

Executive Council Report December 2016

Previous Executive Council Minutes from September 2016: Read and Adopted

FGPC minutes from 13th October: Read and Adopted

FGPC minutes from 10th November: Read and Adopted

General Secretary's Report:

Public Meetings and General Events

- Speaker at the Real Britain fringe held jointly with the Daily Mirror; Reconnecting Britain, Labour Party Conference.
- Moved Composite, Labour Party Conference.
- Speaker at the Global Organising Alliance.
- Speaker at Unite Regional Health & Safety Conference, Derby.
- Speaker at the 2016 Class Conference, London.
- Full day visit to Hinkley Point C development, Somerset.
- Officially opened Unite's new Edinburgh Office.
- Attended Open University reception celebrating the Centenary of the birth of Harold Wilson.
- Speaker at the Unite Group of MPs, Parliament.

Political, International & Inter-Trade Union Matters

- Various meetings with UCATT representatives for merger talks.
- Attended and spoke at UCATT National Executive, London.
- TULO Contact Group meetings.
- Various meetings on Workplace 2020.
- Various meetings with Unite representatives to the Labour Party NEC.
- Meeting with Wills Rangel, President, and Jacobo Torres, International Officer, of Central Bolivariana Socialista de Trabajadores (CBST) - the Venezuelan equivalent of the TUC.
- Meeting with George Katrougalos, Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs (former Minister for Labour).
- Workers Uniting Congress, Washington.
- Meeting with Keir Starmer MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.
- Meeting with Alun Davies AM, Minister for Lifelong Learning and the Welsh Language.
- Meeting with Phil Davies, York Disabled Workers' Cooperative.

uniteNOW!

Administrative & Organisational Issues

- Various meetings to discuss Birmingham Project.
- Meeting with Simon Dubbins, International Director, to discuss the work of the International Department.
- Meeting with Anneliese Midgley, Political Director, to discuss the work of the Political Department.
- Meeting with Andrew Murray, Chief of Staff; Barbara Kielim, Head of HR, and Howard Beckett, Executive Director, to discuss Absence Management and I&C Forum.
- Meeting with Staff Reps to discuss Absence Management and I&C Forum.
- Meeting with Harish Patel, National Officer, and Diana Holland, AGS, to discuss first group meeting for BAEM Officers.
- Meeting with Steve Turner, AGS, to discuss young members.
- Meeting with Ed Sabisky, Executive Director, and Andrew Murray, Chief of Staff, to discuss UCATT Pay and Pensions.
- Meeting with senior staff on developing the union's digital communications.
- Unite Staff, Officer and Organiser Pay Talks.
- Meeting with Brian Rye following the ballot in support of UCATT merger.

Constitutional Committees & Industrial Matters

- Meeting with Tony Burke, AGS, to discuss dispute at Menzies Distribution.
- Meeting with Roger Maddison, NO, and Jim Farley, President of Ford Europe, to discuss the future of Bridgend Engine Plant
- Meeting with Marshalls plc, Halifax.
- One to one meetings with a number of National Officers to discuss ongoing industrial matters.
- Meeting with Aviva Reps, Esher.
- Meeting with UPS National Committee (NNC).
- Various meetings with Peter Kavanagh, Regional Secretary, and Oliver Richardson, National Officer, to discuss ongoing issues at Heathrow.
- Meeting with Unite Aerospace NISC, Southport.
- Meetings with Ford Convenors, London.
- Meeting with Vauxhall senior management, Luton.
- Meeting with TATA Reps, London.
- Meeting with British Steel Convenors, London.
- Meeting with Tony Brady, temporary National Officer for Steel.
- General Meeting with all Assistant General Secretaries to discuss industrial matters.
- Meeting with Sharon Graham, Executive Officer, and Gail Cartmail, AGS, to discuss First Direct.
- Meeting with Faslane Stewards, John Smith House, Glasgow.
- Site visit to Rosyth, Scotland.

Principal Media Appearances

- Since the last Executive Council the General Secretary has been mentioned over 320 times in online and print media and over 110 times in broadcast media. Dominating the coverage for this period was the Labour Party and TUC conferences, as well as Sports Direct, bank job losses and pension disputes.
- Interview, Adam Boulton Show, Sky News, 28th September 2016.
- The General Secretary also featured, BBC Scotland, BBC Daily Politics, BBC News Channel, Sky News and LBC radio during Labour Party Conference.
- Tribune, monthly column.
- Interview, Daily Telegraph, 30th September 2016.

General Secretary Election 2017

The present term of office of the Unite General Secretary concludes at the end of April 2018. Past practice would have indicated that an election for the post would take place in the latter part of 2017, to allow time for a proper handover in the event of a new General Secretary being elected by the membership.

Council will be aware that the election for General Secretary, like the election of the Executive Council itself, is mandated by law to be conducted by a postal ballot, a method that is not only archaic but also, for a union of Unite's size, extraordinarily expensive. While the precise cost of each of these elections is affected by the membership turnout, the cost is in the range of £1 million to £1.3 million each.

Procedures for the election of the Executive Council, in accordance with rule, in the first part of next year are now well-advanced. Changes to rule adopted at the 2015 Rules Conference now mean that the electorate for the two ballots – General Secretary and Executive Council – are much more closely aligned than in the past. The General Secretary election merely requires the addition of the Retired Members Plus and Community members to the Executive Council electorate.

Combining the two ballots would therefore save Unite around £1 million in costs associated with the elections – costs which, to underline, are imposed on us by Tory laws from 1980s. The alternative would be to start a fresh ballot, with a near-identical electorate, just a few months after the previous ballot had concluded.

It is therefore proposed that an election General Secretary is held on the same schedule already agreed as that for the Executive Council election. The Schedule is appended below.

uniteNOW!

To conform with the requirements of Rule 15.1, the General Secretary therefore gives notice of his resignation from office (after the requisite notice period), such resignation to take effect from April 28 2017, the date at which the result of the General Secretary election is declared.

The ballot rules and guidance for the Executive Council election that were agreed for the 2017 elections will be valid for the General Secretary election save for the following amendments:

- 1) In accordance with Rule 16.12 a candidate must:
 - be eligible to vote in the election;
 - have at least 5 years continuous membership of the union; and
 - have received at least 50 branch nominations or workplace nominations (where there is no workplace branch), subject to the total including nominations from more than one region.
- 2) All members of the union can vote in this election including members who pay retired members plus contributions and community members, but excluding ordinary retired members who are not entitled so to vote as per rules 3.2 and 15.1.
- 3) Each properly nominated candidate will be entitled to submit an election address to be circulated to members eligible to vote with the ballot paper up to a maximum of 600 words

The Returning Officer for both the Executive Council Election and the General Secretary Election will be Electoral Reform Services, who also serve as Independent Scrutineer.

The ballot timetable for this election will be the same as that for the Executive Council Election. The only difference to the timetable is the dates for the count and scrutiny. For the General Secretary election there will be a manual count and scrutiny at which observers may be present. This will be conducted in advance of the count and scrutiny for the Executive Council election which will be an electronic process, as on previous occasions.

unite**NOW!**

Unite offices Closed for Christmas Holidays	Friday 23rd December 2016 to Monday 2nd January 2017 (inclusive)
Despatch of Nominations Forms	w/c 2 nd January 2017
Nominations Period	Monday 16 th January – Friday 17 th February 2017
Last date for Receipt of Nominations	Wednesday 22 nd February 2017
Last date for Acceptance and Receipt of Election Address	Monday 27 th February 2017
Voting Papers Despatched	27 th March 2017
Helpline for members who have not received their ballot papers opens	Friday 7 th April
Deadline for despatching duplicate papers	Thursday 13 th April 2017
Easter Holidays 2017	14th – 17th April
Deadline for Voting papers to be returned to the Independent Scrutineer – 5.00p.m. on	Wednesday 19 th April 2017
Count and scrutiny of ballot papers by ERS for General Secretary Election	Thursday 20 th to Saturday 22 nd April 2017
Count and scrutiny of ballot papers by ERS for the Executive Council Election	Thursday 20 th to Wednesday 26 th April 2017
Count Verification of Executive Council attended by observers	27 & 28 April 2017
Executive Council receive report of Independent Scrutineer and result declared	28 th April
New EC takes office	1 st May 2017

ORGANISING REPORT

OVERVIEW

Broad Industrial Strategy (BIS/Work, Voice Pay)

Automation

35% of UK jobs could be lost to automation by 2035, with **more than 650,000** Unite members employed in sectors at high risk. Unite needs to develop an effective response. A detailed verbal report was delivered to the EC by the Executive Officer.

