SOUTH EAST REGION DISABLED MEMBER’S COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION

Introduction

* 1. Unison national rules provide for the promotion of opportunities for members to ‘self organise’ in groups of disabled members, women members; Black members; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender members, young members and retired members.
	2. This self organised group within the Region shall be known as the South East Region Disabled Members’ Committee (SERDMC).

Objectives

The aims and objectives of the South East Region Disabled Members’ Committee (SERDMC) are based on the aims and objectives of self organisation as set out in the Rule Book, and the South East Regional Consitution. The Committee intention is to develop a clear and focused strategic, political agenda for disabled UNISON members in the Region in a friendly, supportive and non-oppressive framework. The Committee will develop long, medium and short-term strategies to achieve this, setting realistic goals, prioritising important issues and monitoring and reviewing progress.

**3. The Committee**

The Committee;

a) is a fully recognised constituent part of the regional organisation within UNISON rules. The Committee communicates with the Regional Executive via it’s representation on the Regional Committee/Council by 2 representatives with full voting rights and quarterly and annual reports;

b) communicates with and is accountable to UNISON disabled members in the Region.

c) appoints delegates to the Regional Council and shall elect representatives to other regional committees;

d) shall formulate proposals, motions or other initiatives, in line with UNISON Rules, to the Regional Council and/or Regional Committee;

e) shall put forward proposals and motions to the National Disabled Members’ Committee and National Disabled Members’ Conference, in line with UNISON Rules;

f) shall elect two representatives onto the National Disabled members’ Committee;

g) shall send two delegates to National Disabled Members’ Conference.

4. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Regional Disabled Members’ Committee set out the purposes of the Committee and define its role with UNISON South East Region. They outline the areas in which the Committee will develop its work in order to fulfil the responsibilities included in the Rule Book.

The South East Region Disabled Members’ Committee will;

4.1 Promote the interests of disabled members within the union and help to create a union organisation that is relevant and appealing to disabled members.

4.2 Promote greater participation of disabled members at branch, regional and national level in the Region including new members and younger members.

4.3 support and assist UNISON in achieving proportionality and fair representation.

4.4 promote awareness of difference (e.g. culture, class, lifestyle, faith), challenge the multiple discrimination faced by female, Black, lesbian, transgender and bi-sexual disabled women, and encourage anti-discrimination initiatives and work to eliminate discrimination in our union.

4.5 give advice to other Regional Committees and Service Groups on specific social and political issues of concern to disabled members and on priorities for disabled members in negotiations, campaigns and polices as requested.

4.6 provide training to meet the particular needs and issues of disabled members and promote all courses widely in the Region.

4.7 publicise issues that affect disabled members and support a wide range of activities in furtherance of the objectives of the committee, including the regular production of newsletters and any publicity materials .

4.8 develop links with disability organisations in the Region, nationally and internationally.

4.9 play an active role in taking forward initiatives and campaigns emanating from National Disabled Members’ Conference motions.

4.10 provide an annual Action Plan and Budget to the Regional Finance Committee and Regional Council. The Committee’s action plan to deliver its objectives will be realistic and cost effective. The Committee will continue to monitor and review progress, prioritise important issue and ensure budgetary constraints are met.

5. Composition of the Committee

5.1 The Committee shall consist of twenty members.

5.2 In addition, the Committee will also include the following representatives :

(i) One disabled representative from each of the other Self-Organised Groups (Black Members, LGBT Members and Women Members)

(ii) One disabled representative from Young Members

(iii) Ex-officio: 1 disabled retired member

(iv) Ex-officio : disabled members of the Convenors Group and the NEC

 Ex-officio members will not have voting rights.

6. Annual General Meeting

6.1 The Annual General Meeting will usually be held before the end of November to fit in with the Regional Council timetable.

6.2 The Committee will produce an annual report for the Annual General Meeting.

6.3 Election of the twenty Committee members of the South East Regional Disabled Members’ Committee will take place at the Annual General Meeting.

6.4 Elections will also be held at the Annual General Meeting for the following;

(a) Chair

(b) 2 Vice Chair

(c) 2 Regional Delegates to National Disabled Members’ Conference

(d) 1 Representative to SERTUC Disability Network and 1 substitute

1. SOGY Liaison Officer
2. Two representatives to the South East Regional Council
3. Two representatives to the South East Regional Committee
4. One representative to the Education, Training & Development Committee
5. One representative to the Finance Committee
6. One representative to the Publicity & Campaigning Committee
7. One representative to the Labour Link Committee
8. One representative to the Women’s Committee
9. One representative to each service group; these being:
* Local Government
* Health
* Police & Justice
* Water, Energy & Transport
* Higher Education
* Further Education
* Community

(n) Elections will take place biennially for representatives to the National Disabled Members’ Committee. Nominees must be members of the Regional Disabled Members’ Committee. Nominations must be accompanied by an election address.

6.5 The Committee shall also elect from its Committee members, from time to time, such representatives and delegates as agreed, to any UNISON conference, seminar or training event that is applicable to and approved by the committee.

6.6 To ensure the widest participation and to contribute towards achieving fair representation, job sharing is encouraged.

6.7 Attendance at the Annual General Meeting shall be open to all disabled members. Travel and subsistence costs to be funded by branches.

6.8 Nominations for the Committee will be sought from disabled members’ and branches at least six weeks before the date of the AGM.

6.9 The Annual General Meeting shall approve the work programme set by the Committee for the coming year.

6.10 Motions to the Annual General Meeting must be received 28 days before the meeeting and amendments 14 days before the meeting.

7. Committee Meetings

* 1. The SERDMC will meet four times each year.
	2. A quorum of the Committee shall be six members of the Committee; and the Chair or Vice Chair must be one of those present.
	3. Where a quorum is not expected at least 7 days before the meeting, the meeting shall be cancelled. Any urgent Committee business and decision shall be conducted via other means of communication; always ensuring the access needs of Committee members are met and that the Chair or Vice-Chair participates in the decision making.
	4. The Committee will implement and monitor the Action Plan as determined by the Committee.
	5. The Committee will receive written reports from its elected role holders as listed under 6.4 and 6.5

7.6 The Committee will report to the Annual General Meeting of the South East Region Disabled Members’ Committee and to South East Regional Council meetings and to the Annual General Meeting of the South East Regional Council.

7.7 The Committee will consider any and all issues relevant to recruitment, retention and involvement of disabled members in UNISON.

7.8 The Committee will consider and debate motions submitted from branches and other SOGs.

7.9 If a member of the Committee misses two consecutive Committee meetings without sending apologies, the Committee shall contact the member to ascertain whether they no longer wish to participate in the Committee, and if necessary seek nominations for a replacement Committee member.

8 Finance

8.1 The SERDMC shall operate within its own financial allocation as determined by Regional Finance Committee and Regional Council.

8.2 All disabled members attending the Annual General Meeting will have their transport costs paid by their branch, except for the current members of the Committee who shall be reimbursed through the Regional Disabled Members’ Committee budget, in keeping with the South East Regional Financial Standing Orders.

**9 Constitution**

9.1 Proposed rule changes must be submitted at least 14 days prior to that meeting for advice to be sought and given on the implications of the change(s).

9.2 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at the Annual General Meeting.

**Agreed at the Annual General Meeting held on 12 November 2010.**