

Unite Policy Manual

2011

Policy as determined by the Unite Policy Conference 2010
and Actions taken as at September 2011



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Economic and industrial strategy

Including manufacturing, defence, science, energy, nationalisation, taxation and fuel poverty

Economy

Unite policy is to develop an alternative credible strategy for world economic development to counter the neo-liberal policies currently dominating governments across the world. In particular policy requires the union to examine the role of the EU in regard to procurement rules; privatisation of public services and its policies on pensions. Unite policy also recognises that public sector growth is essential to the rebuilding of the economy and industry. It also supports the removal of the debt economy and the cancelling of debts of the under developed nations.

Unite is also committed to use its resources to defend workers' jobs and conditions from being undermined by employers seeking to import cheap labour and specifically to protect trade union members who are self-employed.

Taxation

Unite has called for an examination and revisions of tax law to address the avoidance of tax which is costing the UK exchequer in excess of £26 billion a year. Unite is in favour of a return to progressive taxation and an end to tax evasion.

Unite is in favour of a change to the method of payment of employers' national insurance contributions. Unite policy is to see NI collected as a percentage of employers' total wage bill in order to redress the anomaly arising out of a trend to part time work.

Unite is also calling for home workers to receive an increased tax allowance and for the union to carry out investigations to launch a national campaign to highlight the growing number of members working from home.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has produced submissions to the Labour Party Policy review on an alternative economic strategy, and it is currently exploring the establishment of a trade union funded think tank to develop new ideas which are based on trade union and labour values.

It is also creating a trade union group in parliament committed to the values and ideas of trade unionists and is working with a variety of think tanks and outside economists as well as building associations with campaigning organisations such as False Economy and UK Uncut.

The Government has recently announced its intention to consult on taxation changes which would bring national insurance contributions in to the general income tax rate. The union is considering fair taxation policies as part of its overall approach to an alternative economic strategy. The calculation of national insurance will form part of that review. The union has already published as part of its strategy on an alternative economic strategy a leaflet on Fair Wages and Tax Justice for All in July this year.

Manufacturing

Unite is committed to campaigning in support of UK manufacturing and has demanded that government provides more pro-active support and interventionist action. It is in favour of a Minister being appointed with responsibility to support the sector and to introduce tighter controls to prevent high tech and high skilled jobs being exported at the expense of UK workers. This should be coupled with support for the EMF petition to the European Parliament to improve the competitiveness of the Telecoms infrastructure industry.

Unite policy also includes campaigning for government procurement to be used as a mechanism for supporting UK manufacturing jobs and for sustained investment in the UK Defence industry and support for the automotive industry as well as the shipbuilding, mechanical and electrical design industry and many other jobs within the supply chain of civil and naval nuclear industry.

Unite also seeks to remove obstacles to reserved contracts to enable organisations such as Remploy to more easily bid for work.

Unite is also supporting the aerospace and airline industries and counter claims that the only way to tackle climate change is to stop flying. To this end Unite policy is to lobby government to support the industry in its efforts to improve fuel efficiency.

Demands are made for UK banks particularly those owned by the UK taxpayer to be required to provide assistance and easier credit to companies, including SMEs, for investment.

The union's campaign must also address the high cost of energy to industry and ensure that the UK manufacturing has a level playing field with its European competitors.

Unite will campaign across the trade union movement, and by using its political influence, in defence of UK manufacturing jobs.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite is lobbying on this issue with Labour MPs, Government, and Employers' Federations. It also contributes to a number of policy panels on manufacturing which address the needs and actions that manufacturing in the UK require to sustain existing jobs and provide growth for the future. Unite also works with other manufacturing trade unions through the TUC Working Group on manufacturing to contribute to representations to government on manufacturing.

Unite has included the need to support manufacturing in all its publications relating to an alternative economic policy. In June 2010 *Manufacturing; Into the Future* was published by Unite setting out our policy and campaign objectives http://Manufacturing_Into_The_Future.pdf. A new manufacturing strategy document is also being produced.

In the last year individual national manufacturing campaigns have centred around Johnnie Walkers in Scotland, Cadbury's and Bombardier Transport.

Unite is a founder member of the Associate Parliamentary Group on Manufacturing created to raise the profile of manufacturing in Parliament. Unite also gave written evidence to the Business Select Committee on government assistance to industry in August 2010. *continued...*

Unite has been campaigning for skilled apprenticeships in manufacturing, in addition to leading the unions and Sector Skills Councils and the Manufacturing Skills Alliance to campaign for retention of high skilled and high tech jobs in the UK. Unite's submission and evidence to the Skills Commission on technician and higher level skills can be seen at

http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Skills_Commission_inquiry_into_technician_and_higher_level_skills_Unite_response2May_2011.pdf

Unite also made a written submission to DBIS/DECC on the Low Carbon Skills Challenge

http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_submission-meeting_the_low_carbon_skills_challenge_final_formatted_June_2010.pdf

Both these submissions argued strongly for the retention of high skilled jobs.

In its evidence to the Ministry of Defence equipment and technology review earlier this year Unite made a clear connection between government decisions on defence cuts and the impact on wider manufacturing issues **http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_response_to_MoD_consultation_final.pdf**.

Unite participated in a demonstration and rally in August this year for supporters of Remploy in the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire area. The rally was called as part of the campaign against the closure of 54 Remploy factories when the funding runs out in 2011. The Campaign aim is to get the loading in Remploy workshops for disabled workers up from 50% now to 100% with work from public bodies and to keep these factories open. The union also submitted responses to government consultation on supported employment and a remit was sent to the EC from the National Disabled Members Committee.

High level discussions with new nuclear companies have taken place about the shape of agreements and UK jobs content. The union is drawing up a matrix of UK renewable industries and information on new build sites and maintenance contracts and liaising with Regional Secretaries over recognition. An accord has been signed with Renewable UK.

