

## UNITE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL REPORT – March 2017

### 3.1 December EC 2016 minutes

Agreed.

### 4.1 F&GP January minutes

Agreed

### 4.2 F&GP February minutes

Agreed

### 5A GS Report

The GS only attended the Executive Council for this part of the agenda, as Gail Cartmail is presently Acting GS. Len's activities since the last EC are outlined below, he specifically highlighted the following;

- Recent London NHS rally. Over 250,000 in attendance.
- Pension issues at Atomic, Gatwick and British Airways
- Mixed Fleet issue at BA.
- UCATT induction, Pay and Pensions.
- There will be an Automotive conference on the 25th March with over 250 stewards invited to discuss all the present Automotive issues.

### Activities of the General Secretary for the period since the Executive Council meeting of December 2016 Public Meetings and General Events

- Cuba Solidarity Campaign Cuban Art Exhibition at the Gherkin in London with Cuban Ambassador HE Teresita Vicente.
- Speaker at Show Racism the Red Card 20th Anniversary celebration event at the Speakers Residence, Houses of Parliament.
- Speaker at Mental Health Seminar for Unite reps, Holborn Diskus.

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- Speaker at Room Dedication at Unite Offices in Moreland Street, in honour of Hebert Marin, former TGWU activist.
- Speaker at Unite Hubs Meetings, Liverpool.
- Speaker at Unite Brexit Conference, Liverpool. • Speaker at Unite European Works Council Conference, Esher.
- Speaker, at Rally to Save Glenfield Children's Heart Unit, Leicester. Political, International & Inter-Trade Union Matters
- Lobby of Parliament on AWL Pensions' Dispute.
- TUC General Council and TUC Executive meetings.
- TULO Contact Group meetings.
- Various meetings on Workplace 2020.
- Meeting with Diana Holland, AGS, to discuss ETF.
- Meeting with Keir Starmer MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.
- Meeting with Frances O'Grady, TUC General Secretary, to discuss contributions.
- Meeting with Lord David Owen.
- Meeting with Tim Roache, GMB General Secretary, and Dave Hulse, GMB National Officer.
- Meeting with Hilary Benn MP, Chair of the Exiting the European Union Parliamentary Select Committee, to discuss Unite's priorities on Brexit.
- Meeting with Professor David Bailey, Aston University, to discuss electrification in the automotive industry.

## Administrative & Organisational Issues

- Various meetings with Andrew Murray, Chief of Staff
- Quarterly meeting of Management and Regional Secretaries.
- Various meetings with Assistant General Secretaries and Directors.
- Meeting with Ed Sabisky, Executive Director, and Andrew Murray, Chief of Staff, to discuss UCATT Pay and Pensions.

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- Meeting with senior staff on developing the union's digital communications.
- Meeting of all National Officers and Assistant General Secretaries, Esher.
- Various meetings to discuss Birmingham Project.
- Meetings with Ed Sabisky, Executive Director, and Barbara Kielim, Head of Human Resources, and Unite Staff, Officer and Organiser reps in pay talks.
- Attended UCATT Induction & Integration meeting, Esher.
- Meeting with Harish Patel, National Officer, to discuss BAEM Officers. Constitutional Committees & Industrial Matters
- One to one meetings with a number of National Officers to discuss ongoing industrial matters.
- General Meeting with all Assistant General Secretaries to discuss industrial matters.
- Meeting with Martin Gwynn, Chief Executive, GIST.
- Meeting Dr. Karl-Thomas Neumann, Chairman of The Management Board of Opel Group, with John Cooper, EC Member, in Frankfurt.
- Various meetings with Oliver Richardson, National Officer, on British Airways.
- Meeting with Gatwick Airport Limited shop stewards and Gatwick Liaison Committee.
- Led ACAS Meetings on British Airways dispute in the lead up to Christmas.
- Meeting at Gatwick Airport Limited regarding pensions.
- Joined AWE picket lines in Aldermaston and Burghfield.
- Joined British Airways Mixed Fleet picket line Heathrow Airport.
- Speaking at South West Regional Committee to discuss industrial and political issues around Brexit.
- Speaking at London and Eastern Regional Committee to discuss industrial and political issues around Brexit.
- Speaking at South East Regional Committee to discuss industrial and political issues around Brexit.
- Meeting with Jim Farley, Ford Europe CEO and Chairman, and Ford Europe senior management committee, with Tony Burke AGS, and Roger Maddison, National Officer.
- Meeting with senior reps at Ford Bridgend to discuss industrial matters arising from meeting with Ford management.

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- Speaking at NEYH Regional Committee to discuss industrial and political issues around Brexit.
- Meeting with John Holland-Kaye, Chief Executive Officer, and Paula Stannett, HR Director, Heathrow Airport Holdings Limited.
- Mass meetings at Ford Bridgend.
- Speaker at London Buses conference.
- Meeting with Cowleyshop stewards and company Senior Vice-president Corporate HR, Hubert Schurkus.
- Meeting with Greg Clarke MP, BEIS Secretary of State, to discuss Vauxhall plants.
- Meeting with Dan Ammann, General Motors.
- Meeting with Carlos Tavaras, PSA Chief Executive Officer.
- Meeting with Frank Morris, Executive Council, with Billy Spiers and Jimmy Ryan, on Construction matters.
- Meeting with Vauxhall shop stewards from Ellesmere Port, Luton and Taddington. Principal Media Appearances
- Since the last Executive Council the general secretary was mentioned 620 times in online and print media and over 630 times in broadcast media. Dominating the media coverage was the British Airways mixed fleet cabin dispute, Swissport, steel, banking job losses, Vauxhall in addition to internal elections.
- Interviewed for Jack Jones documentary film.
- Interviewed for London Recruits documentary film.
- BBC News and Sky News Interviews on British Airways dispute, December 2016.
- Interview with Jason Beattie, The Daily Mirror, 1st January 2017.
- Interviews with Bloomberg, BBC News and ITV News on Vauxhall.

## **5B Acting General Secretary's report**

### External meetings & events

Heathrow Skills Taskforce Stamp Out Poverty Management Group – chair Kerslake Review of the Treasury UK Commission for Employment and Skills Our NHS demonstration

### Government Ministers/Departments

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BEIS Secretary of State Greg Clark, Workers on Boards and Executive Pay Department for International Development & International Trade Department officials, Brexit and future trade agreements

## **Labour Party**

Emergency Summit Meeting on NHS, Jonathon Ashworth and Shadow Health Team Contemporary blacklisting – Chuka Umunna MP Health and Care Policy Commission National TULO meeting Party of European Socialists Conference

## **TUC**

TUC Executive and General Council meetings

TUC Public Service Liaison Group

Union Learn Board Speaker TUC Seminar: 'Confronting Change – Globalisation, Migration and Precarious Labour Post

Brexit'

International Development Group – chair

Sister organisations

Building and Woodworkers International General Secretary – meeting Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association General Secretary – meeting

Unite

F&GP

Finance Sector Regionalisation Taskforce

SERCO CEO UK & Europe with NO, Fiona Farmer

EC Chair and Health NOs

Former UCATT Officer's welcome meeting; Organising & Leverage briefing

Unite Construction and Allied Trades NISC

Capenhurst shops stewards and EC members with GS and NO regarding National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI)

Various meetings:

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Chief of Staff and AGS Legal & Membership Services; AGSs; NOs; Director of Political; West Midlands RS & Deputy; Lead NO Construction, Brian Rye; Executive Officer Organising & Leverage; Executive Director, Finance

## **GS election**

Returning Officer, Simon Hearn Election Commissioner, Professor Keith Ewing LP GS, Iain McNichol

## 6.1 Organising & Leverage report

Broad Industrial Strategy (Work, Voice & Pay)

Officer BIS Campaigns

A critical milestone has been reached, as we continue to build a programme that delivers at the workplace.