BIS Industrial Data

The data is continuing to prove popular with activists. The data has now been accessed on over **4,300** occasions by Officials and Shop Stewards/Reps.

Industrial data search engine improvements have been complete, including a new facility to upload collective agreements.

Over **90%** of relevant pay and anniversary data has now been collected.

Over **28,000** workplaces set for negotiations in 2017 (including those covered by national bargaining).

NISC/RISC proposal to dedicate at least one meeting per year to discussing, checking and updating the Industrial Data.

BIS Industrial Guides and Templates

Our industrial guides and templates key used by our Shop Stewards/Reps. They have now been accessed on **over 4,000** occasions online. 5,000 hard copies have been requested.

BIS Regional Plans

Every Region is bringing Officers together and developing a Regional BIS plan. The Executive Officer is having detailed planning session with Regional SMTs re: plans.

Planning Sessions for Shop Stewards/Reps agreed

100% Unite

100% UNITE has delivered a total NET membership **gain of over 98,724**.

Over 17,473 new joiners since the last EC. 6 of the Unite Regions' have already beaten their agreed 2016 target.

12 week pay campaigns. Almost 1,300 100% campaign workplaces are subject to pay negotiations between January and April 2017.

INDUSTRIAL REPORTS

MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Introduction

The shadow of the forthcoming 'Brexit' negotiations continues to loom large over the manufacturing sectors.

On November 1st the Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), which measures confidence in manufacturing, fell to 54.3, from 55.5 in September. It is clear that the economic forecast for manufacturing remains volatile, although in the short-term this is being buttressed by the boost to exports by the weaker pound.

Latest figures from the Office for National Statistics report that industrial production shrank by 0.5% in the third quarter of 2016. Although manufacturing output grew in the month of September, it fell 0.9% between July and September.

The fluctuation in the value of sterling in response to political and judicial announcements - and the subsequent impact for manufacturing - underlines the urgency for the government to pledge tariff-free access to the Single Market as a central objective of the forthcoming negotiations.

Brexit

The manufacturing combine's document "Brexit On Our Terms" has been widely circulated in the manufacturing sectors and all the appropriate NISCs have had a presentation on its content and the policies outlined in the document.

Given that Simon Dubbins will be making a presentation on the latest situation relating to Brexit during the course of the Executive Committee there are just two further items that need to be referred to.

Nissan

As has been reported from the media the very welcome decision by Nissan to build the new Qashqai model in Sunderland along with the 4x4 vehicle the X-Trail. This is not only welcome news for our members but also for the North East and many thousands of workers in the Nissan supply chain.

Following a visit by the Chief Executive of Nissan to Downing Street the Secretary of State BEIS was sent to Japan and some form of arrangement/assurances clearly have been given to Nissan. Those assurances have not been shared with our Shop Stewards or with anybody else for that matter. The Government say that no financial assurances have been given, however it is clear that when details of the assurances leak out (as they surely will) other automotive companies and companies in manufacturing will demand similar arrangements.

The AGS and National Officers will be again meeting with the main employers organisations in manufacturing on Brexit and at this stage it would appear there is still widespread

uniteNOW!

support for Unites' position on issues such as triggering article 50; remaining in a tariff free single market; protection of employment rights; investment; access to skills and most importantly a cohesive industrial strategy – the lack of any strategy on these issues is causing considerable frustration with the total lack of any plan by the Government.

BEIS Select Committee – Industrial Strategy

The AGS gave evidence to the BEIS Select Committee investigation into Industrial Strategy as well as speaking to written evidence submitted to the Committee.

The AGS was questioned specifically on the automotive industry in the UK and the contribution is on public record.

Defence Select Committee – Industrial Strategy

The AGS also gave evidence to the Defence Committee on industrial strategy and procurement along with Phil Rudd, Shop Steward from BAE Systems and a representative of Prospect. Again the contributions are now on public record.

Organising

At the BEIS Select Committee (held in Coventry) the AGS was approached by the Chief Executive of Aston Martin in regard to the massive vote in favour of strike action by members at the company over pay.

In a meeting later in the day - with the Regional Officers present - the CEO said he had "misjudged the situation" and was looking to "get things back on track". As a result the company re-opened negotiations two days later and an excellent pay agreement has been secured. As part of the deal on pay the company have now committed to extend Unite recognition to the new St Athan plant for Unite.

Ford, Bridgend

The General Secretary, AGS and National Officer met with Unite Reps from the Ford, Bridgend plant where the Dragan engine is made - along with engines for JLR.

There are difficulties at Bridgend include a heavy reliance on overtime plus the number of engines the plant is designed to produce up to a million engines (Ford's own and others) but the production is dropping. JLR will move its production to its own plant in the near future and Ford have revised its own production of engines to between 250,000 and 150,000. As a result of the meeting the GS had met with the European CEO of Ford, Jim Farley and made proposed we deal with immediate the issue at Bridgend and develop an accord with Ford on remaining in the UK.

Steel Crisis

Tata Steel is still considering its options. Tata as yet have not sold the Speciality Products as had been anticipated and they have still not reached a conclusion in regard to the rest of the business in the UK – either a merger with the German company Thyssenkrupp or continue to operate as a business or to sell to a third party.

The other key issue is the future of the British Steel Pension Scheme which the company are

uniteNOW!

currently in discussion with the Unions over and the Trustees. There is no doubt that Tata Steel would wish to get rid of the pension scheme, something which our members are totally opposed to, particularly if the scheme goes into the Pensions Protection Fund. It is anticipated that Tata will at some point soon make its proposals to the UK steel unions; however the situation has been exacerbated by the removal of Cyrus Mistry as the Chief Executive of the Global Corporation, leaving yet more uncertainty.

Following campaigning by the unions across the EU the EU looks set to impose punitive antidumping tariffs on imports of Chinese steel after the blocking coalition fell apart when the Netherlands and Austria indicated that they would throw their weight behind the EU proposal, leaving the UK outnumbered.

New rules would bring a shift in EU trade policy by allowing the bloc to introduce far higher tariffs on products judged to be unfairly priced.

IndustriALL organised a massive demonstration in Brussels in early November on the question of the crisis in steel.

Fujitsu

Our members in the IT/computer company Fujitsu are involved in a dispute taking strike action in support of an improved pay increase in Manchester, and the decision of the company to scrap Fujitsu Voice (the company's Information and Consultation Forum) and also the announcement by the company of declaring over 3000 redundancies across Europe (1800 in the UK).

The decision to scrap the I&C Committee is particularly crass as it takes a major step backwards and it would appear the company are only doing this because of the effectiveness of Unite representatives on that body.

Made in Britain 2.0

The Manufacturing Combine has now commenced work on updating Unites' manufacturing strategy which should be ready to publish in early 2017.

The document will contain not just the case for an industrial/manufacturing strategy but also sections on how we need tackle the anticipated introduction of robots, cobots, 3D printing etc.; the needs of manufacturing in terms of skills and apprenticeships; procurement; re-shoring; energy issues; decent employment etc.

SERVICES SECTOR

Introduction

Reports from the Services Sectors show tremendous activity in campaigning, political lobbying and negotiating better pay and holidays as well as fending off unwanted employer led changes.

uniteNOW!

Unite cannot win every battle, especially where employers are determined to cut jobs but victories however small are significant and show the union can grow membership when members decide to fight back.

The Capita Life and Pensions industrial action resulted in an improved offer and a spike in membership. Unite members engaged in industrial action strategy at the Prudential defied the naysayers and won a total victory against the outsourcing of 84 skilled jobs to Mumbai.

UCATT members vote to transfer engagements to Unite was welcomed by a special meeting of the Unite Construction Sector NISC. Members are keen to get on with joint meetings and the planning an organising strategy as future major infrastructure projects are confirmed e.g. Hinckley Point C; HS2 phases 1 and 2; Heathrow Expansion.