Unite has also included reference to energy prices in its submission to the Labour Party policy review and the manufacturing policy document – Manufacturing: Into the Future. The submission to the Labour Party Review included reference to government funding for manufacturing and drew comparisons with the French (FSI) and German (KfW) strategic investment fund models.

Science

Unite policy demands that the government manufacturing agenda provides for private companies to set aside a reasonable percentage of income for R&D. Policy also seeks to have government increase incentives, funding and investment in R&D. Unite has asserted that the future success of the

UK in a global economy will be based on the invention and innovation of scientists and engineers and has called on the Executive Council to establish a cross sectional conference to discuss the science industry and to elect a committee capable of furthering and informing the union's work in this area.

ACTION TAKEN

On the issue of R&D investment, Unite has presented the argument in all its submissions to government at all levels and it forms part of the union's publications on manufacturing. In meetings with manufacturing groups and policy forums, this policy is recognised as vital to the future sustainability of manufacturing in the UK. Unite first made representations on this subject in evidence to the Innovation and Skills Select Committee in 2008. More recently in its submission to the Business Select Committee enquiry in to Skills reference was made to the union's opposition to cuts in resources for science research.

http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_BISCommitteeFutureofHigherEducation_2011_FINAL.pdf

The union is also a member of the Alliance for Science and has played an active role in its deliberations. The Assistant General Secretary (AGS) for Manufacturing has raised the issue with the chemical industry Sector Skills Council (SSC) and discussions will take place with appropriate AGSs regarding the establishment of a science industry committee.

Energy

Unite is in favour of a balanced energy policy which includes coal, renewables and nuclear. It supports the retention of the nuclear industry within government control. It supports the renationalisation of the power generation industry and the national grid as well as support for

investment in clean coal and carbon capture plants.

Unite policy is to press UK and Scottish governments for a co-ordinated public sector led strategy to secure maximum benefits to indigenous industries and communities.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has played a full role through the TUC in a campaign with the Energy Intensive Users Group (EIUG) which has produced two reports on the contribution that the energy intensive sector can make to low carbon transformation across the economy. It has established links with Consumer Focus and Which and joined in a joint initiative on smart meters.

High level discussions with new nuclear companies about the shape of agreements and UK jobs content are also taking place.

Nationalisation

In addition Unite is in favour of the renationalisation of the steel industry. It also supports the People's Charter which calls for energy, transport, water, post and telecommunications to be in public ownership.

ACTION TAKEN

Whilst in the current political climate progress on this aim has been limited, the Unite motion to the 2011 TUC Congress following compositing included this demand and was passed by Congress.

The issue has also been referred to the relevant National Officers for discussion in the NISCs.

Fuel poverty

Unite policy is to lobby government to ensure that fuel poverty is eradicated.

ACTION TAKEN

This will form part of the union's alternative economic strategy.

Employment Rights including Redundancy

Unite is opposed to and seeks the repeal of the anti trade union laws introduced during the 1980s and is committed to campaign for the introduction of legislation which provides a framework of positive rights in accordance at least with ILO minimum standards.

Unite policy includes within this framework:

- the right to organise industrial action, including solidarity action, without the threat of legal proceedings by employers and for workers taking lawful industrial action to be protected from dismissal;
- provide employment rights from day one of employment;
- allowing every worker to be represented individually and collectively by a trade union on any issue;
- extending paid time off for all family - friendly leave provided by statute;
- allowing unions to trigger statutory equal pay audits and appoint equality reps with statutory rights on a par with these for workplace, safety and learning reps;
- allowing unions to choose to conduct workplace ballots;
- the abolition of restrictive balloting and industrial action notice procedures;
- the right to strike and the right to automatic reinstatement for taking lawful industrial action;
- strengthening unfair dismissal legislation, ensuring an enforceable right to reinstatement;
- improving time off and facilities for union reps and lay officials;
- strengthening protection against exploitation and discrimination of migrant, agency, temporary workers, women, black, disabled, young and

LGBT workers and those in smaller firms;

- ensuring workers receive proper compensation when their employer is declared bankrupt;
- ensuring pensions, training and equality are included as issues on which collective bargaining must take place when statutory recognition is awarded, and
- Statutory sectoral forums to establish minimum terms and conditions.

The union's policy extends to campaigning against any further weakening of employment and trade union rights and to engage with its Parliamentary group to ensure their support for these policies.

Unite supports the People's Charter and is committed to build support for the Charter in workplaces and communities.

Unite also supports the content of the Trade Union Rights and Freedoms Bill and is opposed to any government which seeks to restrict the rights of public service workers to take industrial action.

It is in favour of promoting the incorporation into the Human Rights Act a right to strike which will allow for participation in strike action without a breach of contract or grounds for dismissal, either at common law or under the statutory unfair dismissal regime. There would be no civil liability for trade union officials or workers who organise, call or take part in strike action and no liability of a trade union in damages where their members or officials have organised, called or taken strike action.

Union policy also demands that further research be carried out into the impact of ECJ decisions in the cases of Laval, Viking, Ruffert and Luxembourg on trade union rights and the Posted Workers Directive and is in favour of a Europe wide campaign to counter the impact of these rulings.

ACTION TAKEN

Many of the motions and composites before the 1st Rules Conference held in June 2010 were of course drafted before the general election and with the expectation that Unite would be pursuing these issues with a Labour Government. The outcome of a Conservative led Coalition has meant that of all issues to be taken forward this topic, worker and trade union rights, is one where the union will get the least hearing from the new Government. However, the following steps have been taken.

Lawful Industrial Action (Minor Errors) Bill

Members of the Unite Parliamentary Group were mobilised to support John McDonnell MP's private member's bill – Lawful Industrial Action (Minor Errors) Bill on 22 October 2010. The Bill was talked out by the Government benches but had that not been the case there were insufficient Labour, including Unite, MPs in attendance to ensure that the Bill passed to the new stage.

The General Secretary has attended the Unite Parliamentary Group and made clear the union's expectations with regard to employment legislation and trade union rights.

