Pat Heron, Chair of Northern Womens' Network.

Speakers:

Kim McGuinness, PCC; Stella Creasey, MP; Josie Irwin, National Women's Officer.

Motion 15:

UNISON at 30

By Linda Hobson

It is an absolute honour that our branch motion is the first to be debated at this year's National Delegate Conference. Particularly as this is our first in-person conference for three years.

UNISON is a forward-looking organisation and has been since its inception, we came together then to make our movement stronger and to campaign for public services.

During this time, often against a backdrop of political resistance, we have achieved a huge amount. We've made sure that through our structures, unrepresented and under-represented groups are front and centre of our union. It's not just a case of the union telling them what to do, it's about giving people a genuine voice to make positive change happen.

This is evident within the Northern Region where equality is at the heart of everything we do, and this is evident through all our structures within the region, having a diverse and inclusive lay leadership team, working in partnership with regional staff to continue to support and promote women from all backgrounds into senior positions within our union. We have an excellent track record. There are so many fantastic women from across our region who have been and continue to be, a huge inspiration to me and others.

This motion is timely, as we celebrate 30 proud years of our trade union in 2023, we should also reflect on its structures and ensure that we have a union fit for the next 30 years. As the UK's largest trade union, the proportion of women is estimated to be above 75% across our union. It seems right that we ask for a review of the progress made to ensure women are represented in proportion to their strength in our union and break this down across regions and service groups. This will allow us to develop a detailed report for next year's conference and come up with recommendations that seek to build the numbers of women, from all backgrounds, participating at all levels within UNISON.



We know that issues such as low pay and insecure work, sexual harassment and misogyny, impact disproportionality on our women members and it is right that we should seek to strengthen their voices at all levels of our union.

The motion states that we ensure that two-thirds of those nominated for our conferences and committees are women, however, we know this has not happened across the union. Our National Labour Link Committee, up until the 2021 elections, only had one woman delegate representative from the regions. As the vice-chair of the committee then, I was proud to work with my colleague, Gordon McKay to make the changes necessary to make sure this never happened again. There is still more to be done and with the commitment of all of our union structures that this motion calls for, we can make those positive changes that are needed.

We should be proud when we look back over the last 30 years on what we have achieved, making a positive difference to the lives of hundreds and thousands of women, raising pay and the value of the jobs they do. Fighting for women's rights at home and across the world. We are in challenging times, the cost-of-living crisis, the war in Ukraine, and the political situation at home and across the world shows us that trade unions are as necessary now as at their inception. Women played a vital role in shaping our trade unions then and through this motion, we will ensure women will continue to do so.

Motion 10: Not in Our Name

By Angela Hamilton

UNISON's rule book says the only way to change the rules is to get a two-thirds majority at National Delegate Conference (NDC).

Getting rules changed isn't easy and nor should it be. All members have the right to be confident that our rules are fair, equal and proportionate. As the sovereign body of our lay member led union it is only right that it is only NDC who can change our rules.

For nearly 30 years any SOG, Branch, Region and even the NEC have taken rule changes to conference when they wanted something done differently.

This year something changed. The NEC has taken a position where they are able to change rules without consulting anyone.

The approach being taken is to think that by calling something a resolution or just an interpretation of the existing rules means the NEC can just change them. Some on the NEC seem to believe it is acceptable to decide who can hold elected positions, attack the role of our democratically elected General Secretary and decide whether a member will face disciplinary action or not. Responsibilities have been taken away from the Chairs of key committees such as Finance and Staffing and handed to the Presidential Team.

Some NEC Members, including those from Northern Region, have spoken out against this behaviour, they've stood up for members and called for the NEC to follow the rules but unfortunately they have been ignored.

Motion 10, Not in Our Name, may have been submitted by National Disabled Members Committee but it is about all of us, about the very future of our union.

It isn't about the changes the NEC have made but about how they have done it. If they are allowed to

change the rules now what else could this or any future NEC do?

Could combining all Self-Organised Groups be seen as just interpreting the rules? Could they resolve to move small Branches into a bigger neighbouring Branch?

We can't see into the future, we can't answer those questions, but we do know that if Motion 10 falls NDC will be handing sovereignty of UNISON to the NEC. Then there'll be no need for conferences because the NEC will have the power to agree policy and change rules without anyone being able to challenge them.

You and every member in your Branch will be silenced. The future of our union is in your hands. Please support motion 10 and let UNISON be a union where every member matters.

We need you!

The Northern National Delegate Conference Newsheet Team needs you!

Do you have an article you would like to write? It could be on an upcoming motion, reporting back on a fringe you attended or anything else conference related.



Paul Foy, Nicky Ramanandi and Linda Hobson will be around if you would like to talk to them about your article or you can contact Paul Riley, who is producing the newsheets by emailing him at p.riley@unison.co.uk.

The team is on hand to help you write the articles too!

Motion 89: Trans Equality - Louder and Prouder

By Nicky Ramanandi

Over the last few years trans and non-binary people have become increasingly attacked and this does not look like it is slowing down. They have been subject to targeted misinformation campaigns by far right groups to provoke fear and mistrust.