There is excellent progress in Councils signing up to the Construction Minimum Standards Charter.

The AGS is visiting Banks Mining with Shadow SoS for BIES, Clive Lewis to assess the viability of UK coal production and the potential for carbon capture and storage. Banks Mining is now exporting coal to Spain and UK coal should have a place in the UK energy mix until the 2025 carbon target.

The Unite Public Sector Combine's focus for 2017 is outsourcing and organisation. Hackney Council Housing maintenance department and housing stock has been brought back in house and outsourcing/insourcing is an issue that impacts across the public sector. Unite's profile in Youth Services remains high having defended the integrity of the JNC collective agreement the Pink Book members continue to fight in defence of youth services supported by qualified youth workers.

By far in a way the greatest challenge to the NHS England are the 44 Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) labelled by Unite as 'Slash, Trash and Privatise'. Unite Health has led the way in exposing the opaque but wrecking proposals and others are now catching up

The elusive quest to close the UK and Ireland gender pay gap is ever frustrating however Unite is playing our role in continuing to raise awareness - negotiations in HE and in Finance an equal pay day. The slow progress to close the gap highlights the importance of the EHRC staff's industrial action campaign against compulsory redundancies.

Construction

The recent announcement by UCATT, confirming their member's decision to join the Unite family is so significant in many ways. A trade union with a proud history in representing construction workers dating back to the 1860's the two sectors will complement each as the new sector will have a wealth of talent and experience from the shop floor upwards,

uniteNOW!

speaking with and delivering one clear consistent message “United we Stand divided we fall” in the workplace environment.

The new integrated sector for the first time ever will provide Unite with a real opportunity to maximise the industry greatest asset “the workforce” in delivering real and continuous solid membership growth across the “Total Construction Process sector”, as each region of Unite will define their own planned industrial strategy involving construction officer’s / shop stewards and lay activists contribution through all the Regional Industrial Sector Committee’s.

- Delivering on Direct Employment as the only alternative to Precarious Employment
- Apprenticeship / Adult Training
- Developing project specific agreements linked to future Infrastructure projects
- Develop cross sectorial campaigns through early engagement to influence Clients, as each region will have differing requirements.
- Campaigning to improve the industry collective agreements
- Supporting Training of Shop Stewards and Safety Representatives

TRANSPORT & FOOD SECTOR

TRANSPORT AND FOOD – KEY ISSUES

Since the last Executive Council and a period of severe instability, volatility, insecurity and division within and across the regions and nations of the UK and Ireland, including in our movement, our priority has been to come together. In particular, in line with our “Transport Matters” and “From Plough to Plate” industrial strategies, we need to ensure transport and food workers are fully recognised - protected and included in shaping the next stages – with action at all levels, from the workplace and community, to regional, national, European and international levels. It is clear that this approach will need to continue, as the repercussions of the election of a Tory government, and their response to the EU Referendum and the US Presidential election in particular, impact on all our lives.

“TRANSPORT MATTERS” UNITE TRANSPORT CONFERENCE 2 November 2016

As agreed with the Transport working group, a very well-attended and positive conference took place bringing together representatives from key transport workplaces across our transport industrial sectors and sub-sectors, and including the diversity of our membership. Keynote speakers were : Val Shawcross Deputy Mayor – Transport - London; Andy McDonald MP Labour’s Shadow Secretary of State for Transport and John Paul Brown Co-op National transport manager speaking on Transport workers and Vulnerable Road users. A wide-ranging discussion took place.

Workshops were actively supported and covered the three agreed crosstransport priorities: **Action on clean air – cutting diesel emissions; Mental health first aid; and Ending the race to the bottom** including standards, automation and sub-contracting.

uniteNOW!

The Conference also received a presentation from Noel Coard ITF Hubs project on developing software for mapping membership geographically, an important tool for industrial hub organising.

In closing the conference, next steps were confirmed, including the survey of Unite transport membership which has been piloted with the NISCs.

“Transport matters, so do transport workers - transport workers transport our world. What is good for transport workers is good for transport services to the public – passenger and freight.”

“OUR INDUSTRIAL VOICE” UNITE CONFERENCE FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Arrangements continue to be made for the conference, and an update was presented AGS.

TUC CONGRESS 2016 – Unite moved an amendment to a Rail and Bus motion covering the Bus Services Bill. Also Unite spoke in favour of action on climate change but against the motion which sought to put transport and energy workers out of work as their solution. A powerful speech from a Unite delegate and bus driver called for a strong anti-racism campaign and exposed the racism he and other colleagues and their families have suffered following the EU Referendum vote (see pages 22/3 Unite works “In solidarity not hatred”).

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2016 – Unite spoke in the Transport and Food & Environment debates. Unite moved the Transport commission report and policy document, which were agreed. Unite’s fringe meeting “Building a world class bus system” was very well attended. The AGS spoke at the Action for Rail fringe on “Rail and Public ownership” and the Labour Transport group fringe on “Tackling inequality – the contribution of a progressive transport policy”.

SECTORAL BODIES – At the Downstream Oil Distribution Forum it was reported that the Petroleum Driver Passport continues to grow, including with the full involvement of the Belfast terminals in Northern Ireland.

The AGS attended a meeting of the Rail Supply Group which included having a discussion with the rail Minister Paul Maynard.

Gangmasters Licensing Authority – Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority meeting of workers/NGO representatives took place, our aim remaining to ensure the extension to new areas is not at the expense of the current important and effective licensing system.

A meeting also took place with Rob Harper and Matt Draper in relation to organisation of Driving Instructors.

INTERNATIONAL and EUROPE – During the quarter the AGS has been involved with Unite’s Europe/Brexit check group, the ITF and ETF, IUF and EFFAT as well as Workers Uniting Congress. Also participated in the ITF Executive Board and chaired the ITF Women’s Committee both held in Panama, which included a visit to the Panama Canal, a key strategic transport area.

uniteNOW!

POLITICAL REPORT

Introduction

This quarter has been dominated by the US elections and the discussions on the terms of Britain exiting the European Union. There are parallels between the shocking victory of the President –elect Donald Trump and the vote here in the summer of a Brexit vote which the report will go into.

US Election

Trump's election victory translates into the following figures:

- In the Electoral College Trump won in 306 states compared to Hillary Clinton winning 232.
- In terms of the popular vote Trump won 47.4% of the vote while Clinton won 47.7% of the vote. Clinton's popular vote lead has now surpassed 2 million.
- The states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Iowa all turned from blue to red. They are usually democratic strong holds.
- Trump's victory overwhelmingly won over white voters with 58% voting for him. White votes made up 70% of the electorate in this year's election. Most old men also voted for Trump.
- Most black people voted for Clinton – 88%.
- The Republicans has also retained their majority in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Against all expectations why did Trump win?

The vote on Trump and Brexit both demonstrate disillusionment with the political establishment – a rejection of the status quo.

There is a renewed energy in the far right with hate crime spiralling. This has now started to be demonstrated in Europe with the French elections looking highly likely to be a contest between a fascist and a Thatcherite.

We must work with the Labour Party to demonstrate that it is Labour on people's side and exposing how the Tories are destructive for our economy and communities.

Brexit

The government's approach to exiting the European Union has been completely chaotic. The messaging from the government is that there is a push towards a "Hard Brexit."

Teresa May is attempting to stop a vote in Parliament being taken on whether to trigger Article 50. This was challenged in the courts and she was defeated, the Government have launched an appeal. At the time of writing the government is facing a further legal battle over whether Britain has a right to stay in the single market after it has left the EU.

uniteNOW!

Unite have been working very closely with the Labour team responsible for exiting the European Union. Messaging from both Unite and Labour includes:

Respecting the decision of the British people to leave the EU.

This is the most important issue facing Britain, and so the government's plans must be presented transparently and subject to public scrutiny. David Cameron did not plan for Brexit and May's Tories have no plan now.

Tories shambolic approach risks damage to the British economy, jobs and living standards. We cannot afford this.

- We want a guarantee of tariff free access to the single market.
- We want a guarantee protection of worker's rights and jobs.
- Along with the TUC we are asking for a seat around the table on negotiations.