New Politics, Fresh Ideas

In January/February 2011 the Labour Party launched its New Politics, Fresh Ideas initiative. Regional Political Officers were asked to ensure that the issue of trade union rights was raised at as many of the local consultative meetings as possible.

Resolving Workplace Disputes and other proposals

On 27 January 2011 the Government published its consultative proposal to "reform" the Employment Tribunal system. The union submitted a comprehensive rebuttal of the proposals as its contribution in the consultative process.

At around the same time the Government published:

- the Employers' Charter - showing how to sack with impunity and moving into the spring, Ministers called for further legislative changes as follows:
- a compensation cap for discrimination case awards – which received a Second Reading on 9th September 2011
- restricting Regulations on collective redundancy and the TUPE regulations

The Business Secretary, Vince Cable MP, has told trade unions that although they still enjoy certain residual rights should they use these rights he may legislate to remove them. Tory back benchers and the Mayor of London, informed by right wing think tanks, are calling for up to a 50% threshold in industrial action ballots and the ending of trade union facility time in the public sector. *continued...*

Employment Law Group

The union has been represented at meetings of this new parliamentary group, chaired by Kelvin Hopkins MP, which has been formed to campaign against the Government's proposals set out in Resolving Workplace Disputes.

The ELG acknowledges that it may have to expand its remit should the Government bring forward proposals to legislate on trade union rights and other collective issues.

National Policy Forum

At Labour's National Policy Forum (NPF) on 25th June, the responsible shadow minister, John Denham MP, was challenged over the apparent lack of front bench opposition to Resolving Workplace Disputes. As is often the case at the NPF, the union was not able to pursue this with the shadow minister who did acknowledge the link between individual and collective rights.

TUC Congress

Unite successfully moved motions C1 on Trade Union Rights and E4 on Agency Workers. Opposition to Resolving Workplace Disputes was contained within motion C2 on The Government's Deregulation Agenda.

The General Secretary spoke at the Institute of Employment Rights fringe and AGS Tony Burke spoke at the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions fringe.

Labour Party Conference

Unite hosted a fringe on Wednesday 28th September entitled The Right to Strike in Britain and Europe: why are we the poor relation? with Len McCluskey, Unite General Secretary; Professor Keith Ewing, President of Institute of Employment Rights; Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty International and Martin Mayer, Unite Executive Council as speakers.

Unite played a central role in achieving new ILO standard for domestic workers at International Labour Conference in June 2011.

The issue of European Court of Justice (ECJ) rulings and Posted Workers has been raised continuously with the TUC. The issue of the ECJs has also been raised formally inside the Labour Party through the Britain in the World Policy Forum and will be the subject of a joint meeting with the Labour Party Prosperity at Work Commission. The Research Department has been asked to carry out more research into this issue.

Minimum Wage

Unite is in favour of a national minimum wage which should equate to a living wage and be paid to all adult workers from the age of 18. Unite policy also supports the payment of a premium rate for work in excess of normal hours and unsocial hours for workers on the NMW. Policy is also in favour of the idea of a European minimum wage.

Unite has called for a High Pay Commission to be created to review and consider proposals to restrict disproportionate remuneration such as maximum wage ratios and bonus taxation across both the private and public sectors. To this end Unite will support campaigns for a High Pay Commission and will lobby for a National Maximum Wage.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite makes an annual submission to the Low Pay Commission on the subject of the minimum wage. It also contributes oral evidence at the Commission's hearings. The 2011 submission can be seen at:

http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_Submission_to_the_LPC_Consultation_on_the_NMW_-_Sep_2011.pdf

The union's policies relating to the National Minimum Wage (NMW) are reflected in the submissions made and the TUC submission also reflects the same objectives.

The NMW is an ongoing campaign for the National Young Members Committee and Unite also made a submission to the Will Hutton enquiry in to Fair Pay in the Public sector which included reference to wage differentiation –

http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_Fair_Pay_Review_Response_final.pdf

Following the creation of a High Pay Commission by the think tank Compass, Unite made a detailed submission in line with this policy and invited the Commission to meet with Unite activists from key sectors as part of its research enquiry.

A copy of the submission can be seen at **http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_submission_to_the_High_Pay_Commission_final.pdf**

Statutory redundancy

The union is in favour of improvements in the current statutory redundancy payments scheme. Such improvements to include:

- an increase in the statutory redundancy payments to include a social package attached to redundancy pay that better our best European counterparts and amendment of the redundancy regulations to ensure the protection of negotiated agreements when faced with redundancy;
- improvements in the statutory redundancy pay so that a “weeks pay” should mean “a weeks actual pay” inclusive of shift premium, bonus and overtime earnings with no monetary limits, and remove the limit on service;
- improved statutory consultation rights in redundancy situations;
- raising the value of the £30K tax free allowance to a more acceptable level;
- a reduction in the qualifying period for Statutory Redundancy Pay;

- for the redundancy scheme to be amended to include the pay that an employee received when working for an employer full time if they are working part-time for the same employer at the time of redundancy;

The union also demands legislation to give enhanced information, consultation and negotiation rights to workplace representatives regarding business restructuring and, in particular, on decisions likely to lead to business closures or workplace redundancies.

Union policy seeks a level playing field to protect UK workers from being the easy option when it comes to company re-organisation and closures and seeks to outlaw the outsourcing of redundant posts.

Unite policy is to get government to introduce legislation to protect workers who find themselves redundant because their employers went into administration/receivership and to introduce a Redundancy Protection Fund (RPF) and to make those workers who are made redundant due to administration/receivership preferred creditors, for all monies they are owed.

ACTION TAKEN

Matter to be raised with the Labour Party and will hopefully become part of Labour Party policy.

Working Time

Unite is opposed to the opt out from the working time directive by the UK government and is committed to campaign for the ending of the opt out.

Unite is further committed to end the current Bank Holiday legislation in order to protect those workers in the retail and manufacturing sectors who are subject to 7 day contractual working including Saturdays and Sundays.

