

## **ADMINISTRATION & MEMBERSHIP SERVICES**

### **NO MORE “GOLDEN GOODBYES”**

Conference notes that in July 2011 the General Secretary issued a statement concerning Derek’s Simpson Severance payment of £361,000, stating ‘there will be no repetition of such inappropriate payments in the future’.

But lay activists and members require more than ‘good intent’. Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to govern this great union in such a way as to prevent this malpractice, hypocrisy and deceit, and to put in place standard and transparent severance provisions applicable to all employees of the union, up to and including the General Secretary. The contents of those provisions will clearly state:

- No ex-gratis payments will be made to any employee up to and including the General Secretary over and above the standard severance terms;
- No severance terms to be available for ‘known leavers’ - i.e. those staff / officers giving notice of retirement or resignation up to and including the General Secretary.
- ‘Known leavers’ information to be provided to the Executive Council on a quarterly basis;
- The Executive Council to monitor severance packages on a quarterly basis in line with the Executive Council budgetary process.
- No employee of the union up to and including the General Secretary, after receiving a severance package, will be employed on a ‘consultative’ basis unless approved by the Executive Council;
- All ‘Compromise Agreements’ are to be negotiated within agreed guidelines produced by the Executive Council. In addition a sub-committee of the Executive Council (recognising the confidentiality of such agreements and data protection) shall oversee and regulate all compromise agreements before payment to ensure they are within the agreed guidelines.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to implement the points above as soon as possible and no later than October 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.

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**Aerospace & Shipbuilding NISC**

### **INAPPROPRIATE SEVERANCE PAYMENTS**

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There should be no repetition, we need to bury that's happened in the past by having a policy and procedure put in place for the future.

**CPPT RISC – East Midlands**

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**Liverpool NW 225**

### **UNITE FINANCES & OFFICER/STAFF PENSIONS**

Conference notes that the Executive Council is responsible for the governance and financial management of the union, and has a duty to ensure we leave a viable union for future generations to continue the fight for better working conditions and a better society. We must not forget we are only 'caretakers' not owners of this great union, and as in any democracy the greater good of the collective must take precedence and survival of the union is absolutely paramount.

Conference is therefore extremely concerned at the burden the officers' and staff pension schemes are placing on the union's finances. The union's finances must be protected and must not be squandered by the funding of large and avaricious severance payments and over generous pensions 'packages' for the few.

However, increasing membership contributions and selling our more prized assets to address the pension shortfall is unsustainable and unacceptable.

Therefore, conference calls on the Executive Council to take action to protect the unions' finances and assets by reviewing pension benefits which may benefit some employees more than others with a view to achieving a single, viable and affordable pension scheme going forward for existing employees of the union - up to and including the General Secretary – as well as future employees.

### **ELECTRICAL, ELECTRONICS AND ENGINEERING NISC**

#### **INDUSTRIAL REPRESENTATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

This conference believes that the current practice of some Regions of allocation of work to regional industrial officers only on the basis of strict geographical areas is not conducive to a coordinated industrial strategy.

This conference believes that Regions must take into account, as per Rule 7.2, industrial servicing to the membership on the basis of sectors and within reason allocate work to regional industrial officers on the basis of industrial sector as well as geographical areas, but in any event, any regional industrial officer must have a responsibility to give written industrial reports to the appropriate Regional Industrial Sector Committee at the appropriate RISC meetings. This conference believes this is the only way there will be industrial accountability from regional officers who service those sectors.

This conference believes that such a policy will serve to add more cohesion to the overall industrial strategy of Unite and will have the additional benefit of giving regional officers more knowledge of the specific sectors they service. It will also empower the RISCs to take a more pro-active approach in the specific interests and aspirations of its members giving more momentum to the 100%

campaign and to its fundamental duty to serve the best interest of its members at every level of the Union.

