



Regional Council AGM 2020

Rule Changes and Motions Booklet

This booklet lists all proposed rule changes to the Regional Constitution and motions for debate received by the deadlines of 10 January and 17 January 2020 respectively.

SOC Report 1 can be found on pages **2 to 4**

SECTION 1: Proposed rule changes can be found on pages **5 to 8**

SECTION 2: AGM Motions can be found on pages **9 to 20**

SECTION 3: Motions intended for submission to NDC 2020 can be found on pages **21 to 29**

SECTION 4: Motions ruled out of order can be found on page **30**

National SOC Representative Report can be found on pages **31 to 32**

Regional Standing Orders Committee Report 1

23 January 2020

1.1 Role and Membership

The Regional Standing Orders Committee's role is to consider all motions, amendments, emergency motions, and rule changes to ensure they are competent and fall within the remit of the Regional Council and its functions as laid out in the national rulebook.

Four members are directly elected by the Regional Council. The region's National SOC representative and one member of the Regional Convenor's Group each have a seat on the SOC.

Regional Convenor's Group	Mark Chiverton
National SOC Representative	Paul Couchman
Directly Elected	Sarah Barwick
Directly Elected	Jane Lacey
Directly Elected	Sue Tibbles
Directly Elected	Paul Tovey

1.2 Motions and Rule Changes

The deadline for rule changes to be submitted for debate at the Regional Council AGM was 10 January. The deadline for motions was 17 January.

- Six rule changes were received for debate.
- Twelve motions were received for debate.
- Eight of those motions were stated as for consideration as regional motions to NDC 2020.

The Regional Standing Orders Committee met on 22 January to consider all rule changes and motions received by the published deadlines.

The SOC will meet on the morning of 8 February to consider any amendments, emergency motions, or appeals to motions ruled out of order.

1.3 Procedures - Reference Back of SOC Report

When the SOC Report is moved, delegates will be asked for questions. Delegates can move reference back of a particular section of the report if they are not satisfied with its contents. Therefore the SOC recommends that the AGM may vote to refer back a whole, numbered section or part of a section.

The effect of reference back of a particular section or part of a section is that the AGM has not yet approved that section and the SOC is charged with reconsidering it. The SOC will then report back to the AGM with its reconsidered view and ask the AGM to accept the updated report. The SOC may decide to change its proposal, or to maintain its original proposal. Delegates can only vote to accept the report or refer back a section of the report. They cannot amend the report from the floor of the AGM.

1.4 Order of Business

Both motions and the proposed rule changes have been printed below in the following order:

- Those received from regional committees (printed in alphabetical order by committee name).
- Those received from branches (printed in alphabetical order by branch name).

Debates will take place in the order they are printed in this booklet.

Please note that if motions in section 2 are not passed by the AGM, then their equivalent motion in section 3 will be removed from the ballot for regional motions to NDC. You will be advised further on this prior to the ballot.

1.5 Motions Ruled Out of Order

The motions ruled out of order are listed in section 4 below.

The Chair will update the AGM during agenda item 2 'Standing Orders Committee Report' if there have been any changes to this section following appeals at the SOC meeting on 8 February.

Delegates wishing to move reference back on this section need to specify which motion they are referring to.

1.6 Emergency Motions

The deadline for emergency motions is 11am on 5 February 2020.

As of 23 January 2020, no emergency motions have been received.

1.7 Amendments

The deadline for amendments is 31 January 2020.

1.8 Composites

Three composites on the subject of the climate emergency were received by the published motion deadline. These were submitted by the Regional Women's Committee, Isle of Wight LG, a Surrey County branches.

The SOC proposed two draft composites of the three motions, one for the Regional Council AGM and one for National Delegate Conference. These composites were agreed by the submitting bodies. The agreed composites appear in this booklet as Composite A and N1.

1.9 Group Debates

The SOC agreed that rule changes R2, R3, R4 and R5 would be discussed in a group debate.

1.10 Consequences

If R2 falls, R3, R4 and R5 fall as a consequence.
If Composite A falls, N1 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.
If M2 falls, N3 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.
If M3 falls, N4 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.
If M4 falls, N5 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.
If M6 falls, N2 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.
If M9 falls, N6 will not be considered as a regional motion for NDC.

1.11 Speaking Times

The mover of a motion or amendment shall be allowed to speak for not more than five minutes. Each succeeding speaker shall not be allowed to speak for more than three minutes.

SECTION 1: PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

R1: REGIONAL CONVENOR GROUP

Submitted by:

**Healthcare Committee
Women's Committee
NO**

For consideration at NDC:

In Rule 10 Election of Officers

10 (a)

Insert “At least 2 of the Service Groups as listed under 17 (a) must be represented within the Regional Convenors Group.” after “of which at least 2 shall be women.”

R2: COMPOSITION OF STRATEGIC AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Submitted by:

Publicity and Campaigning Committee

For consideration at NDC:

NO

In Rule 15 under Standing Committees, delete

“d) Editorial and Communications

6 directly elected seats, of which: 3 general seats; 3 women seats”

Renumber remaining sections under ‘Standing Committees’ accordingly.

R3: APPENDIX 1: ELECTION PROCEDURES

Submitted by:

Publicity and Campaigning Committee

For consideration at NDC:

NO

In Appendix 1: Election Procedures

Under section 4, “STANDING COMMITTEES” delete ‘*Editorial & Communications*’ from the line below in brackets and italics.

R4: APPENDIX 3: GUIDANCE AND REMIT OF REGIONAL STRATEGIC & STANDING COMMITTEES AND ELECTED OFFICERS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Publicity and Campaigning Committee
NO**

In Appendix 3: Guidance and remit of regional strategic & standing committees and elected officers

Under Section 4 'Strategic Committees' add the following at the end of c) 'Publicity and Campaigning Strategic Committee':

"Publicise and promote regional policies. Provide support and encouragement for branch communications in all formats and provide communication resources to other committees and groups within the Region."

R5: APPENDIX 3: GUIDANCE AND REMIT OF REGIONAL STRATEGIC & STANDING COMMITTEES AND ELECTED OFFICERS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Publicity and Campaigning Committee
NO**

In Appendix 3: Guidance and remit of regional strategic & standing committees and elected officers

Under Section 4 'Standing Committees' delete:

"d) Editorial and Communications

Publicise and promote regional policies and influence through its conference and other newsletters. It will provide support and encouragement for branch communications in all formats and will provide communication resources to other committees and groups within the Region."

Renumber remaining sections under Standing Committees accordingly.

R6: WORKING TOGETHER GUIDELINES FOR MEETINGS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Regional Equality Action Group
NO**

Appendix 5: Working together guidelines for meetings

Delete Appendix 5 and insert new Appendix 5:

“Appendix 5: Working together guidelines for meetings

In UNISON we organise many meetings and everyone has an equal right to participate in these. We have the right not to be made to feel uncomfortable as a result of the behaviour of others. The trade union movement represents all working people, regardless of gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, age or disability. To help us work together successfully, the following guidelines have been drawn up.

