

# Northern News

## National Delegate Conference

Thursday 16 June 2022



#UNDC22



## Christina McAnea – UNISON is ready for the fight - Together We Rise!

By Linda Hobson

Our General Secretary, Christina McAnea gave a brilliant speech yesterday. The first opportunity to address an in-person NDC since being elected the first woman General Secretary of our union.

Christina's speech highlighted the anger and frustration of our members who are struggling with the "worst cost-of-living crisis in over 70 years," saying that poverty is a political choice made by the powerful in Westminster. She highlighted that the poorer you are the higher the price you'll pay, whilst those who profited from the pandemic have been let off the hook, some who exploited the pandemic escaping prosecution whilst our members are facing increasing poverty.

She talked of the Government being so out of touch with the plight of our members using the Downing Street wallpaper as an example "£840 on a roll of wallpaper? Conference for that price I'd expect the wallpaper to walk in on two legs and put itself on the wall".

Christina spoke of UNISON's main priority in tackling the cost-of-living crisis, urging branches to get 'strike ready' as we await the outcome of the various pay settlements.

Christina recognised the challenges we face, not least that of the Tory Trade Union Act, but then listed the successes we've had as a union across our

## Thursday Fringes

**Show Racism the Red Card**  
(The Restaurant)

Thursday lunchtime 12.45 - 1.45



**Levelling up? Tackling Racial Disparities**  
(Auditorium 2)

Thursday evening 5.15 - 6.15

## Got an idea for an article?

Paul Foy, Nicky Ramanandi and Linda Hobson are on hand to help you write an article or contact Paul Riley, who is producing the newsheets, by emailing him at [p.riley@unison.co.uk](mailto:p.riley@unison.co.uk).

regions, crediting our activists and working within our branches and communities – showing the real power of our union.

There was a recognition that we need to be ‘united against a common enemy’, the Tory government rather than on internal bureaucracy. Christina said she was elected on a manifesto of change, and she’s committed to delivering on that, having a member-led union, working in partnership with staff ensuring no one part of the union can dominate.

Christina said we must deliver a message of hope to our members, we need to be united as a movement and as a union. Together we Rise!

Christina also shared her recent diagnosis of breast cancer and treatment and I am sure the whole of our region will join me in sending our sincere best wishes to Christina.

## ! Rule Changes

**This afternoon is the rules debate at conference. This is usually a lively debate, and it is an important part of the business at Conference. It is vital that branches are present in the hall during the debate with their branch card votes – there is likely to be at least one card vote during the debate. All amendments to rule changes need a two-thirds majority to be passed.**

**A reminder that if Rule Amendment 1 is carried, Rule Amendment 2 falls and that Rule Amendment 3 and 4 will be a grouped debate with one vote. Enjoy the debate delegates!**

## ! Motion Re-prioritisation

**This morning branches will be asked to re-prioritise motions from the remaining order of business, which have not yet been debated. These will be heard on Friday afternoon along with any Emergency Motions.**

**Each branch can prioritise up to 6 motions and should complete ONE form (on the back of this newsheet) and ensure this is handed to Nicky or Linda before 11.00 am this morning.**

**The suggestions from the Regional Delegates based on Northern Region’s established priorities are as follows:**

- **EMC1 - Angela Rayner and National Delegates Conference**
- **EM 2 - Ukraine**
- **Motion 121 - Speak Up**
- **Motion 78 - Palestine**
- **Motion 24 - Young Workers, Burnout and the Right to Disconnect**
- **Motion 13 - Be the Reason Campaign**

# Motion: 69 Global Vaccine Inequality

By **Rugare Kudya**

Motion 69 is about the deep inequality of how the COVID-19 vaccine continues to be distributed globally. There has been a failure to ensure high vaccine coverage in all countries which puts everyone at risk from new, potentially vaccine resistant variants of the virus. Sixty nine of the world's poorest and most vulnerable low income and middle-income countries missed the World Health Organisation's end of year target for vaccinating 40 percent of their populations.