Whilst all trans people have seen an increase in negativity, there has been a disproportionate increase in attacks on trans women, made worse by the debates as a result of the UK government consultation on reforming the Gender Recognition Act. This has seen gender critical and anti-trans groups using tactics which mirror those around the time of Section 28 – when gay men were portrayed as sexual predators and a danger to children to spread fear and mistrust.

In January 2022, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) issued two public statements in response to plans to legislate for a ban on conversion therapy in England and Wales, and the Gender Recognition Act reform in Scotland, which effectively seek to exclude trans people from improved rights and protections. Following this, a coalition of 19 LGBT+ organisations led by Stonewall made a detailed submission to the UN Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions stating their belief that the EHRC no longer meets the minimum international requirements of a top tier national Human Rights institution and calling for a special review of the EHRC's 'A' rating.

This motion asks for the National Executive Committee to work with the National LGBT+ Committee to explore ways to increase the strength and visibility of UNISON's trans equality work, continue to promote trans ally training, ask branches to encourage employers to join the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme, produce materials to counter the gender critical narrative and continue to campaign for reform of the GRA.



Now is the time to stand with our trans and non-binary colleagues, and the wider trans community, to be louder and prouder by promoting trans equality and becoming allies.

Please support motion 89 Trans Equality – Louder and Prouder!

Motion 9: NEC and Rule Book Commitment to Fair Representation

By Nicky Ramanandi

This motion from the National Black Members' Committee highlights the union's long and proud tradition of tackling discrimination in the workplace and in society, and how we have championed self-organisation, proportionality and fair representation.

We are the union that have embraced progressive ideas which in turn has positioned us to speak with credibility.

The motion seeks to ensure that full attention is paid to the rule book regarding fair representation and that a report is provided to next year's conference to ensure this is the case.

Please support this motion.

Motion 12: Combatting the Rise of Discrimination and Harassment Through Education

By Iqbal Syed

Combatting the rise of discrimination and harassment through education is the topic of this motion and is already a core element of the Northern Region's work program. We have for many years understood the role education plays in tackling discrimination and promoting equality.

A large number of branches are affiliated to Show Racism the Red Card (SRtRC) and we as a region work very closely with the organisation and have done so since its formation. A number of branches have ran training and have worked with employers on this. This is particularly important at a time when we have seen a rise of discrimination both in the workplace and wider society.

Challenging discrimination is now part of all shop stewards training in the region which is jointly delivered with SRtRC. We took this initiative as it was recognised how important this was for new activists and will also form part of the reaccreditation training. We have a clear plan on training and our partnership approach ensures reps are trained without unnecessary delay, we also have our mentoring program which ensures regular contact is made with activists.

There are a number of asks within the motion, many of which we are already carrying out within the region, but it is encouraging to see that the approach will now be a national one. SRtRC are having a fringe later in the week and we will advertise details in an upcoming newssheet.

Please support this motion.



Motion 1: Building the union

By Linda Hobson & Nicky Ramanandi

UNISON membership surged in 2020 because public service workers turned to us as a result of the Government's mishandling of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on vital public services. However, home working continues and workplace access remains restricted. Following an initial surge in schools members in January 2021 rates of new joiners fell dramatically and the rate of leavers increased. Despite a positive national profile throughout the pandemic, UNISON's membership decline persisted and 2021 ended in net membership decline of around 30,000.

UNISON faces major challenges including declining membership, threats of further privatisation of our NHS, traditional physical workplaces are shrinking with an increase in hybrid and home working and large private public service employers such as social care providers and academy trust chains increasingly operate beyond and across

UNISON branch and regional boundaries.

UNISON is an organising union and seeks not merely to service its members but also to organise them: to recruit new members, to find and support new activists, to win recognition where we need to, and to go on to win real gains for members' terms and conditions. However, too often UNISON's promotion of itself to its members presents the union as a servicing union, with emphasis on joining a union for individual protection.

The motion asks to develop a joined-up national organising strategy with a clear vision for a stronger UNISON and a resourced plan to build workplace organisation, grow our activist base, especially elected workplace representatives, increase member participation, and achieve sustainable membership growth. It will also carry out a full and detailed review of how UNISON promotes itself to potential new members and how we can encourage more members into activity.

The review should include opportunities for branches to feed in their views, and to monitor and comment on progress as it develops. It must also include significant opportunities for the self-organised groups and equality groups to offer input. We need UNISON's marketing to work for all our members if we are to move successfully in promoting ourselves from a servicing outlook to an organising outlook.

Please support this motion.



Young members delegation to COP26 in Glasgow

Motions 93/94: Post COP26 and the Climate Emergency

By Vince Barry-Stanners

COP (Conference of Parties) is the annual meeting of global leaders to tackle climate change. COP26 was held in Glasgow in November 2021. The purpose was for countries to put forward ambitious pledges of carbon emissions reductions, to collectively achieve the global agreement to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and no more than 2 degrees Celsius. Unfortunately the commitments that were made are not expected to achieve that, so there is much work to be done to increase ambition, and deliver action to transition to net zero.