Working Together

We all bring valuable knowledge and ideas to meetings. We can help to create the right atmosphere to allow us to share these equally by:

- Indicating to the chairperson whenever we wish to speak and waiting to be called upon.
- Listening to what others have to say and not interrupting.
- Make our own contribution politely, as clear and concise as possible and do not dominate the discussion.
- Ensure that everyone who wishes to speak is given encouragement and the opportunity to do so.

Language

Putting forward your views is an important part of a meeting. Take care not to use initials or jargon unless you explain what you mean. During the meeting, always use language that you know will not offend or hurt others. Discriminatory language of any description will not be tolerated. Language which contains discriminatory references and which is abusive or threatening in any way should not be used and nor should jokes or comments which perpetuate discrimination.

Body language is also an important part of communication and should not be used to interrupt or disconcert speakers.

If you experience anything during the meeting that you feel is not acceptable, please tell the chair.

Harassment

There must be no harassment or bullying at any time, including scheduled breaks and socialising afterwards. Harassment, in general terms is unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of the person, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person, provided that it could reasonably be considered to have that effect.

What is important is not necessarily the action, but how the recipient feels about what has been done.

It may be related to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, maternity, pregnancy, marital or civil partnership status, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident.

Smoking

Smoking or use of e-cigarettes is not permitted in UNISON meetings. Participants who smoke will be able to do so in outside areas as designated by the venue during scheduled breaks.

Mobile Telephones

Please switch all mobile phones to silent or vibrate at the start of the meeting. If the Chair notifies the meeting that there is an induction loop system in use, then unfortunately it is not sufficient to switch them to silent or vibrate as the incoming signals will still interfere with the system and they should instead be turned off. If you need your phone on during the meeting, please notify the Chair.

Timekeeping

It is helpful if everyone tries to arrive on time and stay until the end of the meeting. As this is not always possible please try to ensure the meeting is not disrupted if you arrive late or leave early and notify the Chair in advance where possible.

Access

No-one should be prevented from participating in a meeting because of access requirements. The Regional Disability Access Passport should be completed in advance of a meeting to request appropriate adjustments. Individuals should update the passport as and when their needs change, and send an up to date version. The Regional Access Standards should be adhered to in meetings to ensure that everyone can fully participate. If lunch is being provided please also notify us of any special dietary needs.

Personal assistants and service providers

Where requested, meetings of the committee are supported by a number of service providers such as technicians, interpreters and personal assistants. Please make sure that nothing you do interferes with them carrying out their work.

Personal assistants and service providers do not get involved in policy development discussions, even if they are active members of UNISON. They are present to ensure that access is in place, barriers are removed and that meetings can proceed.

Allergies

Please notify the Chair of any allergies in advance of the meeting that may affect your participation. If the Chair notifies the meeting of any allergies, please respect this and ensure that anything in the room that may affect another attendee is removed in advance of the meeting and is not present throughout the meeting.

Finally

These guidelines are intended to help us all during meetings to make sure that no-one feels excluded as a result of the language, action or attitudes of others. They also aim to promote UNISON's policies on equal opportunities in a positive and practical way."

SECTION 2: MOTIONS FOR DEBATE BY THE AGM

COMPOSITE A: GREEN UNISON AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Submitted by:

**Women's Committee
Isle of Wight LG
Surrey County**

For consideration at NDC:

YES

Regional Council recognises the rising concern and horror that governments across the world are failing to tackle climate change and pollution. Donald Trump is set to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, ignoring Scientists and the United Nations, and a private sector-led and voluntary approach is failing to fundamentally tackle the issue. Regional Council accepts that there is a serious climate emergency and that radical action is needed to avert climate catastrophe.

Governments must act with urgency and take the lead to reduce carbon emissions and other harmful environmental practices. At the current rate of progress, even the very modest targets set by the Paris Climate Agreement to limit rising temperatures to 1.5°C by 2050 are unlikely to be achieved. Major action has to be undertaken by Government who having declared a climate emergency must take appropriate actions to avert the climate change catastrophe. Already over 200 Councils across the UK have declared a climate emergency and want to move faster than net zero carbon emissions in 2050, the current UK target set by the Westminster Parliament. The time to talk is over. The effect on our world and for future generations cannot be ignored. It is critical that we act now.

Regional Council applauds the striking school children across the world for raising the issue of climate change this year. On 20 September four million young people around the world took to the streets to strike and protest against climate change. A few days later Greta Thunberg berated the "empty words" of the world's leaders at the UN climate summit who are "failing" young people.

Council congratulates all those branches and members in the South East who responded to a call from Greta Thunberg and showed their support for striking school children across the world in the demonstrations held on Friday 20 September 2019 by participating in public and workplace protests designed to raise the issue of climate change.

Greta Thunberg in December 2018 told the UN Climate Change Conference: "We are about to sacrifice our civilization for the opportunity of a very small number of people to continue to make enormous amounts of money. We are about to sacrifice the biosphere so that rich people can live in luxury. ...If solutions within this system are so impossible to find then maybe we should change the system itself?" We stand with Greta.

Council notes that UNISON Green week in September also saw a revival of workplace interest in environment reps being recruited and increased engagement with employers on the issue, some of which released staff to attend protests. Others have set up

projects to 'green' their operations and reduce their own emissions, working in partnership with trade unions to do so. Council notes that UNISON Scotland's 'green activist' network is a good example of how to share best practise and support branches and reps in challenging employers.

Regional Council recognises that branches may have an Environmental Officer or 'Green Rep' who co-ordinates the union's green and environmental agenda in the branch and represents the workforce in discussions and negotiations regarding the development and implementation of company or employer environmental policies and practices.

Council notes that a Green New Deal was prioritised in the Labour party manifesto. Council believes a Green New Deal is essential. Energy companies and other major public service institutions may need to be taken back into public ownership to enable the necessary actions to be undertaken to avert climate catastrophe. A Green plan to stop emissions should also go hand in hand with campaigns to save workers' jobs in the so-called 'dirty' industries. The transformation of these industries should harness the expertise of this highly skilled workforce and ensure an expansion of well-paid, unionised, environmentally sustainable jobs. This must be alongside other progressive policies including a major review of transport policy and the development of a fully integrated public transport system, reclaiming and revitalising our city centres, an energy-efficient house building programme, investment in health and education and reversing austerity. The role played by the trade unions will be a crucial factor in the coming months and years – in pushing these issues and campaigning for change.

Council notes that public sector bodies have a significant carbon footprint, as well as rising energy bills, and an ability to influence not only service users but also the wider community. Improving energy efficiency not only supports a reduction in carbon footprints but also reduces energy costs which can be reinvested in public services and staff. A recent Government report noted that CO₂ emissions in the public sector decreased by 30% between 1990 – 2018, accounting for 2% of all carbon emissions, with the private sector decreasing by 41% over the same period and accounting for 18% of all carbon emissions. However, in 2017-2018, CO₂ emissions in the public sector actually increased by 4%, whilst there was a 0% increase in the private sector.

Regional Council believes tackling carbon emissions across public sector workplaces can have a significant impact on the UK achieving its net zero target and tackling the urgent climate crisis. Public Sector employers have a responsibility to commit to significant reductions in carbon emissions and investing in the necessary resources to do so.