**GPM NISC**

### **ADDRESSING THE NEGATIVE RIGHT WING MEDIA IMAGE OF UNITE**

This Conference should commit Unite the Union to run a publicity campaign in the media in conjunction with the 'Ten good reasons to join Unite' poster campaign.

The union has now come under attack from 'ambulance chasing solicitors' who are after industrial accident claims and their attempts to provide bogus union officials to represent non-union members at disciplinary and grievance hearings.

The non-union members of the public in general need to know that the union can represent them on these matters and others if they join the union.

We need to convince the public that the unions do not have a policy of causing industrial action, which is how the press portrays us. The public's perception of the union movement will not change unless we preach the word.

**Servicing and General Industries RISC – East Midland**

### **OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

Unite the Union often works with a diverse range of partners from outside agencies such as firms of Solicitors as our legal partners.

Conference seeks to ensure that whenever Unite the Union enters into a formal arrangement with an outside agency or, conversely, decides to end a formal arrangement with an outside agency that decision will not be the sole responsibility of the General Secretary or Regional Secretary but only after consultation and approval of the Executive Council or Regional Committee as appropriate.

We are, after all, a lay member democracy and it is only right that the lay constitutional committees have the final approval and no employee of the Union, whatever their status should be able to take that decision unilaterally.

**East Midlands Regional Committee**

### **UPDATING OF CONTACT DETAILS**

“This Conference calls on the Executive Council that all branches under the new Unite Structure must be informed of changes within the union, at the earliest possible date following a known decision. Even where the date of implementation has not occurred, and that such notification of changes to the reporting structure, following restructuring and reorganisation of branches; retirements, long-term sickness, changes of placements, branch allocations and/or re-allocations, redeployment of union officials within Unite, or any other changes that may impact on the reporting of issues, or facilitating the ability of paying members, to report to the relevant Unite Officials at Regional District Offices.

We further call upon the Executive Council as part of this motion that names and contact details are issued to enable the relevant Regional Industrial Sector Committees and Branch Secretaries to ensure suitable dissemination of information to unite members who may require it”.

### **Servicing and General Industries RISC – London & Eastern**

#### **OWNERSHIP OF MOTIONS**

This conference calls upon the NEC to develop a robust process, to track a motion which is agreed as Unite policy at either Regional, National Executive or Policy/Sector Conferences.

From the point of acceptance into Unite policy a designated Full Time Officer or member of Staff should be appointed as motion holder. The motion holder should, progress the aims of the motion and provide regular feedback to the NEC, relevant NISC and Regional Committees, on the progress.

### **Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Textiles & Process RISC – NEY&H**

#### **MEMBERSHIP OVERHAUL**

This Regional Industrial Sector Committee calls on the Executive Council to demand a complete overhaul of the Membership system. Retaining members is difficult enough without members being allocated at random to Sectors that bear no relation to their workplace or profession. It is not acceptable that just because you work in a specific industry you are automatically put into the sector of that industry. We must maintain our identity no matter what Sector we are in and we must not be swallowed up by the large Industrial Sectors or we will end up losing more members.

### **VBA RISC – Scotland**

#### **EDUCATION**

Conference recognises the fundamental importance of education for all its’ activists, representatives and members. In today’s society many of our members’ political views and opinions are influenced and shaped by a media and a press, which is predominantly right-wing, biased and has its own political agenda.

Educational courses provide the best opportunity for UNITE to counteract this rhetoric and to educate and politicise our members with an alternative political perspective. This alternative perspective can fire the enthusiasm of our members as reps and activists in the workplace and wider society.

In order to ensure that UNITE maximises this opportunity it is imperative that a consistent message is delivered in all its courses, and for this a more coherent set of materials needs to be developed. Conference recognises the requirement to ensure that training materials should continue to reflect core areas such as Shop Stewards training, Equalities, Pensions, Health & Safety, etc., but Conference also believes that courses should also include a more dynamic and strategic element which focuses on politics, ideologies, economics and the core policies and objectives of UNITE.