- For the first time, every management team in each Region is now charged with producing BIS plans for all Officer allocations
- Every Officer will be engaged in specific pay and non-pay industrial campaigns in the workplace – linking the Campaign to building stronger collective strength.

100% UNITE

Targets have been agreed and delivery maintained.

- 2017 100% target agreed - 51,800
- Significant increase in joiners recorded for the last quarter - Over 20,000 new joiners since the last EC

Closing in on a significant achievement - Net membership gain in 100% Campaigns of 100,000 - Net gain of over 99,000 recorded so far.

Automation

Immense threat of automation to jobs is increasingly recognised. Roll-out of critical Automation report is continuing.

- All NISC and RISC to be attended prior to Sector Conferences
- Discussion with our Reps and Shop Stewards re: sector specific issues
- Timeline of Action to be drawn up.

Sector Organising

Energy Reces

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Our Organisers have now completed all initial ground recces, gathering valuable information from over 1,000 locations. The Department is now engaged on second 3 stage contact prior to full field entry. Once recce information is complete and further discussion with our Energy Reps we will be in a position to trigger the Campaign.

An estimated potential of over 30,000 has been identified from over 430 workplaces throughout Britain and Ireland

Construction

Work with our new colleagues from UCATT is well underway, including:

- Interim and preliminary sector organising reports - Estimated growth potential of over 55,000 in Top 40 Main Contractors
- Two training days with former UCATT Officials held - Day one: Unite's Organising and Broad Industrial Strategies strategy/Day two: 100% training

**BROAD INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY (WORK, VOICE & PAY)**

Work to build our Broad Industrial Strategy (BIS) continues with a significant milestone being achieved – the implementation of BIS campaigns in each Officer allocation. In addition, the 2017 targets for 100% UNITE have been agreed and we can now expect over 50,000 new joiners but more importantly key co-ordination of pay data and growth of our Reps Structures

Officer BIS Campaigns

Our Broad Industrial Strategy is the lynchpin of the Union's concerted effort to improve the living standards of Unite members. Focussed exclusively on the workplace, we are building towards meaningful industrial co-ordination through a programme of practical, accountable campaigns fixed on collective bargaining outcomes.

Together with the Senior Regional Management Teams we have continued the development of BIS. The most recent advance made is one of the most significant to date. Every management team in each Region is now charged with producing BIS plans for all Officer allocations.

In practical terms, this means that for the first time the Union is now able to see the core bargaining and campaigning activity for each Officer over the coming year. Where pay anniversary dates are listed, working with our Shop Stewards, the Officials will be embarking on detailed pay campaigns linked to organising in the workplace. In addition, particularly where the Union has low membership density, each Officer is now working to deliver non-pay campaigns.

This is a significant milestone in the development of our Broad Industrial Strategy. The Union can only achieve improved bargaining results through delivering practical campaigns on the ground. We are now taking the first concrete step.

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## 100% UNITE

As we continue to focus on strike ready workplaces, the 2017 100% target has been agreed with the Region's and significant progress is already being made towards achieving it. We should now expect over 50,000 new joiners from 100% campaigns in 2017. Every Region has delivered at least 10% of the agreed target to date.

A draft document around Organising Potential within Construction was also presented to the Executive.

The long term aim is to have similar documents for all Sectors.

It was a comprehensive presentation with some points identified below;

- Document put together with UCATT Officers.
- Where Unite has probably been reactive in organising within construction, this document is more about taking the initiative.
- Initial Focus will be on the 40 Main Construction contractors. Then it will include sub-contractors and if necessary the Clients.
- Identify Contractors who are covered by National Bargaining rights.
- Then identify specific targets.

Full reports will follow with the Sector.

## 7.1 Manufacturing report

The Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers Index (PMI), which measures confidence in manufacturing, published its first figures for 2017 on the 1st February. January PMI dipped fell to 55.9 from December's two-and-a-half-year high of 56.1. A reading above 50 indicates growth. The ONS has reported that industrial production grew by 2.1% at the end of 2016, ahead of forecasts for 0.8%. This is a rise on the 1.1% fall in production registered in October 2016.

Together, these figures show continued growth for UK industry, with manufacturers enjoying the fastest rise in activity since May 2014. However, while increased activity at the end of 2016 was attributed to a boost in exports due to the weakening of the Pound, this scenario now appears to be changing.

In 2017 the main source of new orders came from the domestic market. The rising cost of imports continues to push up the price of UK-made goods, which in turn threatens a spike in inflation over the coming year. PMI report that input cost inflation spiked to the highest seen since data were first collected in 1992.

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Despite the boost to exports major manufacturers continue to warn that future investment now depends on ending the uncertainty surrounding the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.

For example, the SMMT report that UK car production has reached a 17 year high with 1.7 million cars rolling off UK production lines last year, driven by overseas demand. Some 1.35 million of these cars went overseas, mostly to the European Union.

However, the SMMT also warned that the fall in Sterling against the Dollar and the Euro may not be enough to persuade them to continue investing in the UK if they face tariffs. Investment in the automotive sector is currently falling, down one third in 2016 on the previous year. This is corroborated by an EEF survey which found that up to 75% of members were considering holding planned investment.

## Brexit and Manufacturing

The government has decided to embark on a "Hard Brexit", leave the Single Market and Customs Union with an acceptance that there will be tariffs and trade barriers which we believe will have a disruptive and significant impact on manufacturing in the UK and also will affect the supply chain.

Currently we have a "frictionless" supply chain where parts for cars, aerospace, engineering, move across the European Union without the needs for customs checks etc.

In the case of some companies the same components and parts move across the European Union more than once.

With customs checks the supply chain could be badly damaged and could affect production in our big manufacturing companies.

Equally a "Hard Brexit" under WTO Rules means that there will be tariffs and barriers which will disrupt British manufacturing and leave the UK liable to dumping of goods in the UK because of lack of protection from the EU.

Unite has been instrumental in garnering support from manufacturing Trade Associations for our view that we must maintain access to the Single Market tariff free alongside issues such as protection of employment rights, continued investment, access to skills and for Unions and manufacturers to have a seat at the table.

In the past few weeks we have met with the Engineering Employers Federation, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, Ceramics Confederation, the Chemical Industry Association, the Aerospace Defence, Security and Oil and Gas UK.

At a briefing with Oil and Gas UK the major concern was that outside of the Single Market and the Customs Union, the precarious situation of our oil industry, notably on the North Sea, could mean that tariffs would tip the sector back into a recessionary position.

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A meeting has taken place recently with six of the Trade Associations including the Manufacturing Technology Association, Confederation of Paper Industries and the BPIF from Printing where we reached a consensus on a number of issues with a view to a statement being issued between those Trade Associations and ourselves on the key issues of trade, access to the Single Market, skills and the free movement of labour.

## Trade

If we do leave the single Market and the Customs Union the UK could be reliant on the WTO Rules.

As a result there will be a need for strong trade defence mechanisms in a number of key areas where we are already under attack.

Unite has been invited to take part in discussions with the government on trade defence mechanisms with industries such as steel, glass, oil, ceramics, papermaking and fertilizers, tyres, all of which are subject to illegal dumping from China.

This will also give us a base to continue oppose Market Economy Status being granted to China - which the government is prepared to concede.

## Strategic plans in manufacturing

Besides the work on Brexit three strategic plans are currently being worked on across manufacturing. These include an oil industry strategy "Wells To Wheels" which was unfortunately held up due to circumstances beyond our control - but will be published soon and will cover the oil industry from exploration through to delivery to garage forecourts and storage .