Regional Council therefore calls on the Regional Convenor and Secretary to write to the NEC urging it to:

1. Declare a Climate Emergency and promote this widely.
2. Reach out to the young climate strikers, encouraging branches and regions to engage positively with local groups and raising these ideas with them.
3. Work with all parts of the union to develop and promote a Green New Deal to tackle the climate emergency, eradicate poverty and reverse austerity.

4. Establish a Regional Green Network to support 'Green Reps' and Environment Officers.
5. Encourage Regional Green Networks and events to support branches in establishing the 'Green Reps' role.
6. Produce fresh workplace bargaining guides to help branches engage their local employers on Carbon Reduction Strategies and Carbon Management Programmes as well as other relevant 'Green' workplace policies.
7. Work with LESE and the TUC to re-establish the TUC Green Reps network;
8. Campaign vigorously for policies at local, regional, national and international levels that will deliver rapid reductions in carbon emissions in relevant areas such as transport, energy, buildings, food production and waste management, whilst harnessing the expertise of the workforce and ensuring an expansion of fairly-paid, unionised, environmentally sustainable jobs.
9. Work with LESE and other unions to ensure a just transition for all workers in energy intensive industries;
10. To promote public ownership and intervention to secure a shift towards a sustainable economy and society;
11. Publish a report on how UK public services and workplaces can meet zero carbon targets;
12. Continue to promote the 'Climate change and your pension: divestment guide';
13. Launch a review of all UNISON's internal processes and procedures, aiming to be a union with a zero-carbon footprint.

M2: HIDDEN DISABILITY – THE EFFECT OF AUTOIMMUNE CONDITIONS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

Women's Committee
YES

Autoimmune conditions are where the body turns inwards and fails to tolerate its own cells. Your immune system mistakenly attacks your body.

Some examples of autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities include: Thyroid disease, asthma, osteoporosis, diabetes, coeliac disease, lupus, M.S., mental health conditions such as bipolar disorder, psoriasis, ulcerative colitis, autoimmune, alopecia. Some examples of the many symptoms these conditions can cause are: fatigue, muscle pain, memory problems, numbness, dry eyes, rashes, achy joints, stomach problems.

Autoimmune conditions disproportionately affect women compared to men. While 8% of the population have autoimmune conditions, 78% of individuals with autoimmune diseases are women.

Autoimmune conditions don't disappear. Symptoms can be hidden or invisible, but can detrimentally affect your work and day-to-day life. Symptoms can wax and wane and also be difficult and chronic. Once you develop an autoimmune condition you are also more susceptible to develop additional ones.

Needing to deal with autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities in the workplace can be difficult if the conditions are not supported or acknowledged. The medical profession often do not recognise and support these conditions.

However, the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Work-related activities that can be affected by autoimmune conditions include: interacting with colleagues, following instructions, using a computer, driving, carrying out interviews, preparing written documents and keeping to a timetable or a shift pattern.

Unfortunately, many employers do not accept and make adjustments for certain autoimmune conditions, like diabetes, and recognise them under the Equality Act, regardless of whether or not the condition is insulin or diet controlled. There is inconsistency in how Employers have interpreted the Equality Act.

Autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities are often not recognised as disabilities. Absences caused by these conditions are often recorded as sickness absence rather than disability related absence which can lead to capability and disciplinary proceedings.

Regional Council calls on the NEC to work with the relevant national committees and service groups to;

1. Develop guidance for branches on the impact of autoimmune conditions on workers and how best to support them and negotiate for better workplace policies and recognition of hidden disabilities.
2. Raise awareness of existing UNISON resources including bargaining guides and model policies on disability leave and reasonable adjustments.
3. Campaign for greater recognition and public understanding of hidden disabilities such as autoimmune conditions.
4. Develop a leaflet to raise awareness amongst UNISON branches and membership so that they can be better informed and equipped to challenge inconsistent or unfair practices in their workplaces with regards to sickness absence policies.

M3: TACKLING & REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN WORKPLACES - ANTI-HARASSMENT CHAMPIONS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

Women's Committee
YES

Sexual Harassment remains an increasing and concerning workplace issue, this council acknowledges that anyone at anytime can experience sexual harassment, but the statistics demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of victims are women. This has been brought to the surface in various high profile campaigns such as the #MeToo movement. This council notes the motion- Improving Workers Protection from Sexual Harassment at Work- passed in 2019 and we congratulate the national women's committee for the on-going work and campaigning on this issue and in raising awareness throughout UNISON, including workshops, training courses and guides for branches as a result.

Council reaffirms that sexual harassment and abuse are reprehensible under all circumstances and are not acceptable in any workplace. Those who experience Sexual Harassment at work can often feel reluctant or too vulnerable to speak to their line manager and uncertain of where to turn to for support. This is especially concerning for those who work in isolated and fragmented workplaces. Having a named, trained, independent person in the workplace that can be a point of contact for advice and support confidentially is vital in ensuring more and more victims feel safe in raising issues and concerns immediately. Council recognises that some public sector employers have creates the role of safeguarding Champion which has a broad remit for both staff and patients but can have responsibility of tackling this or similar issues in workplaces alongside supporter networks. A similar but dedicated Anti-Harassment Champion for staff would provide an important lifeline to workers who are experiencing Sexual Harassment. This role offers a trained point of contact for those in need, as well as for anyone who wants to report sexual harassment or abuse confidentially.

Council believes that this role should be promoted within the public sector and adopted by all employers to ensure that a culture of anti-harassment, dignity and respect is developed and that those who experience sexual harassment can seek support and guidance safely and confidentially.

Therefore Regional Council calls upon the NEC to;

1. Work with the relevant national committees, branches and service groups to identify the best examples of Anti-Harassment Champions and practices in workplaces.
2. Collate this information and identify examples of good practice to support the adoption and promotion of the role.
3. Develop a bargaining guide to assist branches to persuade Employers to adopt the role and provide appropriate support and training.

4. Work with LAOS to develop training materials and resources that can be used in branches and workplaces to support the development of Anti- Harassment Champions and practises in workplaces.
5. Develop information leaflets for branches to clearly set out the role of the Anti- Harassment Champion which can be used by branches to engage members and employers.

M4: WOMEN IN CUBA: 60 YEARS OF THE FEDERATION OF CUBAN WOMEN UNDER BLOCKADE

Submitted by:

**Women's Committee
Isle of Wight LG
YES**

For consideration at NDC:

Regional Council congratulates the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) on their 60th anniversary in 2020, and the Cuban people on the impressive achievements made in health, education and social welfare which have positively impacted on the lives of women in Cuba. We also note that all of these achievements have been made while suffering under the impact of almost six decades of US blockade.

Regional Council notes that FMC was the first mass organisation set after the Cuban Revolution in 1960 and its work to guarantee justice for women, in the workplace and at home. The FMC has a research wing which provides input into government laws relating to women on issues ranging from employment, health and ageing, to domestic violence, and an education wing which provides training for policy makers and law enforcers. Conference acknowledges that the work of the FMC and the Cuban trade union movement have been fundamental to achieving the gains women have made in Cuba over the last 60 years.