ACTION TAKEN

The issue of the Working Time Directive (WTD) again continues to be raised through the TUC and at the Labour Party where it will be the subject of further discussion between Britain in the World and Prosperity at Work Commissions. National Officers have been reminded to highlight the benefits of the Working Time Directive as Health & Safety legislation and protection for workers.

The matter of seven day contractual working and bank holidays to be raised with National Officers.

Hostile Takeovers

Unite policy is in favour of the introduction of a “Cadbury Law” which prevents a debt ridden multi-national from acquiring further debt and taking over salient British owned businesses.

Union policy is to campaign to ensure that when takeovers occur legally binding legislation is in place to protect our members.

ACTION TAKEN

Part of Unite motion to TUC Congress 2011.

Unite has also made submissions and given evidence to the Select Committee on this issue.

Agency labour

Unite is opposed to the exploitation of agency labour to undermine the terms and conditions that trade unions are trying to improve in work places.

Unite is in favour of agency workers having the same terms and conditions and rates of pay as full time workers in the workplace.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has been involved in consultations and lobbying of government on the implementation of the Agency Workers directive in the UK. The new regulations coming in to force on 1st October 2011 do not in the opinion of Unite meet the requirements of the Directive and Unite tabled an emergency motion at 2011 TUC Congress calling for the TUC to explore legal action against the UK Government which was passed.

Unite has been working with the TUC throughout the consultations on the regulations and the government’s guidance. A guide to the regulations for organisers and negotiators has been published.

Victimisation

The policy of Unite is to give full support to any Unite representatives who are subject to harassment, victimisation, de-recognition or dismissal for trade union duties or activities. And to support the ongoing legal campaign and support for Unite members in all industries, who have been the victims of blacklisting.

ACTION TAKEN

Individual cases have and will continue to be dealt with by the union’s legal department

Public services

Public services are a social necessity and should not be a vehicle for private profit. The fight for public provision of public services is fundamental to the industrial strategy of Unite. Unite policy is to support workers in struggle to protect and provide the public provision of public services.

Following the 2010 general election union policy is focussed on the defence of the public sector and opposition to privatisation and outsourcing in any form.

Working class people and their families face growing disadvantage and poverty through job loss, pay cuts, and the loss of decent pensions. Unite policy commits the union to defend the weakest and most vulnerable in society from suffering from cuts in the NHS, education, housing provision and maintenance, and care and welfare for the young, the elderly, and mentally and physically handicapped, whilst bankers continue to be paid huge bonuses.

Policy is to defend members' conditions of employment, regarding pay and pensions, and to press for further investment in training the workforce to meet the needs of the future. Unite is opposed to public sector wage freezes

Policy in the public sector will highlight and oppose the unacceptable inequalities within our society, taking every possible step to fight for social justice. This will include defending the jobs, pay and pensions of our members.

Unite will play a leading role in organising a coalition of unions, public service campaigners (such as Defend Council Housing and Keep Our NHS Public), pensioners, disability, patients, unemployed and other such groups to take action to defend the Welfare State and public services.

Unite will encourage all its members to form similar locally-based coalitions in their local communities to defend the Welfare State and public services, and will provide resources where necessary for them to do so.

Policy is to oppose privatisation, the contracting out of public services to the private sector, the use of PFI to fund such services, social enterprise, and "marketisation" and fragmentation in the public sector, recognising that this agenda leads directly to worse public services and undermines universal access.

Policy is opposed to commissioning being done through a competitive tendering process and is in favour of public sector bodies adopting a commissioning process that is transparent and consensual, involving users, care providers and trade unions. Unite policy is for all cleaning contracts to be brought in-house, and for all cleaning staff to be directly employed by the NHS.

Unite is against any cuts in mental health provision and recognises that older adults with mental health issues are not afforded the same level of support by the NHS.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite challenged the privatisation agenda in its response to the Government's initial 'Open Public Services' consultation, and other relevant consultations, and is campaigning against the proposals set out in the white paper published in July 2011.

The Unite Research Department has written a guide to social enterprises, mutuals and privatisation which gives a short outline of Government policy, a short explanation of the jargon used and then some practical steps that reps can take, on campaigning and on what they should look to include in evaluation criteria and contracts, etc. when services are outsourced which can be seen at http://www.unitetheunion.org/pdf/Unite_SocialEnterprisesandPrivatisation_2011.pdf

In March 2011, Unite published 'The Shrinking State – why the rush to outsource threatens our public services'. There have also been specific initiatives against privatisation and outsourcing within particular sectors (e.g. health, local authorities).

Unite campaigns and materials have made both the broad case in defence of public services (e.g. Don't Break Britain; response to 'Open Public Services' proposals) as well as within specific sectors (e.g. 'Unite 4 our NHS', 'Unite for Our Society', 'Protecting, People, Pay and Pensions in Local Government', 'Justice for All'). Unite was part of the national 'March for the Alternative' rally in March 2011 and has produced its own materials arguing the case for an alternative to the assault on public services and the welfare state.

A number of Unite briefings and responses to Government consultations and parliamentary inquiries have also addressed specific areas such as the NHS reforms, local government services, council housing, funding of higher education, and cuts to the voluntary sector.

Unite continues to campaign against the threat to public sector pensions ('Protecting Pensions for our Public Servants') whilst with the TUC and other unions, has worked on trying to deliver a framework of negotiation with government to secure a better outcome and its disproportionate impact on women, Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAEM), disabled and young people. Unite is currently preparing to ballot all members in public sector on industrial action in defence of pensions.

Unite has produced campaign materials arguing the case for an alternative to the assault on public services and the welfare state, including investment in public services, a fair taxation policy and a living wage for all. Campaigns against the spending cuts and pay freezes have also been run in specific sectors.

Unite Stress and Mental Health Campaign was launched in June 2011. This included information on stress, mental health and a disability equality negotiators guide.

Education

Unite policy is committed to the provision of access to education being open to all. Policy is opposed to any increase in student fees and is in favour of an alternative method of funding education. Unite policy is opposed to the abolition of the student fee cap as this would lead to the richest and most powerful institutions charging the

highest fees and benefiting most by an unregulated market in education.