Autumn Statement

The Autumn Statement was delivered on 23rd November by a new chancellor (Phillip Hammond) for a new Prime Minister in the midst of the political wreckage left by the referendum. However, the message was clear. A change in personnel is not a change in politics and this is a continuation of a failing government with failing economic policies.

The OBR forecasts the cost of Brexit will be £58.7bn over the next five years due to lower migration and weaker productivity.

While the chancellor announced reducing the taper rate at which universal credit is withdrawn, the banning of letting agents fees and an increase in the National Living Wage we believe that this falls short of what is needed.

While announcements on plans to invest on specific projects will benefit some local areas they do not address the substantial infrastructure investments that is needed to rebalance the economy and address major issues such as the housing.

We are heading for a major cost of living crisis with the cost of food set to rise while average earnings will fall. Departmental spending limits remain in place as does the public sector pay cap.

The Labour Party

Jeremy Corbyn was re-elected the Leader of the Labour Party on 24th September 2016. The result was clear. He increased his mandate. This result was a clear endorsement of the new course he has set for the Party, and also of Unite's position over the difficult summer months, that is that the Leader of the Party should only be changed by a vote of the membership, and not through parliamentary manoeuvres.

uniteNOW!

There appears to be an understanding in the PLP that there needs to be a period of calm and unity with the Labour Party being able to get on with the day job and a stepping back from introspection – which has been damaging internally in the party and also in the polls.

There continues to be speculation about whether there is to be an early general election and Labour need to concentrate on getting on an election footing to prepare for that.

Parliamentary Activity

Our relationships with the Labour Leadership and the Shadow Cabinet and Front Bench team have been further strengthened. We are working particularly closely with the Brexit team and the team responsible for Industrial Strategy under Clive Lewis.

Activity since the EC last met includes:

- Welcoming young reps from the energy sector in to Parliament for a day of political education, along with a tour, a trip to PMQs and Q&A events with MPs. At the end of the day, four of them joined the Labour Party as they were inspired by their day. We are looking at rolling this out to other sectors in the future.
 - Workplace 2020 is continuing and there have now been various events at branch and CLP level across the country. We are involved in feeding in our views to the project, which is now gaining ground.
 - We have been heavily involved in discussions with the Shadow Frontbench Exiting the European Union team and are working very closely together. Our General Secretary came to Parliament on 30th November to discuss Working people post-Brexit with the Unite Group of MPs.
 - We have been working closely with the Shadow Minister for Steel and been continuing to attend Steel Roundtables, chaired by John McDonnell MP and featuring the Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial, Clive Lewis MP as well as the Shadow Steel Minister, Gill Furniss MP, Labour members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Steel and the other steel unions. These have been a great success. Gill Furniss MP came as part of our delegation to the steel march in Brussels.
 - As Unite has a number of pensions disputes (the majority of which are centred on the closure of Final Salary Schemes), we have made a real focus on this by asking our MPs to submit questions to DWP questions. We also have a lobby of Parliament planned for our AWE workers who are currently in dispute and we arranged a meeting between Jeremy Corbyn and our Gatwick reps at South East Labour Party Regional Conference, to discuss their dispute. We are also looking at ways to take this forward in future.
 - In terms of legislation, we had a number of successes in the Lords on the Bus Services Bill and the Investigatory Powers Bill, which we were working closely with Diane Abbott's office on.
 - The announcement was made by the Government in support of Heathrow expansion. We worked closely with the Shadow Secretary of State, Andy McDonald MP, and his team on Labour's response to this. We have also had meetings with Labour and SNP MPs firming up support for Heathrow expansion.
-

uniteNOW!

- We have had meetings about our housing campaign with the Frontbench and how we can push our position in policy terms.
- We have had several meetings with Barry Gardiner MPs' teams with his International Trade brief providing research support for their policy position.
- On the Westminster Hall Debate on the Future of the Post Office – we provided briefings on this to ensure that points in our members' interest were raised in parliament.

Unite Regional Political Conferences

The Regional Labour Party Liaison Conferences (formerly known as Regional Political Conferences) are scheduled to take place in early 2017. Under Rule 22.5, we hold Regional Labour Party Liaison Conferences triennially. They are not policy making bodies but they do elect the Regional Labour Party Liaison Committee members and they are an opportunity for delegates to receive and discuss both a national and regional political report. Dates are being confirmed for the first quarter of 2017 at the time of writing.

Affiliated Supporters

Unite has over 105,000 Affiliated Supporters who signed up to take part in the recent leadership election. We have met with Labour Party to agree a series of processes to ensure that there are ongoing mechanisms for signing up Affiliated Supporters and collective affiliation.

Trade Union Act

The Certification Office has published its draft guidance and model rules in relation to Section 11 of the Trade Union Act 2016, which governs the Political Fund. The CO requested feedback about whether their rules exceeded the legal requirements of the Act.

The TUC and Unite have responded and whilst the guidance and model rules do not set requirements which are in excess of those provided for in the Act, we used this as an opportunity to press for a lengthy transition period which exceeds the year minimum guaranteed in the legislation.

Unite called for seeking a transition period to take into account our internal timetable of submitting the model rules to our next conference in June/July 2019. We argued that the costs and administration involved in organising a specific conference for rule changes would place a disproportionate burden on us and our activists, many of whom are facing reductions in facility time. It would also be a distraction from our core business and have a knock-on effect on other conferences and activities already planned in our 4 year cycle and we hope that the Certification Office will take this into account.

Wales

Wales is unique at present in being the only one of the UK's national legislatures that has a Labour Government in power. Unite, both nationally and in Wales helped to secure this through financial and logistical support.

uniteNOW!

While we remain the largest party in Wales we fell just short of a majority with 29 seats.

On 23rd June 52.5% of voters in Wales voted to leave the EU. 200,00 jobs in Wales depend on trade with the EU. Approximately 40% of exports go to the EU. Between 2014 and 2020 Wales qualified for almost £2 billion of EU structural funding.

The boundary review has a big impact on Wales. If the changes are agreed Wales would lose 11 of its 40 seats leaving it with 29 seats. This is the biggest proportional change across the UK.

There are concerns for the Ford Planet in Bridgend. Our reps and team in Wales are in discussion with Carwyn Jones AM and First Minister regarding the situation and have facilitated a visit.

The team in Wales have run “how to win a local government selection” course for members who are thinking of becoming Labour Party candidates.

Scotland

The Scottish Political landscape continues to be dominated by the SNP. There is an eye on the local elections in May 2017 and the Scottish Councils.

The team in Scotland continue to be active on a number of political and campaigning issues taking the industrial issues of our members and pushing these through in the political arena.

A report has been drafted on the possible impacts of Brexit on the Scottish economy. This report has been used to raise issues at Scottish Parliament’s Economy, Jobs and Fair Work Committee.

Renfrewshire Council has adopted the terms of the construction charter Unite drafted. Other councils are being encouraged to follow this lead. Strategies and campaigns are being run on manufacturing, human rights, an amnesty on local debt, blacklisting and bus reregulation.

Future Candidates Programme

The work of the Future Candidates Programme continues with its remit on addressing the very narrow social range from which MPs, including Labour MPs, have come to be drawn. A weekend course was held on the weekend of 25th-27th November. We will run another course in the first quarter of 2017.