Regional Council congratulates Cuba for putting women's empowerment and equality right at the forefront of the Revolution, a legacy which can be seen today. We note that women went from being just 5% of the workforce in 1953 to making up almost half today. Today, women hold over 70% of education and health care jobs, they are 66% of lawyers, 68% of university graduates and 52% of doctors. Cuba has the second highest percentage of women MPs in the world at 53.2%.

We recognise that Save the Children consistently places Cuba first among developing countries for the well being of mothers and children and that the World Economic Forum ranked Cuba 23rd out of 149 counties in its 2018 Global Gender Gap Report. We applaud the commitment to gender equality guaranteed in the nation's constitution and laws. Although health achievements benefit all Cubans - many of the country's acclaimed health policies are specifically directed at women.

Thanks to the work of Cuban trade unions and the Federation of Cuban Women, Cuban women receive 18 weeks of paid maternity leave on 100% pay. After that, either parent is eligible for up to 40 weeks of parental leave at 60%. Contraception and abortion have been provided freely since 1965, when Cuba became the first country in Latin America

to legalise abortion. Cuba's reproductive services and family planning have positive implications for women's health in a continent where free contraception is rare.

Since 1997, there has been a government plan for the advancement of women. As a result, all ministries have a responsibility to ensure their policies advance women's equality and well-being. Each ministry has to report annually to the Federation of Cuban Women on what they have done to meet this plan. A policy which we could learn from in the UK. UNISON expresses its alarm at the Trump administration's recent actions to tighten the blockade against Cuba. These include restricting oil imports, reducing Cuban-Americans ability to visit or send money home to families, limiting US citizen's ability to travel to the island, banning cruise ships from docking in Cuban ports, and implementing Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. Such actions take US aggression and cruelty against Cuba to unprecedented levels.

The decision to implement Title III of the Helms-Burton Act expressly aims to deter vital foreign investment. It could see British companies being sued in the US courts for "trafficking" property nationalised after 1959. Congress considers this an act of economic warfare intended to cause tangible suffering to the Cuban people with the objective of creating unrest and instability.

These new measures are already being felt in Cuba. On top of the shortages and difficulties in obtaining everyday goods, education and medical supplies that the blockade causes, the island is now experiencing fuel and energy shortages as a result of Trump's new measures.

The FMC is clear that the biggest obstacle to women's advancement in Cuba is the blockade. It is Cuban women who bear the brunt of the impact this illegal and cruel US policy in their everyday lives since the burden of family care still falls disproportionately upon them.

UNISON commits to continue to campaign for an end to the US blockade, especially the new measures introduced by the Trump administration so that the Cuban women can fulfil their full potential. UNISON supports the UK government voting against the US blockade every year at the United Nations General Assembly. However, it should take concrete measures to punish British organisations or companies that comply with extraterritorial US blockade legislation over UK sovereign laws.

Regional Council praises the Cuba Solidarity Campaign's (CSC) work against the US blockade and to build links between Cuban and British workers and to highlight the achievements and work of the FMC in Cuba.

Regional Council calls upon the NEC to:

1. Support and publicise a delegation from the FMC to come to Britain in 2020 to mark their 60th anniversary and explain the impact of the US blockade on women in Cuba.
2. Encourage affiliation to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.
3. Lobby the government to pressure the US to end the blockade against Cuba and for the UK government to take robust action against UK-based companies that comply with extraterritorial blockade legislation.

M5: THAMES VALLEY ALLOWANCE CAMPAIGN

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Bucks Healthcare & Community
NO**

This branch notes that three health branches Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire have gained support from their trusts, local MPs of all parties and UNISON health both regionally and nationally for a cost of living allowance in the Thames Valley region. This is in recognition of the higher cost of living in the Thames valley and South East Region.

This branch believes that this matter does not only effect NHS staff but all workers and UNISON members living and working in the S East region.

This branch therefore requests that regional council

1. Express support for the 3 health branches currently active in the Thames Valley Campaign
2. Discuss whether to support the building of a regional campaign for a recognized cost of living allowance for members in the S East of England
3. To send a motion to national conference in support of such a campaign if agreed.

M6: SCRAP THE WOS! NO TO WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Isle of Wight Local Government
YES**

This Regional Council congratulates the Frimley Health Branch for its ongoing, high profile campaign against the establishment of a wholly owned subsidiary by their hospital trust. Regional Council notes the increasingly widespread phenomenon of wholly owned subsidiary companies being established across a range of public services including local government, higher education and the NHS.

Such developments have often been driven by austerity and the need for councils, universities or hospital trusts to cut costs. However, Regional Council asserts that such an approach is deeply counter-productive, as well as damaging for staff and the essential services they provide to citizens.

Employers have tried to argue that these changes are essentially benign, but this AGM is clear that these are a form of backdoor privatisation of public services.

Regional Council notes that in recent years there has been a particular use of subsidiary companies in the English NHS, where trusts seek to exploit the tax loophole that allows them to claim back potentially millions of pounds of VAT when using separate companies to take on the running of services such as estates and facilities

management. Regional Council is alarmed that such moves also generally seek to make savings off the backs of workers by removing them from national bargaining arrangements, establishing two-tier workforces, and denying access to pension schemes. In the NHS this most commonly sees new starters not being employed on Agenda for Change terms, instead receiving inferior terms and conditions to directly employed NHS staff and those staff transferred to new subsidiaries.

Regional Council is also deeply fearful of the impact of such developments on fragmenting our public services. The NHS always functions best when all parts of the service are pulling together in the same direction rather than atomised into competing units or with staff broken away from the rest of the healthcare team.

Regional Council welcomes the strength of UNISON campaigning against subsidiary companies and congratulates those branches in other parts of the country such as Bradford Health Services Branch, that have fought off such threats, by using a combination of industrial action, media and political campaigning.

This Regional Council pledges its support for the future campaigns against such developments and calls on the Regional Secretary / Regional Convenor to write to the NEC calling on it to:

1. Continue working with Service Groups, UNISON Labour Link, and all appropriate parts of the union, to fight the creation of wholly owned subsidiary companies that damage both staff and services;
2. Continue to campaign at a national level to:
 - close the VAT tax loophole used to justify the establishment of Wholly Owned Subsidiaries;
 - ensure that national bodies and applicable regulators take a tougher line on those NHS trusts, or other public sector bodies, looking to establish subsidiaries. This may be achieved by negotiating rigorous guidance surrounding their use;
3. Campaign for legislation which would end the ability of employers to utilise two (or multi)-tier workforces;
4. Continue to support those branches engaged in campaigns to resist the imposition of subsidiaries;
5. Establish new networks and national forums, within the applicable Service Group structure, for workers employed by Wholly Owned Subsidiaries;
6. Develop a national campaign, and produce appropriate tools and resources, calling for existing Wholly Owned Subsidiaries to be insourced.

M7: REGIONAL PARTICIPATION REVIEW

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Kent LG
NO**

Council notes it has been noticeable over some years that a number of the Regional Meetings including the Regional Council have not been quorate and therefore cannot carry out their business, make decisions, and take action which is a problem, with some motions not being heard for over a year. This is undemocratic and leads to activists not wanting to attend a meeting that does not achieve what it should in being the voice of public sector workers across the south east.