Conference also notes with concern the increased use of outside organisations and tutors to deliver education to its members. While these organisations and tutors may be appropriate training providers in certain circumstances, it is imperative that we also have a dedicated in-house team of

tutors who have a greater understanding and knowledge of the fundamental principles and policy areas of the union.

While conference recognises the financial implications of the use of in-house tutors, conference also believes there is a fundamental need to develop a more dynamic, vibrant and effective educational strategy that can revitalise the political outlook of our membership.

Therefore conference calls for UNITE Executive to:

- Re-evaluate its current education programmes and ensure that these programmes are streamlined and updated to reflect the main aims and objectives of the union;
- Develop generic materials for all courses to ensure a consistent and coherent message is delivered to all UNITE representatives;
- Re-evaluate its use of tutors and ensure that a healthy balance is developed between the use of 'in-house' and external tutors;
- Ensure that all 'in-house' and external tutors are evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they are sufficiently competent and capable.

#### **Local Authorities RISC – South East**

#### **MEMBER EDUCATION**

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Conference therefore calls on the Executive to support and encourage four weekend schools a year in all regions that have the sole purpose of raising social and political awareness.

#### **NW 764 BRANCH**

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**Wales/Chesapeake Wrexham**

### **AFFINITY PARTNERSHIPS**

This conference agrees that the provision of membership benefits and Unite affinity services should be sourced through companies and employers that recognise for the purposes of collective bargaining, a TUC affiliated Trade Union.

Through the provision of affinity benefits, Unite members should be supporting and supported by trade union members in other employers and sectors safeguarding trade union jobs.

The Union's Executive Council is instructed to formulate a policy that:

1. Requires existing providers have a current recognition and procedural agreement with a TUC affiliated Trade Union.
2. Ensures that any existing providers that do not have a Trade Union recognition and procedural agreement with a TUC affiliated Trade Union are approached with a view to developing a recognition and procedural agreement. Failure of the provider to agree within a reasonable timescale would result in notice being provided to end the affinity partnership.
3. Ensures that all new and prospective providers have a current recognition and procedural agreement with a TUC affiliated Trade Union.

The policy should be formulated by the end of 2012 and implemented in 2013 whilst recognising that some affinity relationships will be subject to an existing contract.

## **Finance & Legal RISC – South West**

### **GOLD BADGE AWARD**

This conference believes that the current criteria for the awarding of merit badges to members, particularly the Gold Badge is in need of adjustment. Currently a member must show particular merit in service on behalf of the union in both Representative and Political areas. We believe that if a member has shown long and distinguished service on behalf of members in either category they should be considered accordingly and not barred from consideration. Furthermore this conference believes that constitutional committees should be able to recommend not only the recipient but the level of merit award.

## **Passenger RISC – South West**

### **DEDICATED LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS**

That given the specialist nature of Local Government Employers, i.e. the finances, democratic/cabinet structures, legislation surrounding the operation of Local Government etc, it is unrealistic that all servicing Officers of Local Government will have the depth of knowledge required due to their cross sector composite responsibilities, and therefore, similar to Unison and the GMB, Unite should provide, in Regions were the Local Government RISC request it, a dedicated Officers servicing Local Authorities to ensure a 'joined up' regional approach to employment issues, organisational and recruitment issues and various community campaigns across all Local Councils in the Region. This should be organised in the Region from the existing Officer core to ensure it remains cost neutral.

## **West Midlands Local Authorities RISC**

### **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE ADVICE ON MOTIONS EFFECTS.**

This Conference calls on the Unite Executive Council to ensure that at future Rules Conferences the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) will give consideration to the consequential effects of rule change motions and provide advice to Delegates on which motions will fall as a result of earlier motions being carried or defeated. Advice of this nature should also be supplied in relation to motions and amendments submitted to policy conference.

## **Motor Components RISC - West Midlands**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

This Conference should ensure going forward that all Motions or Remits, proposed by lay members through the structures of Unite, may not be composited or composited out without full and proper consultation with lay members responsible for the Motion or Remit, no matter what body or organisation they are intended for.