A TULO course for Future Candidates is due to take place in March 2017 which we will be participating in.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Executive Summary:

With the exception of UNITE's actions in relation to Brexit which are dealt with in a separate report, the key factors to note since the last Executive Council meeting are:

- The US and wider labour movement has been rocked by the election victory of right wing populist Donald Trump. The deep seated fears for the rights of workers, ethnic minorities, women, disabled, etc., were clearly visible at the Workers Uniting Congress that took place in the week after the election in Washington;
- UNITE has continued to play its full role in the Global and European Federations and helped to shape their work, activities and focus, including in the recent IndustriALL Global Congress; the BWI delegation to Qatar for the signing of an agreement; the UNI Global Executive; and an ETUC EWC conference;
- Bilateral meetings and events have taken place with IG Metall in Germany, GPA in Austria, the TUNE European trade union group, visiting Chinese trade unionists and visiting Japanese trade unionists from Honda;
- UNITE and the USW focused upon three main themes at a very timely Workers Uniting Congress – Workers Uniting in the new political landscape; Workers Uniting and equalities – including black lives matter; Workers Uniting and trade. Excellent discussion and debates took place and motions on politics, equalities, education, member to member, and trade were passed to chart our way forward;
- EWC negotiations have proceeded and made progress in GE, Manpower, IAG, Facilicom, GKN, Hewlett Packard, and Caterpillar, while training has been provided for the SNBs of Westinghouse, SPX, and Princess Food. UNITE has also coordinated the position of the European Federations in relation to the review of the recast Directive;
- Solidarity work has continued to make a real difference in relation to the situation in Turkey and the struggle of the Kurds and civil society against the establishment of a dictatorship; to the BDS campaign against Hewlett Packard for its complicity in the Israeli occupation of Palestine; and in support of the Colombian peace process and against the growing wave of assassinations of social and political leaders.

Global and European Trade Union Federations

IndustriALL Global/IndustriALL-Europe (manufacturing sectors):

IndustriALL Global 2nd Congress (3-7 October 2016): UNITE affiliates to IndustriALL jointly with the USW as Workers Uniting. It is one of the most important of UNITE's affiliations to the Global Union Federations and therefore a significant UNITE delegation was put together, attempting to ensure a balance of sectors as well respecting IndustriALL's aims for gender balance within delegations and the involvement of young workers.

UNITE had been fully involved in the preparations of the key congress documents during

uniteNOW!

debates within the organisation that had lasted over a year. Five key priorities were set out for the organisation - Defend workers' rights; Build union power; Confront global capital; Fight precarious work; Promote sustainable industrial policy. UNITE worked hard to ensure a strong focus on organising was included as well as a commitment to the Charter of Solidarity.

UNITE delegates participated fully in the congress, speaking in debates, attending a number of side meetings as well as building bilateral links with sister unions. Overall there were nine different speakers, intervening in eleven debates. A full report is available from the International Department.

IndustriALL-Europe – Steel Action Day: A UNITE delegation participated in the Steel Action Day rally and demonstration in Brussels on 9 November. The event attracted 15,000 people despite terrible weather. The rally heard speeches from the ETUC, the President of IG Metall, the General Secretary of IndustriALL Europe and the Belgian affiliates who had helped organise the event. The event was held under the theme of 'No Europe Without Steel' and further details and pictures can be found via the following link to the IndustriALL Europe website. <http://www.industriall-europe.eu/news/list3.asp?stid=483>

UNI/UNI-Europa (private services & graphical sectors):

UNI World Congress 2018: UNITE is a member of the preparations committee for this congress taking place in June 2018. There is significant co-operation with Liverpool City Council in terms of the cultural impact of the congress and plans are being made for important work within the community and schools to ensure the visibility for this global union event within the City. Current estimates are for around 2500 participants and the UK affiliates will have a significant responsibility for ensuring the smooth running of the congress. The next meeting of this group in Spring 2017 will focus on the commitments UK affiliates will need to make in terms of stewarding, co-ordinating visa applications, and the logistical issues associated with an event of this size.

ITF/ETF (transport sectors)

ITF Executive: UNITE attended the ITF Executive Board in October 2016. Key to the discussions were trade agreements and the Executive issued a statement opposing the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA). The statement highlighted that transport unions were working for a fair and sustainable trade world where profits and opportunities are distributed equally and that TISA seriously undermines this objective. Also discussed was the National Express leverage strategy which the Teamsters union is developing with the Unite organising department. It is intended to use the UNITE inspired Charter for Principles to Combat Corporate Bad Behaviour to bring this overtly union busting multinational to account. Significant work is continuing with IndustriALL on the hubs organising project.

UNITE took part in the ITF International Action Week for Road Transport, with a photo call outside Central office. The week from 3-9 October saw unions and their members all over the globe coming together to take part under the slogan 'Transport workers fighting back!'

uniteNOW!

Organising globally! The week aimed to highlight important issues that affect road transport and railway workers and emphasise the importance of belonging to a union.

BWI/EFBWW (construction sector):

Qatar delegation (13-16 November): UNITE took part in a delegation to Qatar with the BWI. This delegation was organised as a result of discussions that began between the BWI and the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy (SC), the organisation responsible for delivering the infrastructure required for the 2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both parties was signed during the visit. It will see them conduct joint labour and accommodation inspections on World Cup projects in Qatar from January 2017, and will cover construction site and accommodation inspections, training and a review of the SC's current grievance mechanisms. The joint inspections will initially focus on projects that are being built by multinational companies that are headquartered in countries where BWI currently has representation. BWI will also review and assess the SC's current Workers' Welfare Forums - a mechanism developed to allow workers to express and resolve their grievances and other issues that are mandated by the SC as part of the Workers' Welfare Standards (WW Standards).

Solidarity Work

Turkey – solidarity with the Kurds and Turkish civil society: With the catastrophic developments in Turkey UNITE has continued to step up its solidarity work in relation to the Kurdish population and the wider civil society. Following pathbreaking fringe meetings and debates at the UNITE Policy Conference in July and UNITE's efforts to move the TUC emergency motion into a much stronger position, UNITE also organised the first ever Labour Party fringe meeting on the issue at the September conference. Speakers included Feleknaş Uca – HDP MP from Diyarbakir, and Rizgar Wan member of the Kurdish National Congress. The meeting was very well attended and preparations are already underway to repeat the exercise in 2017.

UNITE International Director travelled to Diyarbakir in October with Labour MP Kate Osamor to witness the trial of jailed Kurdish political leader Kamuran Yuksek. Kamuran was arrested two weeks after returning to Turkey from the UK after having taken part in a meeting in the UK parliament hosted by Kate Osamor and supported by UNITE and GMB. There was concern by UNITE that comments he has made during the meeting in the UK were being cited in evidence against him. The delegation were delighted that the trial collapsed during the first day. The delegation also met with representatives of the CHP, HDP, and the government AK party as well as members of trade unions and civil society.

Cuba: Following the significant progress made in recent times there is now concern that the election of Donald Trump with Republican Party majorities in both houses of Congress threatens to undo recent improvements in Cuba-US relations. Both Trump and Mike Pence specifically said days before the election that they would look to repeal Obama's executive

uniteNOW!

orders on Cuba. Republican majorities in both houses could strengthen hard line members of congress to influence anti-blockade legislation.

Palestine: UNITE South East and London and Eastern Regions sent a delegation to Palestine in early November. The visit was organised by Palestine Solidarity Campaign and the 12 delegates visited several areas including East Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley, Hebron and Tel Aviv. They met with both Israeli and Palestinian human rights and trade union organisations, such as the Coalition of Women for Peace (in Israel) and Kav LaOved (Workers Hotline). The group also met representatives of the National Boycott Committee (BNC) and with sister unions in the health and postal sectors.

A successful National Lobby of Parliament for Palestine took place in early November and saw hundreds of people visit the House of Commons to meet their MPs to raise the issue of illegal settlements, and to ask for a UK trade ban with the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land. Since the lobby several MPs have now raised this issue in the chamber and put pressure on the Government to take action.

The Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu was reported to be sending his army's bulldozers in at dawn on Tuesday 22nd November to demolish a Bedouin village in Israel. This demolition had been delayed for two years due to international protests at this extreme case of ethnic cleansing, but the go ahead was given for the village to be razed, destroying the homes and livelihoods of many families. PSC have launched an urgent campaign to support the community.

Colombia: Since the last meeting of the Executive Council the historic peace agreement that been reached between the Colombian government and FARC guerrilla forces was rejected by the Colombian people by the tiniest of margins in a referendum on the 2nd October. Since then a new agreement has been reached and it is hoped that this new deal will be implemented urgently by the Colombian government. The most worrying development recently has been the killing of several members of the Patriotic March and of two FARC guerillas after the second peace agreement had been reached. There are worrying echoes of the killings that accompanied the peace process in the 1980s and ended in a political genocide.