"Made In Britain 2.0" is being produced by the Manufacturing combine and will update the original document but will also include the digital economy.

The Automotive Sector and colleagues in the transport sectors will be working on a strategic plan to handle the electrification of vehicles, driverless vehicles and future mobility.

## Industrial Strategy

Unite has been at the forefront of arguing strongly for a proper Industrial Strategy. Sadly the Government's long awaited announcement was greeted with a mixed reponse all round and fell short of expectations. Just £17 million was allocated to skills, the investment in regional was patchy at best and it appears industry will be allowed to 'get on with it'.

Unite has helped Labour pull together a much more robust response and our own industrial strategy based on skills, investment, foundation industries and advanced manufacturing.

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Unfortunately, Clive Lewis the Shadow SoS at BEIS resigned over the Article 50 vote. We had done considerable work to brief him and keep in contact etc.

His replacement is Rebecca Long Bailey who made immediate contact with Unite and meetings are planned with her and her team and for regular contact to be maintained.

## Automotive Industry

The EC will be aware from extensive media coverage the sudden announcement that GM (Vauxhall) have been in discussions with PSA (Peugeot) with a view to Peugeot purchasing GM-Opel's European businesses.

This announcement has significant implications for Unite members employed by GM Vauxhall in the UK (Ellesmere Port, Luton and Toddington). As a consequence of the announcement the GS, AGS and National Officer met with the Secretary of State Greg Clarke and his officials the day after the announcement.

The General Secretary will want to comment on the situation in regard to GM-PSA in his report.

The General Secretary will also wish to comment on the situation at Fords in the UK.

The previous Executive heard a report on the discussions we have held with the company about their continuing "footprint" in the UK and following a meeting with the European Chief Executive of Fords, we are now working with them on a number of specific issues related to the future of Bridgend, Brexit, electrification, the use of the significant capacity on the Dagenham estate and competitiveness.

We have finally signed a recognition agreement for the new Aston Martin plant in St Athan, Wales, an extension of the current agreement held in the West Midlands following a discussion between the AGS and the Chief Executive of the company.

Thanks go to Unite members at Gaydon who assisted not only in securing a decent pay increase at the company but also ensuring that we were able to secure recognition.

## Steel Industry

At the time of writing a ballot on the final proposals for the future of the Tata Pension Scheme is taking place across the three steel Unions.

The final deal was reached following discussions with the company where improvements were made to the Agreement and a recommendation was made at a mass meeting of Union Reps at the TUC, that members accept the new arrangements which would keep Tata's business ongoing in the UK.

The Speciality Products division is to be sold to Liberty House with whom we have had meetings.

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We anticipate that Tata in the UK will be part of a joint venture with ThyssenKrupp. A further report on this will be given at the EC meeting along with the result of the ballot on the pension scheme.

## Snapshot of Pay Deals

BOC IPA 1.9% and 2.0% 2 Year Agreement

Chubb 2.0% on basic and related allowances 1st January 2017

Crown Packaging 2.0%

Schindler Lifts 2.0%

Syngenta 2.1%

## 7.2 Services report

A summary of the report is outlined below;

- Nearly 80 per cent of councils have little or no confidence in the sustainability of local government finances and 84 per cent of councils think the current needs assessment formula is not fit for purpose.
- To cope with their immediate and long term pressures around social care, housing and homelessness, 65 per cent say they will be forced to dip into reserves to balance the books while nearly nine in ten councils said it was a high priority or essential to explore other sources of income including commercialising council services. Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) 2017 State of Local Government Finance survey Throughout the period covered by this report our NHS and social care in crisis has dominated the headlines. The Labour Shadow Health team called crisis summit early January and attracted virtually all the leadership of the Royal Colleges and professional bodies, including Unite. Labour attacked the Conservative front bench on the leaked text scandal that showed a favourable deal to Surrey Council in exchange for their promised u-turn on increasing council tax.

All the Unite services sectors are directly or indirectly impacted by the dogged continuation of austerity. Add to the mix the impact of Brexit on public services staff recruitment and retention and the crisis can only worsen.

Unite is leading from the front. Without Unite there would have been no national support for the 04 March for our NHS; no Labour Party Trade Union pledge; no national campaign to expose STPs.

The reports from Health, Local Government and CY&NfP represent tenacity and hard work across both teams involving lay leaders and officials. There has been a continuation of high level pension's

disputes, AWE and the NDA Estate with members taking or preparing for industrial action. Complex pension negotiations with RSA were largely led by our Unite workplace representatives.

A new Water Industry Combine has been established and its first meeting was attended by reps from 12 of the 22 UK companies.

Which? Survey showed that whilst 56% of adults use online banking there remains 20 million adults that did not. This report shows the scale of Branch closures, often in the most already socially excluded areas.

The historic joining of UCATT with Unite construction members is now in place with support and direction from the Organising & Leverage Department the sector is set to engage in a growth strategy.

## 7.3 Transport & Food report

### AUTOMATION AND DIGITALISATION – TRANSPORT AND FOOD SECTORS

Automation and Digitalisation are already a central part of the transport and food sectors, including warehouse management systems, containerisation, on-line check in, self-service tills and autonomous braking. As a union in these sectors, we have experience going back over a century negotiating and organising as part of the struggle over the introduction of new technology. Our “work, voice, pay” Broad Industrial Strategy is central to our response, together with our Industrial Hubs and Global Union Federations. Cross-sector working is essential alongside sector-specific activities, in order to ensure that maximum union power is built, new jobs and ways of working are organised and knowledge shared. During the quarter, in addition to discussing with other AGSs moving forward on implementation of the Policy conference motion :

- Passenger and Road Transport & Logistics sectors are linking up with the Automotive sector over technological developments including electric and driverless vehicles
- The AGS was involved with DHL Supply Chain event on AI/Robotics
- The AGS met with an Automation sub-group set up by the National Women’s Committee
- The Modern Transport Bill announced in the Queen’s Speech is being monitored

### “TRANSPORT MATTERS” – ACTION ON THE THREE OVERARCHING PRIORITIES AT UNITE TRANSPORT CONFERENCE

- Action on Clean Air – Cutting diesel emissions : diesel emissions register being finalised
- Mental health First Aid : first seminar held with major road transport & logistics employers – where the AGS was honoured to speak

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- Ending the race to the bottom : raised at launch of the private members' bill on protecting workers' rights underpinned by the EU, in response to consultations on Industrial Strategy, approach to Automation, and at meeting on ports with John Hayes MP Minister of State for Transport. Key issues around TUPE protections have been part of campaigning around the Bus Bill, in Logistics, and Agency workers' rights

Trade Union Act : "40% threshold in important public services" includes workers in Bus, Rail, Civil aviation, Ports. The importance of membership organisation and records remains vital.

## "FROM PLOUGH TO PLATE" – PROTECTING WORKERS IN THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN, FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY

The immediate threat to jobs in the sector is already serious, and Brexit has the potential to threaten many many thousands more. Together with the National Officer, National Committee and researcher, the AGS has raised with the Political department the need to ensure the importance of the FDA sector is recognised. Jobs in nearly every constituency will be affected, and the safety and security of our food supply impacts us all.

## GLAA AND DIRECTOR OF LABOUR MARKET ENFORCEMENT

The vital role of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, as it becomes the GLAA, needs to be protected and extended so that it has the resources needed to deal with labour abuse across sectors, as well as continuing to maintain the licensing system across agriculture and food. The GLA was achieved because of long-term trade union campaigning against abuse, and implemented by Labour following the horrifying deaths of cockle pickers in Morecambe Bay, The ConDems and now the Tories are strengthening its remit, while at the same time failing to provide the resources needed, and of course they have cut trade unions from the Board, as well as the 'stakeholder structure' itself.