Council further notes that according to Public-sector trade union facility time data 2018/2019 there was a 6% cut across public sector employers in facility time spending from the previous year. Our branches in the region continually experience growing pressures to represent members due to privatisation, commissioning and the effects of austerity on our services at a time where our facilities to carrying out union work is being decimated. This has the knock on effect of our activists struggling to obtain release to attend the number of meetings across our regional democracy and presents a barrier to participation which can be seen in the amount of vacant seats on regional committees.

Council believes that due to the lack of participation by branches and low turnout at meetings that in many cases decisions are referred to other bodies therefore not allowing a diverse range of opinions being heard on issues affecting both our member and our branches.

Regional Council further believes that regional structures including service groups, strategic committees and standing committees are not fit for purpose and do not meet the challenges of the changing workforce and how public services are being delivered. If we are to support our current members, grow as a union and ensure we have an activist base to meet these challenges, we need vibrant and active regional structures that work for all members and activists and maintains UNISON as a member led union.

Regional Council resolves:

1. To carry out a review of the regional committee structures and to convene a working group to comprise of:
 - a) Regional Convenor
 - b) Regional Secretary
 - c) 2 members of the Regional Objectives Group
 - d) 1 representative from each service group
 - e) 1 representative from each self organised group
 - f) 1 young member
 - g) 1 retired member
2. The objective of the review will be to:

- a) To consult with all branches and self organised groups on barriers to regional democracy participation.
 - b) Review the current purpose, scope and remit of all bodies within the regional committee structure.
 - c) Develop a plan to increase participation and attendance in regional activities and decision making to the benefit of all our members.
 - d) Gather feedback from branches and self organised groups on any potential changes to the regional committee structure.
3. That the working group present recommendations and potential constitutional changes, including rules changes and or a new Regional Constitution to the Regional Council AGM 2021.

M8: STAND UP TO RACISM IN 2020

Submitted by:

Portsmouth City

For consideration at NDC:

NO

This Regional Council notes:

1. Racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism on are on the rise and we are seeing the scapegoating of migrant, refugees and Roma people.
2. Such racism is encouraged by mainstream politicians, such as Boris Johnson and Donald Trump, and media, and in turn helps boost and legitimise the far right.
3. Trade unions have a long record of challenging racism and fighting for unity.
4. Stand Up To Racism is organising demonstrations in London and Glasgow on Saturday 21 March 2020 on UN Anti-Racism Day.

This Regional Council resolves:

1. To support and mobilise for the demonstration being organised in London on the 21st March by Stand Up To Racism and the TUC on UN Anti-Racism Day, by encouraging branches to book coach transport to the demonstration for UNISON members and supporters, and encouraging them request funding towards this from UNISON's regional pool.
2. To re-affiliate to Stand Up To Racism at a cost of £200 per year.
3. To sponsor the Stand Up to Racism meeting and Love Music Hate Racism fundraising event at this year's UNISON National Delegate Conference in Brighton, hosted by Camden UNISON, send a donation of £500 towards the costs of these events, and encourage delegates to attend.

M9: FIGHTING LOCAL AUTHORITY CUTS

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

**Surrey County
YES**

This Regional Council believes that the funding crisis in local government, caused by the austerity policies of the conservative government, has reached a critical level. In towns and cities across the country vital services have been closed and cut back – with no end in sight.

This Regional Council notes with disappointment that it is not only Tory-controlled local authorities, but also those with Labour majorities, that are carrying out cuts. Often our union is the last line of defence for workers in local government services and for those who use council services.

We believe that councils, particularly Labour councils where UNISON may have some influence, should do everything within their power and within the law to avoid making cuts, whilst promoting their actions in the community and building a local campaign. They should also link up with others to develop a national strategy to fight the cuts.

This Regional Council believes that UNISON must be seen to actively oppose austerity-driven cuts to services – through public campaigning, lobbying, petitions and through supporting our members who work in these services – whoever is running the council.

This Regional Council calls upon the NEC:

- To call on all councils to look at what options they have to generate resources and avoid making cuts – including the use of reserves, capitalising eligible general fund expenditure and using prudential borrowing to generate revenue (such as in those councils which have borrowed to invest in property, using the returns in rents etc. To supplement their revenue budgets).
- To support those councils who take up this option, in developing local campaigns in defence of local authority services.
- To support and promote efforts to link up those councils across the countries of the UK.
- To promote this position at all levels of the union, including within the Labour Link.

SECTION 3: MOTIONS WHICH (IF PASSED) ARE TO BE CONSIDERED AS REGIONAL MOTIONS TO NDC 2020.

N1: GREEN UNISON AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

National Delegate Conference recognises the rising concern and horror that governments across the world are failing to tackle climate change and pollution. Donald Trump is set to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, ignoring Scientists and the United Nations, and a private sector-led and voluntary approach is failing to fundamentally tackle the issue. Conference accepts that there is a serious climate emergency and that radical action is needed to avert climate catastrophe.

Governments must act with urgency and take the lead to reduce carbon emissions and other harmful environmental practices. At the current rate of progress, even the very modest targets set by the Paris Climate Agreement to limit rising temperatures to 1.5°C by 2050 are unlikely to be achieved. Major action has to be undertaken by Government who having declared a climate emergency must take appropriate actions to avert the climate change catastrophe. Already over 200 Councils across the UK have declared a climate emergency and want to move faster than net zero carbon emissions in 2050, the current UK target set by the Westminster Parliament. The time to talk is over. The effect on our world and for future generations cannot be ignored. It is critical that we act now.

Conference applauds the striking school children across the world for raising the issue of climate change this year. On 20 September four million young people around the world took to the streets to strike and protest against climate change. A few days later Greta Thunberg berated the "empty words" of the world's leaders at the UN climate summit who are "failing" young people.

Council congratulates all those branches and members around the country who responded to a call from Greta Thunberg and showed their support for striking school children across the world in the demonstrations held on Friday 20 September 2019 by participating in public and workplace protests designed to raise the issue of climate change.

Greta Thunberg in December 2018 told the UN Climate Change Conference: "We are about to sacrifice our civilization for the opportunity of a very small number of people to continue to make enormous amounts of money. We are about to sacrifice the biosphere so that rich people can live in luxury. ...If solutions within this system are so impossible to find then maybe we should change the system itself?" We stand with Greta.

Conference notes that UNISON Green week in September also saw a revival of workplace interest in environment reps being recruited and increased engagement with employers on the issue, some of which released staff to attend protests. Others have set up projects to 'green' their operations and reduce their own emissions, working in partnership with trade unions to do so. Council notes that UNISON Scotland's 'green activist' network is a good example of how to share best practise and support branches and reps in challenging employers.

Conference recognises that branches may have an Environmental Officer or 'Green Rep' who co-ordinates the union's green and environmental agenda in the branch and represents the workforce in discussions and negotiations regarding the development and implementation of company or employer environmental policies and practices.