While the world's richest countries continue to accumulate vaccine doses, the world's poorest struggle with woefully inadequate supplies. It is estimated that by the end of 2021, there were 600 million surplus vaccine doses across G7 countries alone. At the same time, only one in eleven people in low income countries have received a single dose.

We need the UK to expedite vaccines reaching those most in need. Actions to support this should include increasing the UK's overall commitment to COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX). The UK government needs to join the US and other World Trade Organisation (WTO) members in supporting a Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver at the WTO during this global crisis.

If it wasn't for the high levels of investment by government, research by public universities and public subsidies we would not be where we are with vaccines, despite the fact that the pharmaceutical industry is one of the most profitable in the world, making billions in profits from charging high prices and controlling who gets access to their products. The pandemic has exposed how profit driven the system is and that the pharmaceutical industry is in need of urgent reform.

UNISON has provided leadership in raising this issue in the UK and its willingness to work collaboratively with other organisations such as Global Justice Now, the Trade Justice Movement and others from outside the trade union movement.

The motion asks the National Executive Council to:

- 1) Continue to campaign for the UK to support a waiver of the WTO TRIPS agreement and for other measures to facilitate true global access to Covid-19 vaccines and other treatments;
- 2) Support calls for a reform of the pharmaceutical industry based on the principles of access to affordable pharmaceutical products for all based on need rather than the ability to pay;
- 3) To campaign for such reform within the TUC, Scottish TUC, Irish Congress of Trade Unions and European and global trade union movements as well as the Labour Party alongside non-governmental organisations who share our values and commitment to this campaign.

Please support this motion.

## Hello from Clare Williams



Thursday has arrived and what a massive impact our Region has had on conference already.

Although I've not been on the floor with you this time around, I have still kept track with all the excellent contributions from Northern Region delegates and the level of debate has been fantastic. The best part is seeing you all at conference, in-person, for the first time since 2019!

We have once again made our presence felt and all the hard work that has gone into the speeches is evident, together with the support you are giving each other. You have highlighted the positive work that you and UNISON do for members within workplaces, particularly during a pandemic and in the middle of the cost of living crisis.

Thank you for all your hard work and here's to watching more of you up at that rostrum today and Friday.

I will be at the regional social tonight and I am looking forward to seeing you all!

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# LUNCH TIME FRINGE

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## SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD

Thursday 16 June

Keeping the BLM movement top  
of the political agenda

**Time: 12:45**

**Location: The Restaurant**





# Reflection: Labour Link Rally with Raynor

By Linda Hobson

I was pleased to chair the Labour Link 'Rally with Rayner' on Tuesday evening. A packed hall got to hear from Abena Oppong-Asare and Angela Rayner, both were UNISON activists before being elected as Labour MPs.

Abena, elected in 2019, is now the Shadow Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury. She and Bell Ribeiro-Addy are the first women British Ghanaian MPs. In 2019 she attended our National Delegates conference as a delegate and later that year was elected to parliament.

Angela always says she was 'born in Stockport but raised in UNISON'. She's been active at every level within UNISON and benefitted from the union learning programme. As a young, single mother and a care worker, she became active within UNISON and worked to better the pay and working conditions for her colleagues. Through her UNISON and Labour Link work, she helped take our UNISON policies into the Labour Party. She's now the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party.

We also heard from our very own Christina McAnea, the first woman elected as General Secretary of our union. Christina spoke of the importance of the link between UNISON and the Labour Party, she pointed to Angela and Abena as fantastic examples of how we help to develop our activists through our political education and organising.

The atmosphere in the room was fantastic, Angela spoke of the need to get a Labour Government elected at the earliest opportunity and Christina echoed this by highlighting we can have fantastic policies but that they will just gather dust on a shelf if we don't get Labour in power to enact them. Abena spoke of the important work she was doing raising the equality agenda in relation to the Government's economic policies as we know this is not something the Tories are interested in.