The Director of Labour Market Enforcement has now been appointed, and Unite has contributed to various consultations about the role, as well as attending a first meeting, which he has asked to follow up with us. In addition to Unite attending meetings of the GLAA workers group, we have taken opportunities to ensure these points are made wherever possible. The AGS spoke on this at the Institute of Employment Rights Access to Justice event, and was interviewed about workers and unions in the sector for an online programme on Food Ethics.

## MODERN SLAVERY – GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS – NEW REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES

Some of the first policies are beginning to be drawn up, and we are developing a checklist of key points in conjunction with other organisations such as FLEX. Unite has also submitted evidence to the DWP Consultation on Modern Slavery.

## DOWNSTREAM OIL DISTRIBUTION FORUM – WELL TO WHEELS

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The importance of the Petroleum Driver Passport achieved following the tanker driver dispute continues to be underlined, and the DODF continues to oversee both the Passport and developments in the sector. This is fully reflected in the Well to Wheels Report which has now been drafted

## OTHER INDUSTRIAL

- Swissport – settlement achieved at ACAS
- BA Mixed Fleet – ongoing dispute and industrial action
- Bombardier – meeting regarding future and investment
- Action for Rail – joint campaigning with TUC
- Campaign for Better Transport – discussion around key issues
- Presented Unite in Transport & Food as well as Equalities to welcome event of UCATT officers

## INTERNATIONAL and EUROPE

In addition to points raised above, during the quarter the AGS have been involved with Unite's Europe/Brexit check group and linking up with National Officers and NISCs over materials and information for our reps and members at this vital time. Unite is fully involved in activities of ITF, ETF, IUF and EFFATT.

**BRENDA SANDERS** – Former Chair of T&G and Unite Executives, Brenda Sanders was a senior shop steward from the food industry. The AGS and Executive Council would like to pay the strongest tribute to her as part of this industrial report., She will be very sadly missed.

**EDDIE BARRETT** – The AGS and Executive Council would like to pay tribute to Eddie Barrett, whose dedicated commitment to journalism, to trade unionism, to socialism and his incredible wit and love of life, will continue to make a difference.

## **7.4 Equalities report**

A summary of the report is outlined below;

### Women's March 21 January 2017

The AGS was invited as a speaker at the 100,000 strong London march, linking up with marches taking place across the world. she was proud that we were co-sponsors of the march, which involved many taking to the streets for the first time in their lives, bringing together women across generations and men in support. We also linked up as Workers Uniting and our banner "Women Workers Uniting" on the march included logos of Unite women and the USW Women of Steel. We also distributed Women Workers Uniting badges – thank you to Unite Equalities and Community –

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Liane Groves, Siobhan Endean and everyone who ensured we were able to meet a very tight deadline.

## Unite Conference for Migrant Workers “Our Industrial Voice”

Plans are now fully in place for the conference which is due to take place on 22 February. A verbal report will be presented at the EC. Thanks to Anooshah Farakish, Alberta Mills and Suzanna Dolata as well as Harish Patel, the EC Chair, the General Secretary, colleague AGSs and a number of National Officers and researchers for their support.

## LGBT History Month – much to celebrate, so much more to do

The AGS attended a packed reception to launch the month in Jeremy Corbyn’s office with Sarah Champion Shadow Minister for Women & Equalities, Jenny Douglas EC LGBT rep with Unite National LGBT delegates, the National Officer and a wide diversity of LGBT+ people and organisations. Time to remember the tireless struggles of those we follow, as well as to commit ourselves to the struggles ahead.

## Automation and Women

The AGS with a working group of the National Women’s Committee to discuss the implications of automation for working women, and the Unite response.

## Unite National Equalities Conferences 2017

Planning and practical arrangements are underway for the conferences in line with rule and agreed by the EC, with the Conference team, National equalities committees, National Equalities Officers, Regional Women’s & Equalities officers and specialist equality staff.

## Unite Equality Strategy 2020

In preparation for the conferences, the Unite Equality Strategy is being updated to include Policy Conference equality decisions and the actions on equality of the Tory government since the General Election.

## Unite Equality Working Group

A meeting of the working group took place, involving chairs and vice-chairs of National equalities committees with EC equality reps, National officers and specialist equality staff. The meeting discussed equality in the context of industrial, economic and political developments including the general election, EU Referendum, TU Act, Automation, agreed the 2017 Equality Plan, discussed implementation of Policy conference equality motions, Equality Strategy updating and plans towards Equality 2020. It was agreed that an overarching priority is to ensure equalities and industrial sectors are effectively linked up. International equalities issues and reportback from the Workers Uniting Congress session on equality were also discussed.

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## TUC Women's Committee

The AGS has attended meetings of the TUC Women's Committee. Key issues have included: priorities for working women following the EU Referendum, Sexual Harassment and Violence against Women, Pregnancy discrimination, attacks on Abortion rights. Plans for 2017 TUC women's Conference are moving ahead well, and the TUC Women's Committee will be involved in the commemoration of a great TU leader Mary Macarthur through the unveiling of a Blue Plaque. The committee also expressed support when she raised the Ascott Martyrs, and remembering these incredible women in our movement, an important event we are discussing taking forward in Unite with support across FDA, SE region and Equalities.

## Labour Party Equalities

The AGS attended Labour NEC Equalities Committee, discussions on future policymaking role of Labour Women's Conference, implementation of Chakrabarti inquiry into anti-semitism and other forms of racism, and met with Labour's Safeguarding & Complaints Officer on the Labour Party Sexual Harassment and complaints procedure.

## Labour Party Work, Pensions and Equality Policy commission

As co-convenor of the policy commission, The AGS has been involved in arranging the first meeting and developing the framework for the first draft of the policy document. Debbie Abrahams Shadow Secretary of State for Work & Pensions and Dawn Butler Shadow Minister for Diversity and Communities were both involved with delegates from all parts of the Party. Labour's Disability Roadshow was highlighted.

## Regional Women's & Equalities Officers

The AGS has continued to link up with RWEOs throughout the quarter to ensure implementation of this important role in relation to Unite's powerful equality agenda. I was delighted to be part of the appointment of the South East Region RWEO, which will be presented to the EC. I would also like to place on record my best wishes to Sharon Wentworth the previous RWEO in the South East, and to thank Regional Officer Kathy Walters who has been covering the role.

## Discrimination Law Conference 2017

This annual event pulling together all the key legal developments on equality took place at the TUC in January. The AGS also wanted to place on record our thanks to Michael Rubenstein for all he has done through the Equal Opportunities Review to ensure that trade unionists and others have all the latest legal developments immediately to hand, as well as supporting a strong and effective equality legal framework, and to thank Kate Godwin for all her input to EOR as well.

## Work Your Proper Hours Day 24 February

As well as promoting the day, the AGS has also brought it to everyone's attention within Equalities, Transport & Food sectors and to other AGSs. Working time, work-life balance, equality and health and safety all link together around this day, which is the date calculated by the TUC to be the first date you are paid if average unpaid overtime is taken into account.

## Workers Rights (Maintenance of EU Standards) Bill

This Private Members' Bill submitted by Labour MP Melanie Onn was talked out by the Tories, but remains a very important document setting out what is needed to protect workers' rights under threat from leaving the EU. While the Tory government states that protecting workers' rights is one of their priorities, their actions here expose the reality.