Conference notes that a Green New Deal was prioritised in the Labour party manifesto. Conference believes a Green New Deal is essential. Energy companies and other major public service institutions may need to be taken back into public ownership to enable the necessary actions to be undertaken to avert climate catastrophe. A Green plan to stop emissions should also go hand in hand with campaigns to save workers' jobs in the so-called 'dirty' industries. The transformation of these industries should harness the expertise of this highly skilled workforce and ensure an expansion of well-paid, unionised, environmentally sustainable jobs. This must be alongside other progressive policies including a major review of transport policy and the development of a fully integrated public transport system, reclaiming and revitalising our city centres, an energy-efficient house building programme, investment in health and education and reversing austerity. The role played by the trade unions will be a crucial factor in the coming months and years – in pushing these issues and campaigning for change.

National Delegate Conference notes that public sector bodies have a significant carbon footprint, as well as rising energy bills, and an ability to influence not only service users but also the wider community. Improving energy efficiency not only supports a reduction in carbon footprints but also reduces energy costs which can be reinvested in public services and staff. A recent Government report noted that CO2 emissions in the public sector decreased by 30% between 1990 – 2018, accounting for 2% of all carbon emissions, with the private sector decreasing by 41% over the same period and accounting for 18% of all carbon emissions. However, in 2017-2018, CO2 emissions in the public sector actually increased by 4%, whilst there was a 0% increase in the private sector.

Conference believes tackling carbon emissions across public sector workplaces can have a significant impact on the UK achieving its net zero target and tackling the urgent climate crisis. Public Sector employers have a responsibility to commit to significant reductions in carbon emissions and investing in the necessary resources to do so.

National Delegate Conference therefore calls on the NEC to:

1. Declare a Climate Emergency and promote this widely.
2. Reach out to the young climate strikers, encouraging branches and regions to engage positively with local groups and raising these ideas with them.
3. Work with all parts of the union to develop and promote a Green New Deal to tackle the climate emergency, eradicate poverty and reverse austerity.
4. Establish a National Green Network to support 'Green Reps' and Environment Officers.
5. Encourage Regional Green Networks and events to support branches in establishing the 'Green Reps' role.

6. Produce fresh workplace bargaining guides to help branches engage their local employers on Carbon Reduction Strategies and Carbon Management Programmes as well as other relevant 'Green' workplace policies.
7. Work with the TUC to re-establish the TUC Green Reps network;
8. Campaign vigorously for policies at local, regional, national and international levels that will deliver rapid reductions in carbon emissions in relevant areas such as transport, energy, buildings, food production and waste management, whilst harnessing the expertise of the workforce and ensuring an expansion of fairly-paid, unionised, environmentally sustainable jobs.
9. Work with the TUC and other unions to ensure a just transition for all workers in energy intensive industries;
10. To promote public ownership and intervention to secure a shift towards a sustainable economy and society;
11. Publish a report on how UK public services and workplaces can meet zero carbon targets;
12. Continue to promote the 'Climate change and your pension: divestment guide';
13. Launch a review of all UNISON's internal processes and procedures, aiming to be a union with a zero-carbon footprint.

N2: SCRAP THE WOS! NO TO WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES

This National Delegate Conference notes the increasingly widespread phenomenon of wholly owned subsidiary companies being established across a range of public services including local government, higher education and the NHS.

Such developments have often been driven by austerity and the need for councils, universities or hospital trusts to cut costs. However, Conference asserts that such an approach is deeply counter-productive, as well as damaging for staff and the essential services they provide to citizens.

Employers have tried to argue that these changes are essentially benign, but Conference is clear that these are a form of backdoor privatisation of public services. Conference notes that in recent years there has been a particular use of subsidiary companies in the English NHS, where trusts seek to exploit the tax loophole that allows them to claim back potentially millions of pounds of VAT when using separate companies to take on the running of services such as estates and facilities management.

Conference is alarmed that such moves also generally seek to make savings off the backs of workers by removing them from national bargaining arrangements, establishing two-tier workforces, and denying access to pension schemes. In the NHS this most commonly sees new starters not being employed on Agenda for Change

terms, instead receiving inferior terms and conditions to directly employed NHS staff and those staff transferred to new subsidiaries.

Conference is also deeply fearful of the impact of such developments in fragmenting our public services. The NHS always functions best when all parts of the service are pulling together in the same direction rather than atomised into competing units or with staff broken away from the rest of the healthcare team.

Conference welcomes the strength of UNISON campaigning against subsidiary companies and congratulates those branches that have fought off such threats, using a combination of industrial action, media and political campaigning.

Conference particularly congratulates Bradford Health Services branch and Frimley Health branch for their extensive and high profile campaigns against the establishment of subsidiary companies in 2019.

This National Delegate Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to:

1. continue working with Service Groups, UNISON Labour Link, and all appropriate parts of the union, to fight the creation of wholly owned subsidiary companies that damage both staff and services;
2. campaign at a national level to both:
 - close the VAT tax loophole used to justify the establishment of Wholly Owned Subsidiaries;
 - ensure that national bodies and applicable regulators take a tougher line on those NHS trusts, or other public sector bodies, looking to establish subsidiaries. This may be achieved by negotiating rigorous guidance surrounding their use;
3. campaign for legislation which would end the ability of employers to utilise two (or multi)-tier workforces;
4. continue to support those branches and regions engaged in campaigns to resist the imposition of subsidiaries;
5. establish new networks and national forums, within the applicable Service Group structure, for workers employed by Wholly Owned Subsidiaries;
6. develop a national campaign, and produce appropriate tools and resources, calling for existing Wholly Owned Subsidiaries to be insourced.

N3: HIDDEN DISABILITY – THE EFFECT OF AUTOIMMUNE CONDITIONS

Autoimmune conditions are where the body turns inwards and fails to tolerate its own cells. Your immune system mistakenly attacks your body.

Some examples of autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities include: Thyroid disease, asthma, osteoporosis, diabetes, coeliac disease, lupus, M.S., mental health

conditions such as bipolar disorder, psoriasis, ulcerative colitis, autoimmune, alopecia. Some examples of the many symptoms these conditions can cause are: fatigue, muscle pain, memory problems, numbness, dry eyes, rashes, achy joints, stomach problems.

Autoimmune conditions disproportionately affect women compared to men. While 8% of the population have autoimmune conditions, 78% of individuals with autoimmune diseases are women.

Autoimmune conditions don't disappear. Symptoms can be hidden or invisible, but can detrimentally affect your work and day-to-day life. Symptoms can wax and wane and also be difficult and chronic. Once you develop an autoimmune condition you are also more susceptible to develop additional ones.

Needing to deal with autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities in the workplace can be difficult if the conditions are not supported or acknowledged. The medical profession often do not recognise and support these conditions.

However, the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010 is if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Work-related activities that can be affected by autoimmune conditions include: interacting with colleagues, following instructions, using a computer, driving, carrying out interviews, preparing written documents and keeping to a timetable or a shift pattern.

Unfortunately, many employers do not accept and make adjustments for certain autoimmune conditions, like diabetes, and recognise them under the Equality Act, regardless of whether or not the condition is insulin or diet controlled. There is inconsistency in how Employers have interpreted the Equality Act.