In relation to the spike in violence Workers Uniting sent a letter to President Santos, the Colombian National Attorney General and the Colombian Presidential Human Rights Office expressing its concern and at the violence suffered by members of the farmers' association, ASTRAZONAC which is an affiliate of our sister union FENSUAGRO. The letter expressed outrage at the attack on its member Esneider Gonzalez, and the murder of one of its embers, Jhon Jairo Rodriguez Torres. Workers Uniting asked for a progress report on investigations into the cases as well as a report on the protection provided to FENSUAGRO leaders and Esneider Gonzalez.

uniteNOW!

Venezuela: As part of ongoing negotiations, the Venezuelan government and the opposition MUD group have reached a 5-point agreement, which crucially includes working together to “combat sabotage, boycott and aggression against the Venezuelan economy.” It also commits both parties to respecting existing constitutional arrangements and endeavoring to eradicate violence from politics. President Maduro praised the agreement as good for the nation's "peace and prosperity," thanking the role played by Jose Rodriguez Zapatero, former president of Spain, Ernesto Samper, UNASUR President, Leonel Fernandez, former president of the Dominican Republic, Omar Torrijos, former president of Panama and Monsignor Claudio María Celli, the representative of Pope Francisco I at the dialogue.

These developments, however, take place in a context of great uncertainty created by the election of Donald Trump as US President and with Venezuela's hard right continuing to call for the unconstitutional overthrow of the elected, constitutional government. During his recent Presidential campaign, Donald Trump attacked Venezuela's progressive government, saying that he would "stand with the oppressed people of Venezuela yearning to be free".

Brexit Coordination Team Report

Introduction

It is clear that the process of leaving the European Union will be one of the most complex and difficult tasks that has ever been undertaken. If handled badly the implications for UNITE members and working people generally are potentially extremely negative with the possibility of massive job losses as well as the loss of hard won employment and workers' rights.

At the same time it is becoming increasingly clear that the government is devoid of any coherent plan and is nervous about even tabling a draft proposal for fear of the enormous rifts it may very well release within the government and the Tory party more generally. The position of the remaining 27 EU members seems to be hardening with a consensus around no concessions developing.

Against this background it is essential that all of UNITE's sectors and regions make their voices heard on behalf of our members, however it also is essential that this is done within a coherent overall framework. To this end the General Secretary took the decision to establish a UNITE Brexit Coordination Team to ensure an orderly approach to the issue across the entire union.

The team is coordinated by Director of International Simon Dubbins and is made up of the Directors of Politics, Research, Legal, Communications as well as the four Assistant General Secretaries. It has already met on a number of occasions and the below report gives a summary of activities to date.

uniteNOW!

UNITE approach to Brexit:

The basis of the UNITE approach was established in the Executive Council statement that was carried at the UNITE Policy Conference in July 2016. Although the policy and approach will clearly mutate and adapt as the circumstances change and develop, the Executive Council statement did identify the key issues at this stage, they were:

1. Defence of UNITE members' jobs which might be threatened by the UK leaving the EU;
2. Protection of employment rights that depend on legislation from the EU;
3. Opposing the racist backlash unleashed by the leave vote;

In addition to these three core issues the statement also made it clear that:

- There should be no rush to trigger Article 50;
- UNITE would oppose a Brexit that reduces trade union rights, excludes the UK from the Single Market and fails to deal fairly with the issue of free movement of labour;
- UNITE would support the people of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar in addressing specific issues given these countries and regions voted by a majority to remain;

The need for a full debate around the difficult issue of immigration was also part of the EC statement carried at Policy conference. In relation to this General Secretary Len McCluskey made a well-publicised intervention at a CLASS conference in which the need for trade union safeguards to prevent undercutting and exploitation of migrant labour was stressed as part of a new approach to immigration policy.

Political input:

On the political level UNITE has been working to communicate and push its position in relation to the government, devolved authorities, labour party, and sister unions and European federations.

With regard to parliament there are a whole array of committees and bodies that will be examining aspects of Brexit or the whole situation in its entirety and UNITE therefore needs to consider carefully which consultations to respond to in order to maximise impact while minimising resource implications.

So far UNITE has made formal submissions to the following:

- House of Lords Select Committee on Trade in Goods and Services following Brexit
- House of Commons Health Select Committee into the effect of Brexit
- Women and Equalities Commission

Meetings have been held on an on-going basis with the Shadow Brexit Minister Keir Starmer, as well as Shadow Foreign Secretary Emily Thornberry and Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell. The meetings have focused upon getting a clear understanding of what the

uniteNOW!

UNITE position is and discussing strategies to advance our aims and objectives in relation to Brexit.

One area that has emerged as particularly complex is that of the **triggering of Article 50**, with the party apparently now in the position of not wanting to oppose the triggering and just wanting to see a government plan, while UNITE's position was to argue against the triggering until certain guarantees and assurances have been received on our key areas.

Assuming Article 50 is triggered in accordance with the stated government intention, there will inevitably follow a very intense period of lobbying in order to make sure our concerns and demands are heard. In order to make sure activists are fully aware and mobilised towards our goals it is **intended to hold a series of regional seminars around May 2017**.

In order to ensure the best outcome from the Brexit process it is also **vital that UNITE utilises its extensive contacts with sister trade unions and other EU governments** who will have a key role to play in determining the nature of any final UK-EU agreement. A number of very high level meetings have already taken place and a comprehensive plan for future meetings is being compiled.

Industrial strategy:

It is essential that UNITE also engage with the Brexit process on an industrial basis and this is already underway including:

- Briefings to our reps in the various NISCs and Regional Committees are taking place and individual company developments are being monitored very closely;
- Compilation of advice document for reps flagging up key issues at stake and what issues to be aware of and question at company level – for example does the company have a Brexit strategy and if so what, to insist on being informed and consulted on plans, to be aware that many companies may seek to use the situation opportunistically, etc.;
- Development of coherent strategies for particular sectors and groups of sectors including meetings and engagements with employer's organisations, such as those in aerospace, auto, ceramics, and chemicals;
- Organisation of a conference for European Works Council reps in multinational companies for 10-11 February 2017. The conference will look at the broader issues surrounding Brexit as well as industrial strategies to deal with the developing situation, but will also focus on the critical task of aiming to ensure the continued membership of UK reps in established EWCs.

Documents and communications:

Communicating our message during the Brexit process will be of critical importance and a great deal of work has already been undertaken in this respect. The following documents have already been produced or are very close to being finalised:

uniteNOW!

- Brexit on our terms – UNITE strategy to defend manufacturing: jobs, investment and employment rights;
- Generic document on Brexit and the issues it raises with 2 pages reserved for sector specific details;
- Brexit Watch key terms document for EC members and reps;

In addition to this a new dedicated UNITE website to deal with all aspects of Brexit is under construction and will be launched early in 2017.

Conclusions:

- A good start in ensuring a coherent and organised UNITE approach to the Brexit process has already been made with the UNITE Brexit Coordination Team up and running and working towards this end.
- A set of explanatory leaflets and documents have already been produced and a new dedicated website will be up and running by the beginning of 2017;
- Extensive political lobbying at the UK and wider European level is already underway with UNITE's views and demands being properly fed in;
- An emphasis on an industrial focus to the Brexit process is also being developed with reps and regional officials set to have a key role in defending conditions and practices in the workplace;
- A series of concrete activities are planned including a conference for EWC reps and a series of regional conferences around May 2017.

EDUCATION REPORT

INTRODUCTION

As planned, we are mounting fewer courses but accrediting more students.

Last year - 2015, in the third quarter – 289 courses attracted 2873 students

This year - 2016 in the third quarter – 261 courses attracted 3342 students

Financially, in the light of debates in the Executive Council, this is on target. By fewer courses and more students, we are reducing unit costs but increasing the number of Unite reps benefitting from our courses. Added to the deliberate policy of reducing our residential courses, we have been able to increase the opportunities to learn locally in the regions and countries.

QUARTERLY STATISTICAL RETURNS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2016

REGION	Courses	Students	Teaching Days
East Midlands	16	130	615
Ireland	10	173	642
London & Eastern	55	535	2360
NE, Yorks & Humber	24	527	973
North West	39	630	1508
Scotland	20	223	830
South East	16	145	725
South West	24	308	1180
Wales	17	141	762
West Midlands	20	231	1155
Residential Courses	20	299	1401
TOTAL	261	3342	12151

COURSE DELIVERY

Unite's commitment to delivering courses recognises the different circumstances in which our reps find themselves. This is why there are various modes of delivery for Unite courses.