The AGS was a speaker at :

- Access to Justice Conference organised by Institute of Employment Rights
- Climate Change Refugees Conference organised by TUC, Friends of the Earth I was also involved with :
  - Launch of ETF/BTTUTB EVE project involving Unite, FNV and CFDT developing materials on violence and harassment faced by women transport workers
- National BAEM Committee with Iqbal "Iggy" Vaid in honour of Mohammad Taj
- Unite migrant domestic worker facing threats over her immigration status because of underpayment by her employer
- Welcome event for UCATT Officers
- Plans for ongoing meetings of Unite women and BAEM officers regional officers

## 8.1 Political report

A full report was given by the Political Director, the main points being;

- The start of 2017 has seen the political situation remain turbulent. In the USA on 20 January Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States and immediately set about exercising his political power through unilateral executive orders.
- In Britain Parliament has been dominated by the referendum vote to leave the European Union with a debate on triggering Article 50 (The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union) currently going through the Parliamentary passage.
- The by-elections triggered by MPs stepping down to take other jobs in Stoke-on-Trent Central and Copeland saw a win and a loss respectively with a swing to the Tories in both seats. This has unleashed fresh attacks on the Leader(ship) of the Labour Party.

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- Industrially, Unite have had much work to campaign on and push through on in Parliament as attacks on our members. Among other issues this includes mixed fleet members at British Airways on low pay, AWE pensions, and the proposed takeover of Vauxhall by General Motors.

- Unite continue to influence the Labour Party on the policy agenda. The Political Team works on a daily basis with the Leader's Office and the Shadow Cabinet on policy positions and to input formally into the NPF.

## US President's First Month

Trump's reckless approach to the Presidency has sparked outrage across the States and beyond. Protests began with millions of people marching against the President calling for racial and gender equality and against the President's approach to immigration and the refugee crisis. Trumps' "Muslim ban" also led to immediate protests. Here the Prime Minister's invitation of a state visit has means that organisations have been founded against this visit, including Stand up to Trump. Unite are working with this organisation.

## Brexit

The triggering of Article 50 is at the time of writing working its way through the Parliamentary passage and is at committee stages in the Lords.

Unite continue to work closely with the Brexit team in Labour's Shadow Cabinet and Front Bench and have also been in discussion with Labour in the Lords.

Unite's objectives and priorities remain focused:

The objective for Unite – and the wider Labour movement - is to work to protect jobs, employment and trade union rights and investment in the EU withdrawal negotiating process and as the outcomes of political and legal processes that will unfold domestically.

Unite have set out priorities on how to achieve these objectives:

- Tariff-free access to the single market
- Retention of workers' rights and protection underpinned by EU legislation
- Full scrutiny of the terms of exit by Parliament and a Parliamentary vote before the triggering of Article 50
- The collective voice of working people, as represented by the trade unions, to be consulted during the negotiations (a "seat at the table for working people").

## The Labour Party

Since the EC last met the Labour Party have faced and fought 2 by-elections in the Labour held seats of Stoke Central and Copeland.

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The Copeland result clearly presents the Labour Party with big challenges; in the immediate aftermath of the by election Unite has been arguing that the Party must have a laser-like focus on the policies that matter to working communities.

The by election result has unleashed fresh attacks on the Leadership of the Labour Party.

Our Regional Political Officers campaigned hard for the candidates in Copeland and Stoke – mobilising our members, running phone banks, door knocking, texting, and organising union campaign days.

The Party now face a by-election in the safe seat of Manchester Gorton due to the passing of Gerald Kaufman.

## **8.2 International report**

A summary of the report is outlined below;

European and International Federations:

UNITE has continued to play a full role in all the International and European Federations to which it is affiliated. The issue of Brexit is increasingly becoming a major theme but other strategic priorities are also being pursued. It is particularly pleasing that UNITE's organising focus is clearly beginning to bear important fruit in a number of federations;

Workers Uniting:

The strategic alliance of UNITE and the USW is likely to become even more important given the post-Brexit/Trump context of the UK and USA and Workers Uniting responded immediately to the May/Trump summit by issuing its own view on any future trade deal and supporting the women's demonstrations following the inauguration. UNITE reps played a full role in the recent USW 'Human Rights' conference and preparations for the next Steering Committee and BPI course are underway;

Multinational companies:

Support for EWCs, SNBs, combines and I&C structures has been provided for reps in many companies including GE, Manpower, IAG, Facilicom, Engie, Westinghouse, Princess Foods, SPX, Primetals, Mondolez, Siemens, and Honeywell. An important victory against Facilicom was also secured at the CAC that will have important repercussions for access to information in all situations where EWC negotiations are about to begin;

Solidarity work:

Solidarity work continues in relation to Turkey and the Kurds, Colombia, Palestine, Cuba and Venezuela. The situation in Turkey continues to deteriorate sharply while Cuba, Venezuela and

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Palestine all face enormous difficulties with problems set to mount now that Trump has taken office in the US. On a more positive note Fensuagro Vice President Huber Ballesterero has finally been released from prison and the peace process in Colombia continues but many problems exist and the government appears to be dragging its feet on a number of issues. Most worryingly the spike in the killing of human rights activists shows no signs of receding.

## 8.2.1 Brexit Co-ordination Team Report

1. 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 must clearly adapt as the circumstances change and develop, the Executive Council statement did identify the key issues at that 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.

## 2. Key Brexit developments since the last Executive Council

The Brexit coordination team has continued to meet regularly in order to discuss, plan and oversee UNITE actions in relation to Brexit. Since the last Executive Council the key developments that have taken place are:

- Theresa May Lancaster House Speech: Prime Minister Theresa May delivered a speech at Lancaster House in which the government's broad approach to Brexit was laid out. Although much of the information was not particularly new there was a greater clarity about the government's direction of travel and a more formal presentation of where the government intends to head. Of particular importance for UNITE members were:

Prioritising control of borders and immigration over all other issues;

Acceptance that leaving the single market is probably inevitable and that leaving the customs unions is also very likely;

Removal of the UK from the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice;

- Article 50 court cases: The government lost the case in which its' right to trigger Article 50 without parliamentary approval was challenged, it subsequently also lost the appeal to the Supreme Court. Importantly however, the ruling did not say that the devolved assemblies had the right to be consulted in the process;
- Introduction of Article 50 Bill to parliament: In response to the court rulings the government reacted with a Bill to enable parliament to trigger the process, the Bill consisted of a derisory two paragraphs with no detail.
- Government White Paper on Brexit: This White Paper was also relatively vague on detail and direction and was little more than a reiteration of the Lancaster House speech of Theresa May, however a UNITE analysis of the document flagged up many areas where the small print appears to justify UNITE concerns, including in the crucial area of workers' rights;
- Summit with President Trump: It is essential that the election of Donald Trump to the US Presidency and the manner in which the UK-USA relationship develops, is considered as part of the Brexit process as the two issues are inherently linked. Key points to note from the summit were Donald Trump's pronouncement that the UK leaving was a good thing and his hope that the U itself would disintegrate.
- Summit with President Erdogan of Turkey: Similarly the meeting with President Erdogan that came immediately after the meeting with Donald Trump is highly important. Given the massive human rights violations of the Turkish government and the establishment of an authoritarian regime, it is very clear that the UK government's post Brexit stance will be driven by a need for trade regardless of the government or the human and workers' rights situation in any particular country. This will pose enormous challenges for UNITE members.
- Collapse of the Northern Irish Assembly: Although the collapse of the power sharing coalition administration in Northern Ireland had multiple causes, there is no doubt that the issue of Brexit is having a very important influence. In addition the very difficult issue of the border is now becoming the front and centre issue of the in relation to any final settlement;
- Scottish Independence Referendum: With the courts saying clearly there is no need for the UK to directly involve devolved administrations in the Brexit process, and the emergence of the government's 'hard Brexit' stance, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has tabled proposals regarding a second referendum. It is likely that this issue will rise up the agenda as the process unfolds;

3. UNITE political input:

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Although the political situation surrounding Brexit has been highly charged and highly controversial, in particular in relation to the line and direction of the Labour Party in relation to the triggering of Article 50, UNITE has remained active in trying to influence developments and make sure that the voice of UNITE members has been heard. To this end UNITE has:

- Made our position in relation to the government stance on access to the single market and the rushed triggering of Article 50 clear in press releases;
- Continued to work with the labour party in relation to UNITE red lines on access to the single market, remaining in the customs union, protection of workers' rights and protection of the rights of EU nationals;
- Organised events and promoted discussions in Regional Committees and NISCs and RISCs - most noteworthy in this respect were the North West Brexit and Manufacturing conference and the UNITE EWC reps conference;

UNITE will continue to engage with the government, labour party and other in parties in order to defend and advance our members interests and with this in mind it is still intended to hold a series of regional conferences on Brexit around May 2017 with the aim of taking having an effective voice as the process moves into a new phase.