Unite will campaign vigorously against proposed budgetary cuts in the areas of further and adult education.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has been at the front of this campaign to highlight the errors of current Government policy to increase student fees. Unite made a direct submission to the Browne Review arguing the cost of higher education should be spread more broadly across student contribution, the public purse and employers bearing their share of costs. These would be either by way of a "graduate tax" on Employers who take on students or by switching student debt to employers. Unite's position outlined in the conference motion is also mirrored by other trade unions.

On the detail of the Browne Review and of the Higher Education White Paper Unite made two submissions one to Lord Browne and the other to the BIS Select Committee into HE link [http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_BIScommitteeFuture-ofHigherEducation_2011_FINAL\[1\].pdf](http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_BIScommitteeFuture-ofHigherEducation_2011_FINAL[1].pdf) and

[http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_submission_on_the_White_Paper_HigherEducation_2011_FINAL\[1\].pdf](http://www.epolitix.com/fileadmin/epolitix/stakeholders/Unite_submission_on_the_White_Paper_HigherEducation_2011_FINAL[1].pdf)

Oral evidence was given by the National Officer (NO) to the BIS Select Committee on 5th April 2011, and the NO and AGS were also in attendance in the demonstrations to stop the increase in student fees with Unite members joining the demonstrations through Whitehall and Manchester. Unite continues to raise these issues, the latest being the reduction in higher education funding in Northern Ireland affecting our membership in Queens and Ulster Universities as well as Stranmillis & St Marys Colleges. It is taking the issue directly to both Stormont and Westminster government departments.

Unite has also been deeply involved through the "Save the EMA" campaign including the detailed planning and organising for marches and meetings of students and campaigners at Westminster and other parts of the UK, including a lobby of the Houses of Parliament on the 9th December 2010 and the vote and debate on the 19th January 2011. Unite has been a fundamental part of the joint union campaigns "United For Education" link at <http://unitedforeducation.org.uk> and the "Save the EMA" Campaign link <http://emacampaign.org.uk>

Unite members have raised petitions and attended lobbies and marches including meetings of the various groups supporting the Save the EMA Campaign. Unite has also produced its own material issued to stewards and highlighted the issues on its web pages at

http://www.uniteunion.org/news_events/latest_news/unite_backs_day_of_action_to_d.aspx

Welfare

The welfare state provides an essential safety net for many working class people – particularly at times of illness, unemployment, in retirement, or during disability. Unite policy condemns the current attacks on the welfare state and calls on central and local governments to review policies that make life-threatening cuts to vital care packages for severely disabled and elderly people and ensure that no disabled people are denied essential care.

Unite policy supports funding for the care of the elderly and infirm throughout the UK to be

uniform. Unite opposes the widespread closing of local authority care homes which totally disregards the detrimental effects this has on communities' most vulnerable people. The union seeks to have such closures reversed and the necessary financial resources put into this sector to provide good quality care, free at the point of need.

The union is committed to campaign vigorously in defence of the welfare state and against any welfare cuts and to work with other broad-based organisations that share our campaign objectives.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite's welfare reform campaign has joined forces with PCS, other unions and political organisations to call on the Government to rethink its welfare reform plans. There was a lobby of Parliament in March 2011 against the cuts to welfare benefits affecting disabled people as well as submissions to government consultations.

An example of Unite's local campaigns was in Bristol where the union organised a mass lobby of Bristol City Council's Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee in July. The union expressed outrage that every homecare assistant looking after the elderly in their homes currently employed directly by Bristol City Council would lose their job as the work was contracted out to cheaper private sector providers.

Housing

Unite affiliates to Defend Council Housing. Unite policy is in favour of more social housing and for local authorities to undertake new build and refurbishment strategies. This policy has been reflected in the work being done on the union's alternative economic strategy.

Community services

Unite policy states that it is essential that public spending on both statutory and voluntary sector services is increased in order to ensure that people receive help and support that they need and to prevent the economic inequalities in the UK from becoming worse. It condemns the current crisis in relation to funding and the moves to privatise services.

Policy calls for a voluntary sector that complements the public sector, not compete with it. Unite is in favour of the restoration of appropriate funding models, which reflect real community needs and reverse the trend to competitive tendering. Policy should focus on the quality of services to local communities, in which all Unite members have a stake and promote the value of the public sector and restore the independence of the voluntary sector and ensure that it is not used as a vehicle for the transfer of public services

Unite is opposed to many young people currently being obliged to work as unpaid interns in order to gain experience so that they can try for paid jobs.

Unite policy supports the need to have high quality volunteering opportunities available, and to ensure that members' jobs are not replaced by "volunteer" labour.

ACTION TAKEN

'Unite for Our Society' campaign was launched in March 2011 in response to the devastating cuts to the voluntary sector. The union is campaigning to ensure that voluntary sector organisations can best serve those who rely on their support, their staff, volunteers and society. "Choose Youth" campaigning for youth work funding and 'Little Society' campaigning specifically for Children's charities

There are currently numerous threats around the issue of volunteers including:

- Ensuring adequate support and training of volunteers;
- Ensuring volunteers do not replace paid workers;
- The number of volunteers decreasing due to voluntary sector cuts, despite Cameron's Big Society intentions;
- Increasing number of internships;
- A New Community Membership category to encourage Unite membership.

Unite is also in the process of updating the Unite guidelines 'Best Practice in Volunteering' which will form basis of encouraging Community Membership and underpin our campaign for high quality volunteering opportunities.

Related policy

Unite will seek from the British Government assurances that it will reinstate the reciprocal health agreement with Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man.

Equalities

Unite's policy is committed to equality for all and is campaigning for all legislation designed to promote respect and dignity is equality neutral across the rest of the community and society as a whole.

Unite is committed to the unity of working people irrespective of race, religion, language and nationality.

Unite is in favour of statutory rights for union equality reps and mandatory equal pay audits for all employers to include disabled workers.