Unite Residential Courses are for those who simply cannot dovetail into our regional provision whether that is for geographical or domestic or other reasons.

Our normal practice for national residential courses, exclusively held in our View Hotel and Conference Centre in Eastbourne or Esher Place in Surrey, commence at 15.00 hrs on Monday and finish with a session on Action Plans at Noon on the Friday at Esher Place and 12.30 at Eastbourne.

Being residential courses, students are expected to participate in at least one evening session.

uniteNOW!

All Unite education courses are deliberately designed and delivered to achieve our Union's goals, often referred to as "Unite's Three Pillars":

- Organising
- Politics
- International Solidarity

And all are embedded in our commitment to equality. That means meeting the NEEDS of our activists; for that reason we have created an array of different ways (modes) of delivering our courses. In the Health Sector, for instance, we have experimented with half day sessions over a ten or even twenty week period – alternating morning and afternoon courses in order to relieve the burden of an accumulation of work waiting for our activist on her or his return to work. As reported in my last report we are conducting trials on electronic learning, distance learning and blended learning for our activists.

Though one concrete principle is that to educate "representatives" role and function, that learning has to be fact-to-face in a classroom within a collective. Pressures are currently being brought to bear – in the light of the withdrawal of funding for adult and skills education – to abandon classroom-based education for Unite reps. We have publicly resisted this retrogressive step; and we are working with the Learn with Unite team to seek alternative sources of funding in order to maintain our programme of trade union education courses.

Unite education is designed to support reps to win in their workplaces and their communities. Our provision is geared to meet the day-to-day and longer terms needs of the Union. Our Education provision is open and accessible to all in Unite, whether lay or employed, member, activist or representative. Our mainstream courses are all academically accredited. And all Unite courses are based on student-centred learning.

CENTRAL OFFICE DEPARTMENTS & ADMINISTRATION REPORT

ADMINISTRATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS FOR THE ELECTORAL PERIOD 2017 – 2020

We have written to branches and workplace representatives to invite statements for potential candidates for this election. The statements are being compiled and will be distributed with the nominations mailing to go out at the beginning of 2017.

The Council can also be advised that it is proposed that the ballot for the Young Members' constituency will be conducted among young members only, since it has proved possible to identify such members on the membership system.

uniteNOW!

NATIONAL EQUALITIES CONFERENCES 2017 NATIONAL YOUNG MEMBERS CONFERENCE 2017

Separate papers setting out the arrangements for the National Equalities Conferences and the National Young Members Conference including the distribution of delegates are being separated separately for your consideration.

NON-FUNCTIONAL BRANCHES

The administration has surveyed regions as to the state of branch organisation, and it has become apparent that there are a significant number of branches not meeting due to a lack of branch officers, secretaries in particular. It would seem that in some parts of the union, the situation has drifted.

A secretary in office is seen as essential to calling a branch meeting. There are other reasons why a branch may be deemed non-functional, for example, non-return of quarterly returns, but these do not necessarily prevent a branch from meeting and conducting business.

Under Rule 17 branch organisation is in the first instance a matter for the Regional Committees, therefore Regional Secretaries have been asked to draw up and implement an action plan, on a very urgent basis, to address the issue of branches without a branch secretary in their Region. Where there is no prospect of the situation being rectified soon, branches are being closed and their members' transferred directly to the most appropriate functioning branch. A further update will be provided to the Council in March.

CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The weeks since the last EC meeting have been busy for the Communications team as we provide more support to industrial officers' fight for better deals for our members.

The rash of attacks on pensions schemes saw us launch our campaign to 'stop the pensions robberies'; highlighting moves by Gatwick Airport Limited, BMW and AWE to dilute the benefits members have long contributed to.

The general secretary reacted to the shock failure of the Home Secretary to open an inquiry into events at Orgreave, and also set out a new vision for getting a better deal on migration for working people in his speech to the Class conference, wherein he called upon the government to let unions protect terms and conditions for all workers in the UK. The speech generated a great deal of reaction on the LabourList site, and has been picked up in statements by shadow business secretary Clive Lewis MP.

We also mobilised for the demonstration outside the Conservative conference with thousands of Unite members travelling to Birmingham to fight against never-ending austerity, and assisted the union in its support for Wear Red Day, with an article by Howard Beckett on challenging racism through football appearing on Labour List.

uniteNOW!

Since the last executive council Unite has been mentioned over 1,550 times and the general secretary over 320 times in online and print media. This compares with 746 mentions for the TUC, GMB's 670 mentions and Unison's 655.

In broadcast media Unite was mentioned 385 times on TV and radio and the general secretary 110 times. The total number of mentions for Unite and the general secretary across all media for the period was over 2,365.

Dominating the coverage for period was the Labour Party and TUC conferences, as well as Sports Direct, bank job losses and pension disputes. To have paid for advertising to generate a similar level of reach among the public would have costs the union £15.5 million over this period.

We have also been using the high levels of coverage to promote Unite to non-members, using Facebook to target people interested in, for example, Sports Direct to encourage them to join up. A small-scale targeted campaign over a few days reached over 72,000 people and saw hundreds sign up to our campaign for change at that company.

Unite's digital team also helped relaunch the TUC meeting for union staff working in digital communications with a presentation on the tricks and traps involved in using Twitter.

On Twitter, our most active day in last month was on 31 October with the union's criticism of the government's decision that there would be no inquiry into Orgreave decision which reached over 160,000 people. Our other top day on Twitter was the October 2nd march at Conservative conference, which reached 153,000 people followed by Wear Red day (117,000 reach).

Since 1 September, Unite has been seen on Twitter 6.5 million times but we are also getting more notable retweeters/likers; the author J K Rowling signalled her liking for our comments on the Bedroom Tax, for instance.

The union's main magazine, UniteWorks, continues to gain in readership with over 300,000 members opting in to receive it, and more and more non-members – younger and more female – are tuning into UniteLive.

We are now preparing the union's response to the Autumn statement and our communication of the government's announcements to members. Work continues on the digital front too with the large-scale task of relaunching the union's website now underway, and the development of a Brexit microsite in hand for launch early in the New Year.

We are also working with the Daily Mirror to launch the Christmas campaign to keep children warm and fed, encouraging people to help by donating to the Trussell Trust foodbank appeal, which is planned for early December.

Finance Report

The financial results for Unite in the 1st Three Quarters of 2016 are satisfactory and better than last year. More specifically, Total Income amounted to £126.3 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016, up £3.1 million versus the same period a year ago. Contribution Income increased by £4.2 million as the increase in membership subscriptions implemented 1st September 2015 and 1st September 2016 (Enhanced and Part-time) more than offset the loss of paying membership. However, as anticipated, due to the Jackson legislation, Legal Income has continued to fall, down £1.1 million (or 24%) year on year. A breakdown of Unite's Total Income in the 1st Nine Months of 2016 is as follows:

- Contribution Income excluding Driver Care	£120.5
- Driver Care	2.1
- Legal Income	3.7
- Affinity / Sundry Income	0.0
Total Income	£126.3

Total Recurring Expenditure totalled £105.8 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016 which was £2.3 million less than last year. This variance is more than accounted for by a £3.0 million decrease in Political Affiliations & Grants owing to the General Election and the subsequent Labour Party leadership contests in 2015. The costs of Other Affiliations, Grants & Donations are up by £700,000 versus last year while spending in other areas has fallen – the £1.3 million decline in Other Administration is worth noting. Employment Costs including Organising, were relatively stable year on year and amounted to 37.9% of Income on a year to date basis.

As a consequence, Unite recorded a surplus before Investment Income and Non-Recurring Items of £20.5 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016 – £5.4 million better than last year.

Investment Income amounted to only £0.6 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016 -- £1.5 million less than a year ago. Non-Recurring Items (excluding Pension Deficit Reduction payments) amounted to a net £3.9 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016. This was comprised of severance costs of £339,000 and the write-off of VAT on property purchase/refurbishment of £3.2 million.