European Union position in relation to Brexit: It is vitally important to note that while the UK has been defining its position in relation to Brexit, this has not been happening in a vacuum and the remaining 27 Member States have also been defining their position in relation to the UK. Key points to note in this respect are:

- The European Commission has appointed Frenchman Michel Barnier – an avowed federalist - to head the Commission's negotiating team, at the same time the European Parliament has appointed former Belgium Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt – a man with similar political perspectives;
- It is becoming clear that the EU intends to deal with the issues of outstanding UK financial liabilities and the issue of the Irish border before any of the other issues will be negotiated;
- The EU will not accept a final settlement that will allow the UK to be on equal or more favourable terms than it currently is and access to the single market will not be allowed without the free movement of labour;
- A European Summit is planned for 25th March in Rome that will celebrate 60 years since the foundation of the European Union. At the summit it is intended to adopt a 'Roadmap for the Future of Europe' and also to relaunch the social pillar of the union to address the issue of social cohesion;
- Critical elections are due to take place in The Netherlands (March), France (April) and Germany (September);

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UNITE North West conference on Brexit and Manufacturing: An excellent conference on Brexit and the implications generally as well as for the manufacturing industries in the region took place on Friday 2nd February 2017. With some 200 participants present excellent discussion and debate took place with interventions made by GS Len McCluskey, AGS Tony Burke, International Director Simon Dubbins, AGS for Legal Howard Beckett and MEP Teresa Griffin.

Unite Conference on the Implications for European Works Councils and Employment Law Post Brexit:

This conference was primarily for UNITE EWC reps and officers with significant EWC responsibilities. Its focus was on the broad political and legal issues surrounding Brexit and the need for the conference was reflected in the fastest ever take up rate for such a conference with some 90 participants from a range of multinational companies across Unite's sectors including, among others, automotive, finance, docks, transport, food and drink, aerospace, and GPM&IT.

The participants heard from colleagues from other parts of Europe on how Brexit was being viewed from there, including the General Secretary of Industrial Europe, and representatives of FTM-CGT and IG Metall. In addition to union reps the conference heard from the Chief Executive of Thomson's, Stephen Cavalier, on the employment law implications of Brexit, and it finished with interventions from General Secretary Len McCluskey and Labour's Shadow minister for Exiting the European Union, Keir Starmer, both of whom engaged in an extensive question and answer session following their speeches.

At the close of the conference a statement summarising the conclusions was made (see below).

#### 4. UNITE industrial input:

Brexit check company watch: A questionnaire designed to give a quick overview and insight into how companies are dealing with Brexit now exists and has already been widely distributed to workplace reps. This questionnaire will enable UNITE to keep an up to date overview of what is happening at workplace level and how developments are beginning to impact.

NISCS, RISCs and Regional Committee: Interventions continue to be made at various constitutional committees in order to make sure our workplace reps are as informed and up to speed as possible and in order to make sure that feedback from workplaces is received. Engaging with industry federations: Meetings also continue to take place with key employer's organisations, including those in the auto, aerospace, ceramics, paper, chemical and oil and gas sectors with a view to defining common points of political input where possible in relation to issues such as the single market, workers' rights and EU nationals, etc.

#### 5. Documents and Communications

Press and publications: Unite have continued to publically make the case that workers should not pay the price of Brexit and the union has received considerable press coverage for its position – including the General Secretary's announcement in relation to the Article 50 vote. The Brexit on our

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Terms document has continued to be widely circulated, particularly within the manufacturing sectors, a publication now exists for the finance sector and documents for health and a number of other sectors are under preparation.

Website: The Brexit Check website is due to go live between the submission of this report and the Executive Council meeting. This will be a crucial resource for members and activists, providing key information on Brexit, updates on developments, material for activists to explain the situation and Unite's approach to members, and it will also be possible to develop the website into a campaigning platform should this be necessary as the negotiations over Brexit begin in earnest.

## 6. Next Steps

A number of actions have been identified in order to further UNITE work in relation to this critical area:

- A series of regional conferences will take place in May to discuss the overall approach of the union but also issues specific to each region.
- The Brexit team will continue to input into the political process, particularly as negotiations over Brexit actually begin once Article 50 is triggered before the end of March. Interacting with the labour party is clearly central to this strategy but it will become increasingly important to engage with the government and devolved administrations directly.
- Plans are underway to provide a briefing to the Labour MEPs in order that they can use any influence they may have within the European Parliament;
- Inputs in order to promote the UNITE position will continue to be made within the European and global industry federations as well as directly with key individual unions. IndustriAll -Europe will hold their Executive Committee in London in June which will be a particularly high profile event;
- Contact and engagement with key employer's organisations will continue in order to define and implement common approaches where possible.

Concluding Statement of the delegates at Unite's Conference on the Implications for European Works Councils and Employment Law Post Brexit

Over 80 of Unite's senior European Works Council representatives from across manufacturing, services and transport came together over two days to discuss the implications of Brexit for both employment law and their work on European Works Councils.

Following two days of intensive discussions the delegates were convinced on the importance of ensuring that Unite continue to lead the way in standing up for the interests of working people as the Brexit process develops.

The delegates reaffirmed their support for the Unite Brexit strategy and its key demands of;

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- Tariff free access to the single market and participation in the customs union.
- A seat at the table for workers.
- Ensuring that exiting the EU does not result in a renewed attack on jobs, rights and communities.
- An ambitious industrial strategy to mitigate the impact of Brexit.
- Ensuring Unite is at the forefront of the fight against racism and xenophobia.

Additionally the delegates were convinced of the important role that they will have, through their roles on EWCS, of both leading the conversation with members on the implications of Brexit and building relationships and solidarity with colleagues from sister unions across Europe.

To that end the delegates agreed that;

- Unite should continue to fight for the rights of UK employees to continue to fully participate in EWCs post Brexit, including the continuation of legal protections that they currently enjoy.
- To put the issue of Brexit on the agenda of their EWCs and push for an in-depth assessment of the impact of Brexit on their companies.
- To work to include new clauses in their EWC agreements to ensure protection for UK employees post Brexit.
- To share information and experience to prevent companies exploiting Brexit to push down wages and terms and conditions.

## 8.3 Education report

A full report was given, see quarterly stats below

### UNITE THE UNION EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STATISTICAL RETURNS OCT TO DEC 2016

REGION	No. of Courses	No. of Students	No. of Teaching Days
East Midlands	24	241	1205
Ireland	9	173	420
London & Eastern	54	592	2400
NE, Yorks & Humber	41	493	1377
North West	54	831	2290
Scotland	49	475	1508
South East	22	202	898

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South West	23	473	1014
Wales	20	206	1094
West Midlands	28	355	1732
Residential Courses	16	189	907
TOTALS	340	4230	14845

## 8.4 Report of AGS Steve Turner

### OVERVIEW

This quarter has been yet another busy and productive one for our Service Industries Sector, Young Members, Community and Retired Member sections of the union. Our Hotels, contract services, 'Decent Work for All' and 'Fair Tips' strategy have had on-going success leading to membership growth.