- encourage women to become representatives and monitor involvement of women at workplace level
- elect union equality reps and negotiate with employers for paid release
- good workplace policies covering sexual harassment and domestic violence within the workplace, including recognition for Unite listening support network on harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Women

Unite policy is to establish and monitor a Unite Charter for Women encompassing the Women's Charter supported by the union and the TUC Women's Conference and to implement the charter at the workplace, in Unite the Union, the wider trade union and labour movement, and with relevant organisations that share our policy and aims.

Women at the Workplace

- an industrial campaign for equal pay regionally and nationally – mandatory pay audits incorporated into bargaining agendas of all our workplace negotiators
- ensuring union negotiators promote and check implementation of flexible working policies and choice, alongside enhanced paid maternity, paternity and parental leave
- a national campaign on breast screening and early detection through the workplace – particularly encouraged in workplaces where there is shift work

Women in the Wider Community

- a national campaign to challenge violent and abusive attitudes against women and girls and campaigning on the International Day to End Violence against Women
- continued support for a woman's right to choose
- gender balance in public appointments
- active support for Unite women in political and public life
- Unite involvement on International Women's Day 8th March regionally, nationally and internationally, and celebrating Women Chainmakers achievements on a minimum wage

Women in the Union

- Unite will strive to be an example of best practice in tackling under-representation and supporting the involvement of women, including recognition of childcare and other caring responsibilities, that women are more likely to be low paid and to be in part-time work and the value of union education, shadowing and mentoring
- Audit of women's involvement throughout Unite as the basis of a cohesive Action Plan on all women's involvement
- Promoting Unite Women's Week education course and United Together Women's Magazine

- Encouraging women members to build their involvement through direct contact e.g. reps surgeries where members can talk confidentially, and production of a short guide to getting involved in Unite.

Unite is opposed to anonymity for men accused of rape and condemns any such proposal as an attack on women, implying that all allegations of rape are not to be believed.

Unite supports campaigns against domestic violence and is committed to ensuring workplaces implement domestic abuse policies and sickness/absence policies which protect the lives and careers of victims of domestic violence.

ACTION TAKEN

The union has launched the Unite Charter for Women and produced the charter as a leaflet.

Unite has re-launched its Domestic Violence and Abuse Negotiators Guide and has continued its campaign including organising events around International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Additionally the union has negotiated agreements, included the guide in submissions to government consultations and in the Scotland Region work with the Scottish Parliament. Elimination of violence against women is also part of the Unite Organising for Equality courses and National Women's Week. Unite has also organised regional events on elimination of violence and abuse against women and in some regions have made links with football clubs for supportive activities.

The union has run national and regional briefings on the Equality Act 2010 for all officers, and produced a guide for access to union premises. In addition the union has been running regional and national courses for reps on organising for equalities as well specific courses for women, BAEM, disabled and young members.

Unite has continued working with TUC to campaign against discrimination and Unite motions have been successfully passed at TUC Equalities conferences as well as Congress.

Statutory rights for equality reps and mandatory pay audits have been included in all our campaigns and policy work on equalities.

BAEM

Unite is opposed to the practice of asking BAEM employees to provide evidence of their nationality and immigration status even when they have been with their employer for several years. Unite policy is in favour of fair and effective employment and anti-discrimination legislation to improve the lives of all people living and working in the United Kingdom.

Unite policy supports the union's Race Forward Campaign aiming to close the ethnic minority employment gap, tackle the pay gap for black

workers, address equality of opportunity in promotion, deal effectively with racial harassment, discrimination and bullying, promote fairness for black women workers, negotiate for Union Equality Reps, campaign for fair treatment for migrant workers and organise and recruit BAEM workers.

The union is also committed to ensure that race equality is an integral part of all Unite campaigns.

The union has called for the issue of Hate Crime to be part of its bargaining agenda on equality issues and recognises that this is a workplace issue.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has updated the Race Forward campaign materials and re-launched them in October 2010 as well as organising training for the National BAEM Committee. It has also updated the Unite "Racial Harassment Hurts" leaflet. In some regions the union has organised activities around elimination of racial harassment by linking with football clubs. The union has continued to work with Kick Racism out of Football.

Organised a "BAEM workers' health and safety" fringe meeting. Put in place an ethnic monitoring system in Unite, and organised events and produced a leaflet for Black History Month 2010. The union distributed "Tell it Like it is" card to highlight the main issue of concern for black workers.

DISABILITY

Unite policy is opposed to all forms of disability discrimination and is in favour of strengthening rights to protection from disability discrimination at work and in the wider community and increased funding for Access to Work to support disabled workers.

The union's policy calls for a National Campaign on Disability Equality at the workplace in all regions

and across industrial sectors, with progress monitored by Unite Regional and National Disabled Members Committees and reported quarterly to the Executive Council.

Unite is in favour of the promotion of the social model of disability within the union and within the workplace. It supports the inclusion of "Disability Leave" into workplace attendance policies, should this not already exist.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has re-launched the Disability Equality at Work Unite Negotiators' Guide and launched Unite's Stress and Mental Health campaign. It has responded to a number of government consultations including supported employment, Disability Living Allowance reforms and on access, organised a national disabled members' course and produced a badge and issued a press release on the International Day of Disabled People.

The Unite HIV/AIDS guide has been updated.

LGBT

Unite policy is aimed at building on past gains to ensure respect and dignity for LGBT workers and to ensure that LGBT equality is an integral part of everything the union does.

Unite policy includes campaigning throughout the labour movement for action to be taken by the government and others on every issue in order to meet full equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people. Such campaigns will include:

- To campaign to amend the Equalities Act to ensure that all public bodies have a legal duty to:
 - Combat discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity;
 - Actively tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic prejudice, harassment and violence;
 - Include a general and specific duty to promote equality and bring in positive action in those areas.