Angela also spoke of the Labour's New Deal for Working People, a comprehensive plan to improve the lives of working people by strengthening individual and collective rights. Keir Starmer has promised that a Labour Government will write this plan into law within 100 days of taking office.

We need more UNISON members to affiliate to the Labour Party through their UNISON membership and more members to consider joining the Labour Party. Within the region this year we had some huge successes in getting UNISON members elected as Labour Councillors to our local councils. Some of you are here in this room, Martyn Heron, Allison Chisnall and Miriam Mafemba, all showing how our political organising within the region is going from strength to strength. As we prepare for the next General Election, there's more work that needs to be done, but our Labour Link is very strong.





# Reflection: UNISON at 30

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By Denise Ward

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I was so proud to belong to the Northern Region to listen to the Newcastle Hospitals motion, UNISON at 30. Speaker after speaker supported the motion with the cry for more women in all layers and all structures of UNISON. Speakers highlighted that we have come a long way over the last 30 years, but not far enough.

It was heartening to hear men come to the rostrum to speak in support of the motion, not just women.

Delegates spoke to thank UNISON for the support and change the union had made to their lives, pointing out that progress has been made regarding proportionality but that this needs to continue and improve.

The conference floor heard how we need to not just talk about increasing the role of women in UNISON and society but take action to implement this. With over 75% of women members in our union, it was felt that this should be a given.

It was clear from the speakers from the Northern Region that equality and proportionality is always top of our agenda.

# Motion 65: Tackling the Cost Of Living Crisis

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By Maria Alberts

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The cost of living crisis is having a huge impact on our members and the public as a whole. Inflation is spiralling out of control, energy costs are sky rocketing, with further increases expected later this year. The costs associated with just going to work have gone up with petrol prices nearing £2 a litre and the cost of childcare adding further pressure to families and single parent families.

Our members are really struggling and as the chair of welfare in the region I am really worried about the impact the cost of living is having on every day people. I can see the surge of referrals from branches across the region to the UNISON charity, There for You, from people desperate for help. The There for You energy grant had to be paused after 24 hours because of the amount of referrals made. Members are having to sell their belongings to fund the every day cost of living, this should not be happening in 2022.

“ I am really worried about the impact the cost of living is having on every day people. ”

In our branch we have been working with local foodbanks so we can now refer our members to them, we have also been working with our NHS Trust to help staff access a free hot meal - but we shouldn't have to do this.

This motion covers a number of ways that we, as a union, can campaign to support our members through this crisis. Such as publicising There for You to our members, coordinated pay campaigns and campaigning for a £15 minimum wage amongst many more actions.

Please support this motion

# Reflection: First Time Delegate

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By Vince Barry-Stanners

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This is my first time as a delegate to any UNISON conference, and despite the initial nerves that came with that I'm glad to say that I'm really enjoying seeing the democracy of our union at work and getting involved in the rest of the conference agenda – including going to the Young Members and LGBT+ meetings and enjoying learning more about what our union has to offer in the Unizone.

It's been really heartening to see Northern Region well represented in the conference hall, with the diversity of our region on full display. For example, on Tuesday we had four excellent speakers from our region – all were black members, and three of them were women.

Seeing the region speak up, and getting encouragement and support from fellow delegates, has given me the confidence to get more involved in UNISON. Both at this conference and after in my branch and our regional structures.

I'm looking forward to the rest of Conference and am keen to speak to more people about their experiences in UNISON and how we can work together to deliver for members across our region.

## Motion 5: A Focus on Apprentices

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By Sophie Toulson

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Apprentices make up a huge bulk of our workforce. In 2019/2020 there were 719,000 people participating in apprenticeships, and in 2021/2022 the participation numbers were up 8.1% on the previous year.

Apprenticeships are a great way for people to enter the workforce as they allow learning and training to be delivered within the workplace. Despite the common assumption that apprentices are all of college age, only half of apprentices are under 25.

Apprentices carry out vital work; the NHS alone currently has 14,000 apprentices, working in over 350 roles delivering hands-on care as well as keeping the NHS running behind the scenes.