- First dedicated organising team in Hotel and Hospitality Sector
- International Human Rights Award won by Unite for our work in Tourism
- Solid progress made on our first facilities management national agreement with COMPASS, Restaurant Associates and KPM
- National campaigns by retired members to raise the scandal of fuel poverty leading to 24,300 or 202 per day deaths in 2016
- Young members end the year with a 4,827 gain in membership
- 'Love union' and 'we all need a pay rise' campaigns launched in communities as part of Decent Work strategy
- Community activity continues to expand and deepen across all

Our young and community members continue to work with our industrial membership in the hospitality and hotels sector and have together launched the Malmaison organising strategy while planning to relaunch our campaign of direct actions and organising activity within Sports Direct and elsewhere within the rapidly growing gig economy.

Our campaigns continue and the level of activity, enthusiasm and determination by our members across all groups, working together to win real industrial and political gains for workers bodes well for our future work.

### 9.1 Central Office & Administration

A full report was given, the Chief of Staff highlighted the following points;

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL** We welcome 4 new members to the Council from the former UCATT: Michael Farrell, Jim Gamble, Andy Jones and Alan Stansfield and also 3 new observers from the former Unite Construction Sector John Gillespie, Tony Se aman and Bill Spiers who join Frank Morris to represent Unite Construction Allied Trades and Technicians industrial sector.

**GENERAL SECRETARY AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2017** Nominations for the General Secretary and Executive Council elections closed on 22nd February. A report on nominations will be provided by the Returning Officer. Ballot papers will be despatched to members eligible to vote in accordance with the timetable published in the guidelines during week commencing 27th March.

#### **NATIONALEQUALITIES CONFERENCES 2017**

Preparations for the above conferences are in hand as per the timetable agreed at the December EC meeting. The invitation to the Regional Equalities Committees to nominate delegates to the Equalities Conferences was sent to the Regions in December 2016, which is before UCATT formally transferred to Unite. To ensure that ex UCATT members have the opportunity to participate in Unite structures at the earliest opportunity it is proposed to invite those eligible ex UCATT members who have taken up places on the RISCs and Regional Equalities Committees to attend the Equalities Conferences in 2017.

This will entail:

- Women: 6 (EM, LE x 2, NE, NW, SE)
- BAEM: 4 (EM, LE, NE, WM)
- LGBT: 2 (EM, WA)
- Disabled: 1 (NE) This will be a transitional arrangement.

These colleagues will be full delegates and extra to the scheme of representation previously agreed by the Executive Council.

#### **NATIONAL YOUNG MEMBERS CONFERENCE 2017**

Preparations for the above conference are in hand in accordance with the timetable agreed at the December EC meeting.

Unconstituted RISCs

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Because of a declining number of attendees, it has been proposed by the Regional Secretary in Wales to link the remaining delegates from the Finance & Legal RISC and Education RISC to form a linked Committee for the remainder of the 2015/18 electoral period.

Former UCATT employees

Work is complete now on the merger from the people aspect in relation to pay, work location, training and induction. A total of 77 employees joined Unite on 01 January 2017; of which 37 were officers and 40 staff.

Of those 11 employees have taken voluntary severance broken down by: 1x officer and 10 x staff employees.

## 9.2 Correspondance including resolutions

- South East Region. To review the current dispute benefit. Director of Finance to respond at June EC.
- East Midlands Region. To negotiate with Unity trust bank to remove this unacceptable bank charge. . Director of Finance to respond at June EC.
- Scottish Region. To negotiate with Unity trust bank to remove this unacceptable bank charge. . Director of Finance to respond at June EC.
- London & Eastern Region. To seek reassurance that the powers of the Gangster Licensing Authority will not be used in a manner which jeopardises the confidential aspects of any working seeking assistance or places them in at risk of their immigration status. Agreed

Proposal for the process and schedule for the Scottish Policy Conference.

Agreed

### **9.3 GS & EC Elections 2017-Returning Officer report.**

The Returning Officer (RO) has received 3 complaints one of which he has sent to the election commissioner to investigate.

A Unitenow EC member requested as per rule a written report from the RO, at the date of this report no RO report had been received.

Andrew Murray, Gail Cartmail, Howard Beckett and the Chair explained the nature of several complaints around the GS Election process and Labour Party. After lengthy debate and discussion the following statement was agreed by the majority of the Executive, the present EC has **64** elected members on it, out of the 43 present the vote was as follows;

- **For 29**
- **Against 7**
- **Abstentions 7**

The complaints will now go through due process;

### **EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENT ON GENERAL SECRETARY ELECTION AND THE LABOUR PARTY**

All candidates for General Secretary were asked at the outset of the election to remember that they were campaigning for office against fellow trade unionists and colleagues at work, who should be treated with respect. The Executive Council repeats that request today, and reminds all candidates that they should avoid all conduct which has the capacity to damage our union.

Executive Council deplores that some of its decisions have been misrepresented. Specifically, Unite has made no loan or gift to the incumbent General Secretary, it agreed to convert loans to Jeremy Corbyn's leadership campaigns into donations long ago and it has not donated money to Momentum. It instructs the Executive Officers to take such steps, in consultation with the Returning Officer, to address such misrepresentations.

The Executive Council further endorses the actions and statement of the Acting General Secretary in relation to the West Midlands Labour Party. The Executive Council further instructs the Executive Officers to ensure that the Labour Party takes all necessary steps to prevent a repetition of this matter and that the Party cooperates fully in such further inquiries as may be necessary.

## 9.4 Application for National Branch-Aviva Insurance Group

This application was withdrawn.

## 10.1 Finance, Property & Finance

As an overall assessment, the preliminary financial picture for Unite for 2016 was satisfactory – on track with the three year financial plan and £2.3 million better than 2015. As noted previously, the second financial storm, the decline of Legal Income, has continued to impact the results. We have weathered the storm of the last pension valuation and cut non-front line costs to a level where the £12.3 million annual pension deficit reduction contributions (including the Republic of Ireland although 2016 was £0.3 million higher due to an actuarial anomaly) can be met out of operating income. Legal Income, which peaked at £11.3 million in 2013, fell to £8.4 million in 2014, to £6.2 million in 2015 and to £4.5 million in 2016. It will continue to fall in coming years.

There are no plans for any contribution increase this year.

The national dispute fund now stands at £37,184,532.

### Birmingham

The major project in Birmingham is now moving at a rapid pace. In January, the Birmingham local office (finally) moved in to the office building immediately adjacent to the site. PCS moved in at the same time. Construction is well underway – the piling is completed, the pouring of concrete will commence on 6th March, the orders for the interior staircases and lifts have been placed. In as little as two weeks, the corner of the office block will be formed to its full height. Naturally, only union labour paid union rates is being utilised.

## 11.1 Legal & affiliated services

Howard Beckett the AGS for Legal responded to a number of questions from EC members who required information about the exact details of the shared flat ownership agreement with the General Secretary Len McCluskey. The Unite EC had ratified the financial aspect of the shared flat purchase at the September 2016 EC meeting. After a lengthy challenging discussion with several EC members the chief of staff asked Howard Beckett to clarify in writing to the EC the exact details of the agreement with Len McCluskey and Unite. (Copy of Howard Becketts clarification letter)

Unite House  
128 Theobald's Road  
London WC1X 8TN

Tel: 020 7611 2500  
Fax: 020 7611 2555



LEGAL DEPARTMENT

10 March 2017

To: Unite EC Members

Dear EC Member

Andrew made a commitment for me to write to the Executive members to outline the nature of the shared ownership arrangement of the flat co owned between the union and the General Secretary.