## **RTC Logistics & Retail Distribution RISC – North West**

### **ACCOUNTABILITY OF FULL TIME OFFICERS**



The Lancashire Area Activist Committee recognise the dedication of the many Full Time Officers who spend considerable time and effort to represent members of Unite in their time of need and do so to the best of their ability.

This Committee are also concerned that there are some Full Time Officers who are not giving members the service that members rightfully expect from their Trade Union, UNITE, and this has a damaging impact on the retention and recruitment of members.

The Lancashire Area Activist Committee proposes that to improve the effectiveness of Full Time Officers that a Policy of assessment is adopted throughout Unite. This Committee proposes that a pro forma that would identify an Officers effectiveness, punctuality in dealing with an issue, etc. should be left with a member/branch or stewards committee when an Officer has represented/supported a member or members.

This would provide constructive feedback to Officers and assist them in representing members more effectively.

This Committee also believes that there would be much positive feedback, with Officers getting the “written” thanks that they deserve.

The Lancashire Area Activist Committee expects that these Assessment forms would not just be viewed by the Regional Secretary but also by the Regional Committee where requested.

#### **LANCASHIRE AREA ACTIVISTS COMMITTEE**

#### **SERVICING OF MEMBERS**

This conference believes that according to the union rule book there is nothing in place that furthers the servicing of members in cases of long term sickness of union staff. (i was aware of the government, making cuts but not my union).

This causes problems within the various union equalities committees and our experience this committee in particular by not having a full time officer, or officers in place to provide the services, support and advice we require, when it's needed by the members & equality reps. This causes a negative image and breakdown within the union's equalities committees.

We are asking unite to put in a panel to manage these circumstances when the union has been made aware of long-term sickness or absence. Just replacing an officer for say one day meeting is not good enough and better more in depth planning is essential if we're to provide the kind of continuous service our members and activists needs.

Please, please support this motion.

#### **Disabled Members' Committee – North West**

#### **UNITE CONFERENCE PREPARATION TRAINING**

This Conference believes that attending Conferences builds capacity in our Lay Representatives, involving them in the Legislative and Constitutional debates that make Unite function.

New Representatives are given the opportunity to attend and experience these Conferences, however sometimes they are left feeling like passengers unable to influence because they have not had the training that would help them to:-

- Write Effective Motions.
- Move or Second Motions.
- Speak on Motions.
- Understand Standing Orders.
- Interpret Citrine.

Conference asks the Executive Council and the Education Department to develop a training package for Conference Attendance and Participation before the end of 2012.

### **Rolls Royce Nuclear Power Branch**

#### **FUTURE MERGERS**

Conference recognises that the history of UNITE is one of a series of mergers that culminated in the merger of Amicus and the T&G in May 2007 to create this great organisation. Despite the initial integration difficulties UNITE has emerged a strong, united and progressive union that is at the forefront of the UK and Irish labour movements.

Future mergers or transfers of engagements, along with the organising campaign, constitute our unions' 'Strategy for Growth' that is aimed at creating a UNITE with the necessary size, resources, and power to effectively represent and fight for our members interests.

While future mergers or transfers of engagement may be essential and must never be ruled out, with the current difficult financial situation UNITE faces, it is essential that future mergers or transfers of engagements do not further jeopardise the union's financial stability.

Conference therefore calls on the UNITE Executive to;

- Ensure any future mergers or transfers of engagement do not damage the financial stability of UNITE;
- Establish a sub-committee of the Executive Council charged only with examining and reporting back on the financial liabilities of any future mergers or transfers of engagements, should such possibilities arise;
- Ensure that the report to the full Executive should give particular, though not exclusive, attention to the pension's liabilities of any potential merger or transfer of engagements partner;
- Ensure that any future merger or transfer of engagements does not include a period of Joint General Secretaries;
- Ensure that in any future merger or transfer of engagements the incoming partner conform to the newly established UNITE pay structure

### **EM/Rolls Royce Derby No 2 Branch**

#### **ETHICAL SUPPLIERS**

This conference calls for Unite the Union to ethically source "Promotional Identity Products" that take into consideration human and environmental issues. To use workplaces that meet international conventions on worker's rights verified by free trade unions and to only deal with similarly responsible suppliers.