Autoimmune conditions and hidden disabilities are often not recognised as disabilities. Absences caused by these conditions are often recorded as sickness absence rather than disability related absence which can lead to capability and disciplinary proceedings.

Conference calls on the NEC to work with the relevant national committees and service groups to;

1. Develop guidance for branches on the impact of autoimmune conditions on workers and how best to support them and negotiate for better workplace policies and recognition of hidden disabilities.
2. Raise awareness of existing UNISON resources including bargaining guides and model policies on disability leave and reasonable adjustments.
3. Campaign for greater recognition and public understanding of hidden disabilities such as autoimmune conditions.
4. Develop a leaflet to raise awareness amongst UNISON branches and membership so that they can be better informed and equipped to challenge inconsistent or unfair practices in their workplaces with regards to sickness absence policies.

N4: TACKLING & REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN WORKPLACES - ANTI-HARASSMENT CHAMPIONS

Sexual Harassment remains an increasing and concerning workplace issue, this National Delegate Conference acknowledges that anyone at anytime can experience sexual harassment, but the statistics demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of victims are women. This has been brought to the surface in various high profile campaigns such as the #MeToo movement.

Conference notes the motion - Improving Workers Protection from Sexual Harassment at Work- passed in 2019 and we congratulate the national women's committee for the on-going work and campaigning on this issue and in raising awareness throughout UNISON, including workshops, training courses and guides for branches as a result.

Conference reaffirms that sexual harassment and abuse are reprehensible under all circumstances and are not acceptable in any workplace. Those who experience Sexual Harassment at work can often feel reluctant or too vulnerable to speak to their line manager and uncertain of where to turn to for support. This is especially concerning for those who work in isolated and fragmented workplaces. Having a named, trained, independent person in the workplace that can be a point of contact for advice and support confidentially is vital in ensuring more and more victims feel safe in raising issues and concerns immediately.

Conference recognises that some public sector employers have the role of safeguarding Champion which has a broad remit for both staff and patients but can have responsibility of tackling this or similar issues in workplaces alongside supporter networks. A similar but dedicated Anti-Harassment Champion for staff would provide an important lifeline to workers who are experiencing Sexual Harassment. This role offers a trained point of contact for those in need, as well as for anyone who wants to report sexual harassment or abuse confidentially.

Conference believes that this role should be promoted within the public sector and adopted by all employers to ensure that a culture of anti-harassment, dignity and respect is developed and that those who experience sexual harassment can seek support and guidance safely and confidentially.

Therefore Conference calls upon the NEC to;

1. Work with the relevant national committees, branches and service groups to identify the best examples of Anti-Harassment Champions and practices in workplaces.
2. Collate this information and identify examples of good practice to support the adoption and promotion of the role.
3. Develop a bargaining guide to assist branches to persuade Employers to adopt the role and provide appropriate support and training.
4. Work with LAOS to develop training materials and resources that can be used in branches and workplaces to support the development of Anti- Harassment Champions and practises in workplaces.

5. Develop information leaflets for branches to clearly set out the role of the Anti-Harassment Champion which can be used by branches to engage members and employers.

N5: WOMEN IN CUBA: 60 YEARS OF THE FEDERATION OF CUBAN WOMEN UNDER BLOCKADE

This National Delegates Conference congratulates the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) on their 60th anniversary in 2020, and the Cuban people on the impressive achievements made in health, education and social welfare which have positively impacted on the lives of women in Cuba. We also note that all of these achievements have been made while suffering under the impact of almost six decades of US blockade.

Conference notes that FMC was the first mass organisation set after the Cuban Revolution in 1960 and its work to guarantee justice for women, in the workplace and at home. The FMC has a research wing which provides input into government laws relating to women on issues ranging from employment, health and ageing, to domestic violence, and an education wing which provides training for policy makers and law enforcers. Conference acknowledges that the work of the FMC and the Cuban trade union movement have been fundamental to achieving the gains women have made in Cuba over the last 60 years.

This Conference congratulates Cuba for putting women's empowerment and equality right at the forefront of the Revolution, a legacy which can be seen today. We note that women went from being just 5% of the workforce in 1953 to making up almost half today. Today, women hold over 70% of education and health care jobs, they are 66% of lawyers, 68% of university graduates and 52% of doctors. Cuba has the second highest percentage of women MPs in the world at 53.2%.

We recognise that Save the Children consistently places Cuba first among developing countries for the well being of mothers and children and that the World Economic Forum ranked Cuba 23rd out of 149 counties in its 2018 Global Gender Gap Report. We applaud the commitment to gender equality guaranteed in the nation's constitution and laws. Although health achievements benefit all Cubans - many of the country's acclaimed health policies are specifically directed at women.

Thanks to the work of Cuban trade unions and the Federation of Cuban Women, Cuban women receive 18 weeks of paid maternity leave on 100% pay. After that, either parent is eligible for up to 40 weeks of parental leave at 60%. Contraception and abortion have been provided freely since 1965, when Cuba became the first country in Latin America to legalise abortion. Cuba's reproductive services and family planning have positive implications for women's health in a continent where free contraception is rare.

Since 1997, there has been a government plan for the advancement of women. As a result, all ministries have a responsibility to ensure their policies advance women's equality and well-being. Each ministry has to report annually to the Federation of Cuban Women on what they have done to meet this plan. A policy which we could learn from in the UK. UNISON expresses its alarm at the Trump administration's recent actions to tighten the blockade against Cuba. These include restricting oil imports, reducing

Cuban-Americans ability to visit or send money home to families, limiting US citizen's ability to travel to the island, banning cruise ships from docking in Cuban ports, and implementing Title III of the Helms-Burton Act. Such actions take US aggression and cruelty against Cuba to unprecedented levels.

The decision to implement Title III of the Helms-Burton Act expressly aims to deter vital foreign investment. It could see British companies being sued in the US courts for "trafficking" property nationalised after 1959. Congress considers this an act of economic warfare intended to cause tangible suffering to the Cuban people with the objective of creating unrest and instability.

These new measures are already being felt in Cuba. On top of the shortages and difficulties in obtaining everyday goods, education and medical supplies that the blockade causes, the island is now experiencing fuel and energy shortages as a result of Trump's new measures.

The FMC is clear that the biggest obstacle to women's advancement in Cuba is the blockade. It is Cuban women who bear the brunt of the impact this illegal and cruel US policy in their every day lives since the burden of family care still falls disproportionately upon them.

UNISON commits to continue to campaign the region for an end to the US blockade, especially the new measures introduced by the Trump administration so that the Cuban women can fulfil their full potential. UNISON supports the UK government voting against the US blockade every year at the United Nations General Assembly. However, it should take concrete measures to sanction British organisations or companies that comply with extraterritorial US blockade legislation over UK sovereign laws.

This Conference praises the Cuba Solidarity Campaign's (CSC) work against the US blockade and to build links between Cuban and British workers and to highlight the achievements and work of the FMC in Cuba.