Despite the critical role that they play in our public services, apprentices are often treated badly by employers, with reports of abuse and bullying common, and poor pay due to a much lower minimum wage set for them. Apprentices are not always made aware of their rights in the workplace, and union membership among apprentices remains very low.

Apprentices deserve respect and recognition for the work that they do, and the route to achieving this is trade union membership and organising. By focussing on increasing apprentice membership in UNISON, and developing these members into activists, UNISON will be able to campaign and achieve results on improving pay for apprentices and strengthening their rights at work.

I support motion 5, a Focus on Apprentices, as I believe that by prioritising the organisation and recruitment of apprentices across the public sector, not only will apprentices have their rights strengthened, the trade union movement as a whole will be stronger.



**ESSENTIAL  
COVER  
FOR  
APPRENTICES**

# Motion 4: Discrimination and Mental Health

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By Sophie Robinson

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Discrimination has many guises. Historically, the emphasis has been on physical abuse, but we now recognise the impact of psychological and emotional abuse.

Some of us will be able to remember the saying, “sticks and stones may break my bones, but names cannot hurt me”. We of course now acknowledge this is not the case.

As a mental health practitioner, I have witnessed firsthand the impact discrimination can have on the mental wellbeing of the victim. Post traumatic stress is all too common for those who experience discrimination. Not only for those who experience physical harm, but also those who have experienced psychological and emotional harm.

As we learn more about post trauma responses, we now know that trauma can build up over time, such as in the case of micro aggression. The drip drip effect can be just as damaging as a one-off event.

“ **Let us be clear, discrimination is not only an equality issue, it is also a health and safety issue.** ”

For those of us who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, our mental health outcomes are disproportionately lower for the general population. For those with more than one protected characteristic, the outcomes get even worse. Let us be clear, discrimination is not only an equality issue, it is also a health and safety issue. It is as such a UNISON issue.

Please support this motion.



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## Reflection: Misogyny as a Hate Crime

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By Nicky Ramanandi

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The Northern Region fringe on ‘misogyny as a hate crime’ took place on Tuesday with Pat Heron, Chair of our regional women’s network who was joined by Kim McGuinness, Police and Crime Commissioner for the Northumbria area and Josie Irwin, the national women’s officer.

Kim spoke about the work within Northumbria Police, the force is among five in the country recording misogyny as a hate crime. Whilst there is not a requirement to record misogyny in this way, Kim spoke of the need to be able to target resources based on evidence and can assure women that these issues matter. This demonstrates real progress; however, Kim was very clear that we need to take this out through the wider movement and that it is not just a women’s issue but a social one.

Josie spoke about the huge increase in violence against women within the workplace and how staff felt unable to raise this. Worse still, was that some staff felt that it was ‘part of the job’!

There were lots of contributions from the floor looking to see how this agenda could be taken forward into our workplaces to help branches to tackle misogyny. This is a priority for our region.



# UNISON Northern NDC Word Search



Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden and .

How many can you find?

BUSINESS MANAGER  
CALL HANDLER  
CARER  
CLEANER  
DOMESTIC  
ELECTRICIAN  
FOOD INSPECTOR  
GARDENER

HEALTH CARE  
HLTA  
HOUSEKEEPER  
ICT SUPPORT  
JOINER  
NURSE  
OCCUPATIONAL  
THERAPIST  
PORTER

PROBATION OFFICER  
RECEPTIONIST  
REFUSE COLLECTOR  
RESIDENTIAL OFFICER  
SAFEGUARDING  
SCHOOL COOK  
SECRETARY  
SOCIAL WORKER  
STUDENT SUPPORT  
TEACHING ASSISTANT

# The social is tonight!

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

# Motion re-prioritisation form

**Branch:**

<b>Priority No.</b>	<b>Motion No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Regional use only</b>

**To be return to regional delegates Nicky Ramanandi or Linda Hobson  
before 11 am Thursday 16 June**