These products are used to advertise ourselves and hopefully leave a lasting impression on those who see or use them. It is how others will recognise and remember us so it is important that they view us as not only opposing but refusing to use unsustainable or sweatshop garments and merchandise.

We also call upon Unite the Union to recognise and source all its supplies from organised workplaces.

We further call for transparency and accountability to our members as to the source of all products used in the promotion of or use within Unite the Union. That a list of all suppliers engaged by Unite the Union to be kept and made available to its members on request.

**LE/GPM East of England Branch**

### **TRADES COUNCILS**

This Conference believes that Unite should play a leading role in ensuring that the whole of Britain and Ireland is represented by active Trades Councils.

To this end all Unite branches should affiliate to appropriate Trades Councils.

In areas where there are no Trades Councils, Unite should take the initiative in setting them up.

**LE/Clerkenwell & St Pancras Branch**

### **TRADE IDENTITY ON ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION UNION CARDS**

This Conference calls upon UNITE THE UNION in the Construction and Engineering Construction sectors to reserve space on members' cards to display their individual trades EG. Pipefitter, Mechanical Fitter, Electrician, Plumber, Erector, Rigger, Scaffolder.

The last few years have seen the craftsmen from the skilled trade unions, now subsumed into UNITE, lose their identity within our organisation which causes them great concern. The "cowboy" element is now able to walk onto sites and claim to be most of the above trades. This situation can and has undermined our skilled members' terms and conditions, safety systems and also our union.

If this issue needs to be referred to an industry sector conference and/or the National Executive Committee we respectfully move that it is done in the course of 2012.

**NEYH/Hartlepool No. 2 1907**

### **IMPROVED USE OF IT**

This Conference notes that our current use of IT requires significant improvements to enable efficient and effective communication with members and potential members.

This Conference calls upon the Executive Council to work with the IT and Communications departments to implement the following changes:

- Improve the external website significantly, keep it regularly updated, remove out of date materials and update the materials and advice available to representatives. Improve the

search engine on the site, in order for it to search for relevant, up to date information. Carry out maintenance regularly on the 'My Unite' area so that it is accessible more often than it is down. Within this area, allow representatives to register the positions they hold, this will further improve communications within the union as a whole.

- More frequent and relevant use of Twitter. Use at the moment is sporadic and generally tends to consist of links to press releases; better use could be made of this social network. When @unitetheunion is tweeted with questions, responses could be tweeted, important tweets from others should be retweeted to followers, details of when NISC and RISC meetings being held could also be tweeted to raise awareness of the lay structures of the union and encourage participation.
- Introduce the use of smart phone apps. An app could be developed to let members know what is happening in their region and/or their sector, update users on the most recent news from Unite, policies could be uploaded and also the rule book. Further functions could be added and updated at later dates.
- Representatives should have access to Unite email addresses in order to communicate with members. This would ensure confidentiality when communicating with members as employers have access to emails sent from their network and, in some cases, emails sent to members may be subject to Freedom of Information requests. Use of hotmail and yahoo etc are not considered to be secure enough to send confidential emails to members. Email messages should be sent from a Unite email address and be marked 'Personal'.

**NEYH/Big Lottery Branch**

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

To improve communication between members using twitter and facebook type sites, through the Unite website, will give members chance to communicate with each other. It should have access to offices and officers to avoid the queuing when phoning when contact the offices/officers.

This is what young people do. Could "I have a grievance" on google be put through to the Union website, therefore attracting new members. The costs would be minimal especially if advertising were found for this website.