Conference calls upon the NEC to:

1. Support and publicise a delegation from the FMC to come to Britain in 2020 to mark their 60th anniversary and explain the impact of the US blockade on women in Cuba.
2. Encourage affiliation to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.
3. Call on the US to end the blockade against Cuba and lobby the UK government to take robust action against UK-based companies that comply with extraterritorial blockade legislation.
4. Continue work alongside other Trade Unions and the TUC to maintain the strongest possible support for Cuba and the work of the FMC.

N6: FIGHTING LOCAL AUTHORITY CUTS

This National Delegate Conference believes that the funding crisis in local government, caused by the austerity policies of the conservative government, has reached a critical level. In towns and cities across the country vital services have been closed and cut back – with no end in sight.

This Conference notes with disappointment that it is not only Tory-controlled local authorities, but also those with Labour majorities, that are carrying out cuts. Often our union is the last line of defence for workers in local government services and for those who use council services.

We believe that councils, particularly Labour councils where UNISON may have some influence, should do everything within their power and within the law to avoid making cuts, whilst promoting their actions in the community and building a local campaign. They should also link up with others to develop a national strategy to fight the cuts.

This Conference believes that UNISON must be seen to actively oppose austerity-driven cuts to services – through public campaigning, lobbying, petitions and through supporting our members who work in these services – whoever is running the council.

This Conference calls upon the NEC:

- To call on all councils to look at what options they have to generate resources and avoid making cuts – including the use of reserves, capitalising eligible general fund expenditure and using prudential borrowing to generate revenue (such as in those councils which have borrowed to invest in property, using the returns in rents etc. to supplement their revenue budgets).
- To support those councils who take up this option, in developing local campaigns in defence of local authority services.
- To support and promote efforts to link up those councils across the countries of the UK.
- To promote this position at all levels of the union, including within the Labour Link.

SECTION 4: MOTIONS RULED OUT OF ORDER

M10: CENSORSHIP IN THE REGION

Submitted by:
For consideration at NDC:

West Sussex
NO

Ruled out because:

A staffing issue
Factually incorrect
Beyond the remit of Regional Council

Regional Council notes that a motion was brought to its AGM in 2018 and passed overwhelmingly by delegates. The text of that motion is copied below:

"This Regional Council notes the increasing use of censorship within the region of lay activist reports. There have been examples at National Conference 2017 and within NEC delegate reports where written reports and articles by lay activists have been amended or refused to be circulated. This Regional Council believes that UNISON faces many challenges over the coming period, and that the censorship of perspectives of elected lay representatives is not helpful to allowing UNISON to meet those challenges. All perspectives within our union should be respected and be permitted to be shared, so long as the Working Together Guidelines and UNISON rules are not broken. This Regional Council also notes that the same reports which have been censored in the South East have been circulated within other regions unamended, pointing to an overzealous approach within the South East region. This Regional Council calls for the circulation of all delegate and activist reports without amendment or blockage, unless such reports are outside the Working Together Guidelines or UNISON rulebook."

This Regional Council notes that despite it giving a clear and unequivocal steer in this regard in 2018, censorship of lay reports of NEC meetings has continued unabated, to the extent that elected lay representatives are put off from writing reports in the knowledge that they cannot freely provide their own reporting of the meetings they attended.

This Regional Council believes in the value of lay member reports and additionally believes there is value in them being provided from the perspective of the lay member who was elected to represent lay members in this region.

This Regional Council reaffirms its 2018 call for the circulation of all delegate and activist reports without amendment or blockage, unless such reports are outside the Working Together Guidelines or UNISON rulebook.

National Standing Orders Committee Representative Report

Paul Couchman – South East Regional Rep on NDC SOC

I have been on the NDC SOC for over 2 years now and enjoy the role most of the time. The committee meets 3-4 times before NDC and looks at all the motions that have been sent in by branches, regions and Self Organised Groups (SOGs). We have to check them all for competency, accuracy and legality. We also check all the amendments to motions and recommend any potential composites where motions are similar. Once a preliminary agenda has been agreed, the SOC then conducts a national prioritisation exercise, where regions and SOGs get to decide which of the motions they want to prioritise. The top few motions get a guaranteed slot on the NDC agenda and the rest are listed in priority order on the 'remaining order of business' (or the 'snake').

Motions which are deemed not suitable or appropriate for discussion at NDC are rejected by the SOC and the relevant submitting body are informed of the reason. The submitters can then appeal and the SOC will consider the appeal at their next meeting. There are no limits as to how many times the submitters can appeal until NDC itself – when they can talk directly to the SOC regarding their appeal. Only submitting bodies who have appealed already may meet with the SOC at conference.

At the conference, the SOC will provide regular reports to delegates, which they will be asked to accept. Once an SOC report has been accepted there is no right of appeal on its content (except where the conference has asked the SOC to 'reference back' a particular decision, i.e. the ruling out of a particular motion). In the event of a vote to reference back, the SOC will reconsider its decision and, if requested, meet with the relevant branch, region or SOG delegates. It is rare that the SOC will change a decision on appeal but it does happen.

At the SOC meetings, we are guided by national UNISON officers and lawyers. Although the elected reps take the final votes on any decisions, we must be mindful of the advice we have received – particularly if we are warned of potential legal repercussions (placing the union in legal jeopardy). We are bound by 'collective responsibility', which means that whichever way we may have voted or if we disagree with any final decisions, we are duty bound to speak with one voice in communicating those decisions. This protects the members of the SOC from being singled out over any controversial decisions they have taken.

The most recent national SOC guidance to branches for submitting motions to conferences is below.

The South East region

Our region comes about 3rd or 4th in terms of the number of motions submitted to NDC for debate each year. The numbers submitted by branches over the past 9 years is shown below. If yours is not listed it will be because you have not submitted anything in the last 9 years – perhaps consider this year? The leader board for motions to NDC is shown overleaf.

Top branches for sending motions to NDC in last 10 years

Portsmouth City – 30

Isle of Wight – 16

Surrey County – 13

West Sussex - 12

Branch/year 20..	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	Total
Bucks Health			1	1			3	3		8
Sussex Partnership Health						1				1
Isle of Wight	2	1	3	1	3	4		2		16
Oxford City						2			1	3
Oxford County					4					4
Milton Keynes area	1									1
New Forest								1		1
Oxfordshire Health					2					2
Hants, IoW, Police & Justice								1		1
Salisbury Health					4		1			5
Oxford Brookes Uni									1	1
Southampton District		2	4				1			7
Portsmouth City	7	1	2	12	3		2	2	1	30
SSE (E&W)							1			1
Southern Water						2				2
Uni Brighton	1	1	4		1	1				8
Uni Surrey	1									1
Epsom & Ewell	1	1	1							3
Surrey County	4	3		2		2	1		1	13
Waverley	1		1							2
Brighton & Hove			1					1		2
East Sussex area				1						1
Kent						5		1		6
Medway Health	2	1								3
West Sussex	1	2	1	4	3	1				12
Hastings & Eastbourne Health			1		2					3
Southern Counties Water			1							1
Regional Totals	21	12	20	21	22	18	9	11	4	137

As always, if branches want any help in writing motions for conference please do get in touch with me. You will be responsible for the content. I can just help try to make sure it is competent.