- To eradicate the two-tiered system of partnership law and marriage in order that same-sex and heterosexual people can have a choice of both
- To campaign for a review of legislation and Home Office practice in respect of asylum for LGBT people.
- To campaign to remove the exemption of religious institutions from the legislation.
- To continue the campaign to repeal the definition of gender dysphoria as a mental illness in the UK.

Unite opposed the signing of a revised EU Trade agreement (Cotonou Agreement) on grounds that it did not include a clause of non-discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

ACTION TAKEN

A monitoring system in Unite has been put in place.

As part of Unite organising campaign, Unite has used a 'Have Your Say' survey to follow up potential members and activists. This survey highlights the priority issues for LGBT workers.

Working with the International Department, have produced materials on LGBT rights around the world and the union has updated Unite LGBT publications.

Unite produced a poster, stickers and a badge for LGBT History Month 2010. Unite also took part in regional events for International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia and linked with football clubs to organise activities on elimination of homophobia and transphobia as well as establishing a link with Press for Change, a campaign organisation for trans equality.

Unite international motion that included opposition to the Cotonou Agreement was passed at the TUC LGBT conference.

Sexualisation of children

The union is opposed to the sexual exploitation of children in the media, in products directed at children and in the advertising of children's goods. It is committed to:

- raise awareness within the regions of this issue and its possible outcomes;
- campaign against this abuse of children;
- publicise who benefits commercially from such images;
- campaign to reduce the amount of sexual imagery of children in media;
- urge the Government to take appropriate action to challenge his abuse; and

- support campaigns against the sexual and commercial exploitation of women and children associated with the 2010 football tournament, the Olympic Games in 2012 and other major sporting events.

Human trafficking

Unite is opposed to the closure of the Metropolitan Police Unit dedicated to tackling human trafficking. Action on trafficking of women reflects the union's longstanding history in support of the most vulnerable workers. The need for a strong and effective domestic workers convention at the 2010 International Labour Conference is also an integral part of the campaign against human trafficking.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has supported this campaign and was a signatory to its petition to government and also organised a lobby and fringe meeting on this subject.

Migrant workers

Unite policy recognises the contribution made by migrant workers and their families to the economy and society in Britain. Unite is opposed to the exploitation of vulnerable migrant workers to undercut local labour and supports positive actions to address concerns which create unity rather than division among working people. These actions include:

- An end to pay and employment discrimination against migrant workers by employer and agencies which undermines terms and conditions for all workers.
- Full and equal employment rights from day one for all, including through mandatory pay audits and strict enforcement of the national minimum wage.

- Government legislation to regulate and penalise employment agency abuse of workers on its books in all sectors, in essence extend the remit of the gang masters licensing authority.
- Trade unions to seek agreements with agencies to guarantee equal terms and conditions for temporary workers.
- Measures to compel employers and sub-contractors to make full and proper use of labour exchanges, with a review of the role of Gangmasters.

- An amnesty for illegal migrants to assist those who are working or living in exploitative or coerced conditions.
- Mass recruitment of all workers into trade unions, where necessary targeting migrant workers in their own language.
- A substantial programme in the public and social sectors to build more houses and flats for rent at affordable rates.
- Adequate funding for educational initiatives designed to integrate migrant workers and their

families into our society while respecting and valuing their own cultural identity.

Unite supports ratification of the UN and ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers and confirms its support for the protection of everyone, regardless of immigration status. The union policy supports the amendment of current immigration legislation to remove discrimination against Black, Asian and Ethnic minority Workers.

Unite also supports the campaign to secure fair treatment for Moroccan workers in Gibraltar.

ACTION TAKEN

The union has included English for Speakers of other languages (ESOL) and other training for migrant workers in its submissions to government consultations.

Unite has also continued its campaign for equal rights for Moroccan workers in Gibraltar including producing a briefing, organising fringe meetings and taking legal cases.

Young people

Unite policy is to support Youth Fight for Jobs where it can and support their work of steering working class youth towards a positive campaign for a better future. The policy includes support for all apprentices to be paid at least the minimum wage, with a job guaranteed at the end and to oppose university fees.

Unite policy supports real, relevant and well paid employment opportunities for young people and is opposed to the government's welfare reform which seeks to minimise welfare support and drive claimants to take the most unsuitable and lowest paid jobs or face cuts in benefit.

ACTION TAKEN

The Unite National Young Members Committee visited parliament and met with Labour MPs to raise issues of NMW, apprenticeships and jobs for young people.

Education, Skills and training

Unite policy is committed to the establishment, development and review of a suitable Training and Development programme, to ensure that all officers, staff and accountable representatives are fully trained and compliant in all equality issues. The purpose of this Training and Development programme would be to enable dedicated, active and competent activists from within Unite the opportunity to apply for a post that would combine training, shadowing and work placement with a Unite Officer, aimed at building on the diversity within the Union and creating a diverse officer

corps that more ably reflects the diversity of the workplace and society.

Workplace training

Unite policy supports government funding of training and for such funds to be available to ensure that individuals are able to access quality and relevant training from local providers in such a way and at such a time that equips them to enter or re-enter the workplace.

ACTION TAKEN

A thorough audit of Education not only identified our resources and priorities, it also presented the Executive Council with an Action Plan, a Future Strategy, a Restructuring and Management Plan in November 2008 to July 2012.

An establishment of an educational service in Unite which has been centrally determined and (mainly) regionally delivered.

The Executive Council decided to concentrate on the union's core course provision, viz;

- 12 Day Workplace Representatives Introductory Certificate Course, (now concentrated into a 10 day Course);
- 10 Day Health & Safety Representatives' Introductory Certificate Course;
- 5 Day Unite Equality Representatives Course; and
- 10 Day Unite Union Learning Representatives Course.

As the union's Strategy for Growth (and its hundreds of 100% Campaign education courses grow to their thousands) it has an absolute requirement to train our reps to fulfil their responsibilities. The union will continue to train Reps to embed its Organising Strategy into their own workplaces.