Pension deficit recovery contributions totalled £9.3 million in the 1st Nine Months of 2016 – exactly the same compared with last year.

Taking everything into account, Unite posted an overall surplus of £7.9 million for the 1st Nine Months of 2016 – a result which was £3.4 million better than last year.

uniteNOW!

Liquid Assets

Unite's liquid assets totalled £127.6 million as at 30th September 2016, up £9.7 million from the end of June and up £22.7 million from year end 2015. The reason for the increase in the quarter was largely due to the jump in the global stock markets (and the decline in the pound) which led to a £7.3 million increase in the value of the Union's marketable securities. The Union's Cash balances also increased.

UCATT Pensions

I can report that the principles laid down by the EC in agreeing to the amalgamation of UCATT in the pension arena are being executed. Specifically, the General Secretary met with UCATT leadership to ensure they fully appreciated what had to be done and Alex Ryan, Unite's Pension Manager, and I met subsequently with the Trustees of the UCATT scheme and with UCATT leadership. The following timetable is agreed:

1. 6th December 2016 – UCATT EC meets to agree the closure of the scheme to future accrual as at 31st March 2017 (before the 1st June 2017 when pensionable pay is next re-evaluated under the UCATT scheme rules).
2. 7th December 2016 – UCATT management disclose the decision taken on the previous day to the UCATT Bargaining Groups and the all active members of the UCATT scheme.
3. 1st January 2017 – the three UCATT employer Trustees step down and are replaced by three members of the Unite EC (logically selected from those who are Trustees of the Unite Pension Scheme).
4. 31st March 2017 – future accrual in the UCATT scheme ceases and all active members become deferred members.
5. 1st April 2017 – otherwise eligible former UCATT employees join the Unite Pension Scheme.
6. 31 August 2017 – target date to merge the UCATT pension scheme into the Unite Pension Scheme (but this does not affect the deferred pensions of former UCATT employees).

LEGAL REPORT

1. Audit of Panel Solicitors' files

For the past 5 years the Unite Legal Department has been identifying cases to review from panel solicitors. The cases selected have been personal injury claims where the union has paid out (or are being asked to pay out) Defendant costs on lost and discontinued cases.

uniteNOW!

To date a sum of over £980,000 has been saved as a result of the audit process. An increase of £30,000 from last report.

Ongoing reviews are taking place to identify suitable cases for audit when requests are received for Defendant costs.

At present there are a number of unsuccessful cases from panel solicitors which Unite are reviewing and may be requesting repayment of Defendants costs. Within those cases, issues with the case handling have been identified. Failures on the part of solicitors on some cases appear to have led to Defendants costs ultimately being incurred.

A total sum of almost £130,000 claimed by panel firms is currently being investigated. Further repayments are likely and will be reported at the next EC.

Audits of employment files are continuing. These audits are unlikely to have a financial penalty for the firms concerned (other than in the most extreme of circumstances) but they will assess and improve standards throughout the regions. We intend to progress to reports as to the performance of panel firms.

2. Regional Audits

(a) General audits

With a view to assessing the standards of service provided by panel solicitors, arrangements have previously been made to visit various panel law firms. The visits have taken place at their offices.

A number of personal injury and employment files have been audited and discussions have taken place with the relevant heads of department to discuss the files and to explain what is expected of panel law firms.

In the last 4 years, 11 panel law firms have been audited. Following audits, various firms have subsequently left the Unite panel.

The previous audit process identified areas of concern in case handling and recommendations were being made to help improve the standards of service to members. The need to contact members as soon as possible to avoid cases being lost to 'no win no fee' lawyers was emphasised.

Unite's requirements for panel solicitors to attend branches, provide training to union officials and to support the Union on local/national campaigns was also highlighted.

In July 2016, Robert Lemon from the Unite Legal Department commenced a further audit process which will include all panel solicitors. The audit will review a mix of different types of personal injury claim to ensure high levels of service are being provided to members.

uniteNOW!

So far 4 panel firms have been audited. The audit reports are being prepared and the findings will be provided at the next EC.

(b) Asbestos, Serious Injury and Clinical Negligence Audit

In 2015 audits were arranged with panel firms in England and Wales to specifically assess the case handling of Serious Injury, Asbestos and Clinical Negligence cases which are of particular importance to Unite and its members. The audit of all 8 panel firms has been completed. A report has been prepared to outline the findings of the audit. The report has highlighted massive differences in the standard of service being provided to some of our most vulnerable members.

Meetings have been taking place with panel solicitors to discuss the findings in the audit. Panel firms have been providing further information requested from these meetings so further review can take place.

Strategic decisions need to be taken as to how personal injury work in respect of Asbestos, Serious Injury and Clinical Negligence cases should proceed going forward.

A Triage Branch is being developed and tested to identify certain personal injury case types when initial contact is made by the member. The Triage Branch will then be able to determine the appropriate panel law firm the member needs to be allocated to. The Branch is to be launched in January 2017.

Self Insurance Premiums

Unite has for many years received income in respect of self-insuring personal injury claims in England and Wales. The SIP payment would be recoverable on all personal injury claims (with a value of over £1,000) that were successful either via a negotiated settlement or at trial. The value of a SIP on an individual case would vary depending upon the case type and whether or not the claim was issued and allocated to a certain court track. On higher value multi track claims the value of an individual SIP to Unite could be substantial.

Unfortunately, given the changes that were brought in by the government in 2013, no SIP payment can be recovered by Unite on any personal injury claim that commences on or after 1 April 2013. For personal injury cases that commenced prior to that date, Unite has been able to recover a SIP in respect of the successful claims but inevitably that number is decreasing greatly each month. It will not be much longer before the income produced from the SIP payments will completely come to an end.

AFFILIATED SERVICES

Membership Programmes

Retired Member Plus

There are now 55,445 members in the programme which is an increase of 1,218 since the last report. This increase is largely attributable to the work that Hardy Evans has been doing which involves contacting 'Retired Free' members.

The RMP programme now generates subscription income of £1,441,570 per annum.

Back to Work

A total of 18,630 members are now participating in the Back to Work programme, an increase of 723 since the last report. This generates subscription income of £484,380 from these members.

Member gets Member

The scheme continues to grow with a total of 64,981 members joining Unite as a result. This is an increase of 6,056 since the last report. Over 46,000 cards have now been sent out. The majority of members joining via the scheme are paying the full-time rate and the table below shows a breakdown by membership category where a shopping card has been sent out.

In respect of the cards that have been sent out (i.e. the new member has paid more than 3 months of subscriptions), the scheme is generating over £8.2m of subscriptions going forwards.

Drivercare

The new Drivercare product was launched in the summer and features a number of new benefits including Wage Support Payment cover. Currently 56,282 members have Drivercare. The combined membership of the RTC and Passenger Transport sectors stands at 167,988 and a substantial number of these members could have Drivercare. We are therefore trying to raise awareness of the new improved product and Hardy Evans has recently commenced an outbound telemarketing campaign to help achieve this. This activity is supported by a specially developed portal that enables Hardy Evans to enrol members into the Drivercare scheme.

It is early days, but so far 789 packs have been sent out and 56 of these have been returned to the Drivercare administration department. We aim to continue this activity in 2017.

As part of the new Drivercare product, we are able to offer members a D4 medical at a fixed price of £35. So far we have received 29 enquiries for this and 12 appointments have been confirmed.

uniteNOW!

Unite Prepaid Debit Card & Unite Rewards

A total of 3,078 cards have now been issued - an increase of 232 since the last report.

The Unite Rewards website now has 15,234 registered users - an increase of 1,231 since the last report.

Earlier this year Unity Trust Bank withdrew their Prepaid debit card which was being used by a large number of Unite branches. We are now in a position to provide the Unite Prepaid Visa card as an alternative. The card does have charges attached to it but we have negotiated a free £10 initial load for branch cards to help with these.

Financial Advice

So far this year a total of 332 surgeries/seminars have been conducted (an increase of 45 since the last report) and these have involved 4,963 members. In addition 1,943 face to face meetings have taken place where members have taken advantage of the free financial review. Year to date, this activity has generated £67,555 for Unite.