**SE-1274 Branch**

## **LAY DEMOCRACY**

This conference recognises that a modern Trade Union needs to be properly serviced by skilled and specialist administrators as well as committed and strongly motivated Full time officer force.

However it is also important that the democratic structures are robust and accessible to the lay membership. So that staff and officers at all levels operate with a clear understanding and acceptance that the union and its policies are determined by and are the exclusive property of the lay membership.

As a result of a series of mergers over the years and the consequential embedding of many different interests and structures, conference believes it is time to review our democratic practises

to ensure the principles of lay democracy are improved. Conference believes the following principles should be constructively but critically examined.

1. Branches should remain the bedrock of union democracy, embedded in the community and linked to community interests, as well as that of the union. Where workplace branches are appropriate, the same principle of engaging with the community should be encouraged.
2. A clear and unambiguous line of accountability for all Full Time Officers. Lay member committees should be efficiently serviced by named officials.
3. Regional Secretaries should have clear and defined duties servicing the Regional Council and also providing support for all committees on the regional council, either directly or through a nominated deputy.
4. Conference believes the practise of bigger multi- officiated offices has proven over the years, not to have served the best interest of the members. Members constantly complain that officials are remote and not assessable Officers operate more effectively when integrated into local communities; when connected with local social and political structures. Conference calls on the Executive to re-examine the policy of multi-manning and consider the re-establishment of local offices, placing our union firmly back into the community.
5. Conference instructs the Executive to fight vigorously to protect lay member rights from Tory intervention.

#### **NW/BAMBER BRIDGE AND LEYLAND BRANCH**

#### **FAILURE OF OFFICERS OF THIS UNION TO SUPPORT ITS MEMBERS**

This Branch has no confidence in its previous two Full Time Officers's who have had responsibility for our members who work for Electricity North West Limited (ENWL) formally United Utilities plc. On many occasions we have asked for support, representation and assistance all to no avail which has resulted, in desperation, of the ENWL Shop Stewards writing to the General Secretary giving a damning report and examples of the Officials negligence (copy enclosed). As a consequence we need a full investigation of why this is the case and why nothing has been done to resolve these most serious accusations on behalf of our electricity supply members. We also call upon the Executive Council to contact the Branch with a view of trying to solve this matter with some urgency.

**NW/Manchester Cable 0603**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

This conference needs to reiterate/support issues surrounding membership problems. Branches need to be kept more up to date by the membership department and informed regularly on any changes to their lists.

This is urgently needed so that Branches can make more of a proactive effort to retain members. This would also be beneficial when doing recruitment campaigns and when voting is required. This would in effect benefit the union as a whole and keep member numbers.

**Aegon UKS NW24 Branch**

## **UNITE THE UNION EMPLOYEES PAY DEDUCTIONS**

This Conference believes that all Unite the Union staff should pay usual PAYE tax and national insurance contributions. The Union should not use tax/NI loopholes, such as salary sacrifice scheme, to replenish the unions pension or any other deficits.

The Union should not deprive the treasury of much needed funds for NHS and all other services that working people rely on. We call on Unite the Union to find other ways to close the pension deficit without taking funds from the treasury.

**NW/Liverpool Construction 0541 Branch**

## **CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATION**

This Conference notes that the EC issues guidance on dates for receipt of motions and amendments. Sometimes these are received late by the Lay Committees who do not then have adequate time to submit responses. This conference calls on the EC to issue a rolling 6 year timetable that lays out administration dates for all Unite Conferences as a matter of urgency and no later than 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012.

**Chesapeake Healthcare Packaging**

## **RMA RIGHT TO SPEAK ON PENSION DEBATE**

This conference accepts that the retirement members association (RMA) as a constitutional section of Unite the Union, be given the democratic right to attend and express their opinion in the pension debate specifically on the policy determined by the Unite Biennial Conference on the basic state pension. The RMA being the current part of the union membership living on a fixed income determined by Government Pension Policy.

**WM/5/910 Branch**