Increasing awareness of the climate crisis and promoting ways of tackling climate change has been a key priority for UNISON Northern. Climate change is affecting people's lives and livelihoods around the world and in many cases it is forcing people to flee their homes and become climate refugees.

It is important that UNISON leads the way on this issue to ensure that action is in line with science, and to ensure that climate change is tackled in a way that is in the best interests of working people. Tackling climate change in a holistic way, including mass public sector investment in services such as housing and public transport, would be beneficial in many ways.

Please support this motion.

Motion 7: The Seven Principles of Public Life

By Sophie Robinson

In 1994, the UK government established the Committee on Standards in Public Life. The committee was chaired by Lord Nolan and was tasked with making recommendations to improve standards of behaviour in public life. The first report of the committee established the seven principles of public life, also known as the “Nolan principles”.

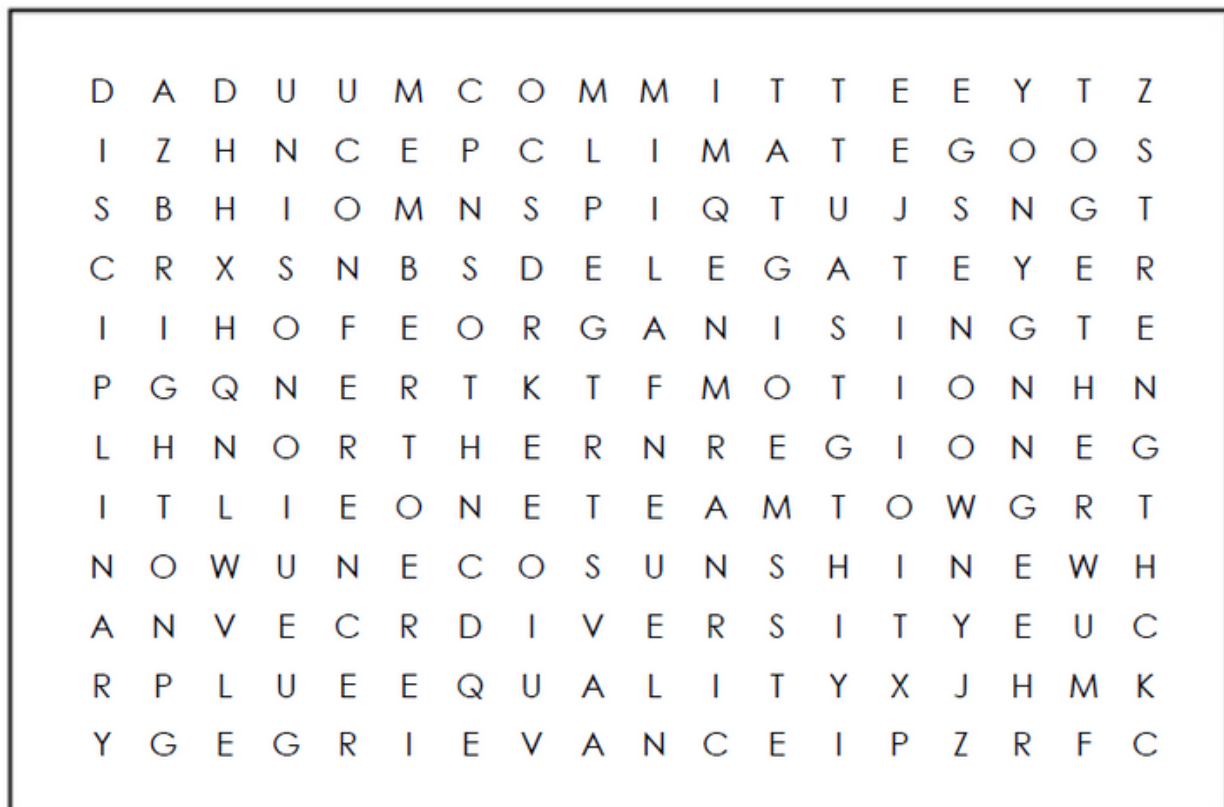
These standards – honesty, integrity, accountability,

leadership, selflessness, objectivity and openness – represent the behaviours expected of those who serve in any public capacity.

The Nolan principles have served as a professional conduct code for nearly 30 years, allowing those in organisations to understand what is expected of them and ultimately building the right culture to support high standards. With this motion we hope that a focus on behaviour and culture will allow our union to grow and flourish and that our members and activists can be heartened that we are adopting principles which ensure our high standards in UNISON are upheld.

Please support this motion.

UNISON Northern NDC Word Search



Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

How many can you find?

BRIGHTON
CLIMATE
COMMITTEE
CONFERENCE
DELEGATE
DISCIPLINARY
DIVERSITY

EQUALITY
GRIEVANCE
MEMBER
MOTION
NORTHERN REGION
ONE TEAM
ORGANISING

STRENGTH
SUNSHINE
TOGETHER
UNISON

It's not all
WORK
WORK
WORK



Socials

There are socials most evenings organised by different Regions and most will be advertised in the Northern daily newsletter.

Northern Regional Social

Join delegates from across the Region for drinks, nibbles and a private DJ

Thursday 16th June 2022 @ 7.30pm

The Walrus, 10 Ship Street, Brighton, BN1 1AD