Here are the facts:-

1. The property was bought on the 29th February 2016;
2. The purchase price was £695,500;
3. At the time of purchase the General Secretary invested £278,200 for a 40% interest in the property;
4. At the time of purchase the union invested £417,300 for a 60% interest in the property;
5. No later than 12 months after the General Secretary leaves office he must notify the union if he wants to buy the union's share of the property at the Open Market Value or if he wants to sell his share in the property in which case the property would be sold at the Open Market Value and the parties would realise their % investment as a % of the sale price.

As you can see this is not a loan or a gift. It is an investment by way of a shared ownership property purchase. The union has very simply invested in a property. In substance the investment is exactly the same as the considerable other property interests the union has in its property portfolio. As and when that property is sold the union will realise its existing % interest in the property, as the union would do on the sale of any union property. It is expected the union will make a considerable profit from the expected increase in London property prices.

In solidarity

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H Beckett'.

Howard Beckett  
Assistant General Secretary for Legal, Membership and Affiliated Services

Len McCluskey  
General Secretary

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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.

To date a sum of over £990,000 has been saved as a result of the audit process. An increase of £10,000 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 over £198,000 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.

## 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.

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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.

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.

Any EC member who wishes to consider the reports relevant to the panel solicitors in their Region should let the AGS know.

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 has been 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 will be launched shortly.

## 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.

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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.

## Small Claims Limit

The Government has recently released a consultation which proposes, amongst other things, to raise the small claims limit for personal injury claims in England & Wales from its current level of £1,000 up to £2,000.

This could have a 30% impact.

The ramifications of this proposal are extremely serious. Unite statistics show that around 65% of members PI cases settle for up to £2,000. An increase of this level to the small claims limit is not justified, would restrict access to justice, have huge health and safety implications and would severely impact the funding and operation of legal services.

Unite has prepared a response to the Government consultation, as have Unite panel law firms. The Government is now due to consider the responses and confirm its decision by 7th April 2017.

The RLACs have been tasked with getting the message out to the membership that the proposed changes should not be allowed to happen and get as many members supporting the campaign to stop the proposed changes from taking place.

There is an online petition at <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/173099>

There is draft wording for an e-mail to send to your MP at [www.feedingfatcats.co.uk](http://www.feedingfatcats.co.uk)

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Unite Legal Department has produced a leaflet which highlights the proposed changes and sets out what action members can take. There is every chance that the Government will not follow through on this proposal if we are able to gather enough support against it.

## Personal Injury Case Uptake

The Legal Department is continuing to monitor the uptake of personal injury claims within the Regions to ensure that members are benefitting from Unite Legal Services and not pursuing a claim with non panel lawyers where they are likely to receive a substandard service and lose 25% of any compensation.

Meetings are taking place with relevant panel law firms to ensure that solicitors are regularly attending branches/events and taking the initiative to get the message out to members that their personal injury claims should be pursued via Unite. By providing a supervisory service and effectively marketing that service, we should see an increase in the number of personal injury claims being pursued by members.

## 11.2 Affiliated services

A full report was given, the main points being;

### Retired Member

Plus The positive trend in the numbers of RMP members continues and there are now 56,921 people in the programme, an increase of 1,476 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 £1,479,946 per annum.

A breakdown of RMP members and 'Retired Free' members by region is shown below:

Region	RMP Mems	Retired Free
EM	3,712	8,592
GI	90	7
LE	10,954	26,588
NE	7,543	22,791

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NI	681	2,732
NW	9,298	25,572
RI	28	1,202
SC	4,315	11,078
SE	5,437	12,828
SW	5,012	12,531
WA	4,265	11,306
WM	4,956	13,186
	56,291	148,413

We are in the process of redesigning the RMP programme. This will include a number of new products and services and a total revamp of the marketing literature and communications. This is likely to be ready in April.

## Member gets

Member The scheme continues to grow with a total of 72,254 members joining Unite as a result. This is an increase of 12,273 since the last report. Over 50,000 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 £12.75 in subscriptions going forwards.

A breakdown of activity by region is shown below:

Region	MGM Mems	MGM Paid
EM	5481	3489
GI	271	132
LE	15476	11037
NE	7528	5245
NI	1388	760
NW	10334	7217
RI	970	430

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SC	6480	5000
SE	4731	3413
SW	8276	5882
WA	4198	2925
WM	7121	4673
	72254	50203

As mentioned in the previous report, the majority of members recruited now are coming from a small number of people, and many of these are reps.

We have therefore decided to review the scheme, assess its performance and see how it can be modified to better reflect its original aims.

## Drivercare

The relaunch of Drivercare has reversed the downward trend in membership of the scheme. As at the end of January there were 61,693 members in the scheme, an increase of 5,411 since the last report. This demonstrates that the outbound activity being undertaken by Hardy Evans is raising awareness of the scheme and showing positive results.

The combined membership of the RTC and Passenger Transport sectors stands at 166,442 and a substantial number of these members could have Drivercare. We will be targeting these members throughout 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 36 enquiries for this service and 12 appointments have been confirmed.

## Apprentices

The toolkits continue to be a popular recruitment aid and a total of 650 were sent out in 2016. These were distributed at over 100 work sites with the largest orders coming from:

Company	Quantity
Babcock	80
BAE	60
Delphi Diesel	27

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National Grid	22
BMW	21
Western Power	20
City and County of Swansea	15
GKN	15
WPD	14
Tata	9

Invoices were sent to solicitors in December to cover the cost of the kits despatched in 2016.

More information about the toolkits is shown at Appendix 1.

The kit contains:

- 5 Metre Tape Measure
- 12" (300mm) Steel Ruler
- 8" (200mm) Adjustable Wrench
- 16 oz Hammer, Ball Pein Head with Hickory Handle
- 6" (150mm) Hacksaw Frame, C/W Blades
- Insulated Crosstip Screwdriver – King Dick Insulated 146 Screwdriver, 100mm Blade, fits PH1, 2, 3 and PZ1, 2, 3
- Insulated Slotted Screwdriver – 100mm Blade, 4mm Tip
- 180mm Combination Pliers, Heavy Duty, with Flat, Cutting and Round Segmented Blade All inside heavy duty plastic Tool Box, 16" overall length

The Apprentice Toolkit will now be adapted to fit the Construction Sector.

## Assistance for self-employed

Since the last report, 261 tax refund enquiries have been received and 249 application packs have been despatched. We have asked the affiliate providers to assess how many are for members who work for an agency, bogus self-employed company or temporary self-employed.

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So far 88 packs have been returned and processed. As a result of the claims already processed, Unite members have received refunds totalling £5,312.95 an average of £87.09 per member.

The tax return deadline was 31 January and 27 urgent enquiries were received during the month. These were all processed before the deadline.

Unite Tax Refund are currently promoting help for self-employed members with discounted fees for tax returns and other accountancy services (See Appendix 2). They are also continuing to assist industry sectors including: Health, Civil Aviation, Aerospace, HGV/Transport, Taxi Drivers, Oil & Gas (including offshore), and MOD.

A marketing plan has been distributed to the regions to help raise awareness to the service and that refunds can be sought for 4 tax years prior.

A review of fees has been undertaken and the Unite service is currently one of the cheapest in the UK for the service with fees being 25% of refunds and £150 per tax return.

## Vauxhall Partners Car Purchase Scheme

A total of 3,168 members have now registered with the programme. Vauxhall are very pleased because two-thirds of these registrations have been made by members registering online rather than when they visit the showroom (and register after being prompted by the member of staff who asks if they are a Unite member). This demonstrates that the advertising is working and is making members aware of the programme. At the end of the year a total of 1,097 vehicles had been sold. This is an increase of 172 since the last report.

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