ALL education courses have to reinforce Unite 3 pillars of:

- Organising
- Political awareness
- International Solidarity

A full statistical return for each region is automatically presented to the Executive Council Education Sub-Committee. Unite will meet the new Equality legislation and making equality impact assessments as it is committed to actively promoting equality and diversity.

Transport

Unite recognises the hugely important role public transport could and should play in society today and into the future. With ever increasing concerns about the environment, pollution and the pressing need for “green” solutions, there was never a more important time to finance and develop a fully integrated public transport system offering cheap and reliable interconnecting services as an alternative to the private car.

Unite policy recognises the need for improved public transport to meet the needs of our members and their communities.

Unite is committed to campaign to secure an expanded, land and water based public transport system that is fully integrated, accessible, reliable, publicly owned and designed as a public service not as a profit making exercise.

The union supports the Local Transport Act 2009 which seeks to give Public Transport Authorities (PTA's) increased powers to regulate and control their local public transport systems. In particular Unite supports the powers to introduce Quality Contracts under which the PTA regains control over the local bus network to specify routes, timetables, fares etc. which are then contracted out to one or more operator to run the service on the PTA's behalf. This will restore public accountability and control over our local public transport system and offer a real opportunity to improve and expand public transport provision to meet the challenges ahead.

The union supports:

- free bus passes for the over 60s.
- free public transport to children, young people, the unemployed and those in receipt of income support.
- public ownership of the public transport system, its expansion, full integration and rational planning.
- the availability and reliability of public transport.
- a decent standard of living and working conditions for all those working in the passenger transport industries.

The union opposes deregulation of transport services as these policies have led to increased fares, less frequent and less reliable services, and far fewer passengers using public transport for local journeys.

Unite fully supports Passenger Transport Industrial Sector's strategy to forge an alliance between workers and users in support of our vision for improved public transport services. This includes the vision to reverse the painful and costly failure of privatisation and the return in time of full public ownership and control of this essential public service as the only secure means of ensuring a well-planned integrated network of interconnecting services of high standard at low cost to the user.

ACTION TAKEN

The union has linked up with Mayoral Campaign 2011 for policy on effective river transport for passengers.

Unite has challenged the privatisation of the biggest ferry port in the UK (Dover) and is campaigning to stop the further privatisation of a further 21 major trust ports within the UK. It is challenging the government's bill on putting British Waterways into the Third Sector resulting in the company becoming a charity and becoming more reliant on volunteers.

Unite is working with Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) underway to promote and safeguard local public transport provision in conjunction with other unions and is continuing to campaign for accessible public transport for disabled people.

Joint work with Retired Members Association (RMA) has been undertaken to defend the free bus pass for the over 60s and Joint work with Passenger Transport Executive Group (PTEG) is in progress to extend free public transport to children, young people, the unemployed and those in receipt of income support.

The union will be seeking to have the Campaign for London Mayoral election to review its position to secure public ownership of the public transport system. Unite has also been working with ASLEF, RMT and the TSSA to produce a study into the benefits of renationalisation of the rail network for the labour party's rail policy consultation.

Pensions

The union supports a decent level of State Pension to be the foundation of all its members' retirement incomes. Unite policy is in favour of the restoration of the earnings link for the basic state pension.

Unite policy is in favour of the principles outlined in the government provisions which will oblige all employers to offer a minimum level of contributions to an employer sponsored scheme, or failing that to the new Government established NEST pension. Unite is supporting the legislation to compel employers to auto-enrol employees into pension schemes which meet a minimum standard, but is disappointed that this scheme is not being introduced sooner, but on a phased basis from 2013-2017.

Union policy supports the following reforms:

- reduce the Lower Earnings Limit and allow part-time earnings from more than one job to be combined for National Insurance purposes;
- expand the right for carers to build up an additional state pension for those looking after children up to age 18;
- increase the basis state pension to the Guarantee Pension Credit;
- ensure the commitment to increase the basic state pension annually in line with average earnings from 2010 is adhered to; and
- that the legislation that will compel employers to auto-enrol employees into pension schemes is introduced in a shorter timescale than planned and that the employer contribution rate is set higher than 3%.

The union is committed to continue to support members who are defending their company pensions and will campaign to defend attacks upon the pensions of public service workers.

Unite policy supports the management of members' pension funds being undertaken independently of the "parent" company and that the composition of Boards of Trustees

- have no less than 50% staff elected representation
- that 25% of the Trustees are nominated by the parent company
- that the Chairman of the Trustee Board is an independent Competent Professional and that the balance (25%) of Trustees are independent professionals appointed by the Trustee Board.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has continued to make the case for 50% member trustees.

Although there has been no specific campaign based on the specific reforms listed, the motion has conditioned the union's response to the Green Paper consultation on the reform of State Pensions. Unite has also been running a campaign in respect of the impact of the current Pensions Bill on women's state pension age where we produced a leaflet and organised a lobby of the parliament.

Unite has been centrally campaigning against discriminatory pension age changes which particularly affect older women in their 50s who have had caring responsibilities.

Unite has highlighted women's poverty in retirement in its pension campaign and submissions to government consultations.

The union has also been raising awareness on a pension loophole concerning BAEM people who go back to their homelands after retirement.

On the wider issue of pensions in the public and private sectors, Unite has been involved in all discussions with government ministers on plans for public sector pension reform and has been arguing strongly that the proposals being put forward are unfair and unjustified. The union has announced its intention to ballot all its members in the public sector for industrial action in conjunction with all other unions. The first day of action will take place on 30th November 2011. The General Secretary has established a central support unit to work with National Officers and activists on the build up to this event and the union is treating it as the highest priority issue for the whole union.

The union is also challenging all private sector employers that seek to undermine occupational schemes and the union has been campaigning specifically against proposals to use CPI instead of RPI as the inflation lever for pensions in both public and private sector schemes.

The union has produced an alternative pensions document for discussion within the union.

Health and Safety

Unite policy is opposed to the deregulation of health and safety and any privatisation of the H&S inspection regime. It is opposed to any reduction in the funding of the enforcement agencies.

Unite policy is also committed to ensuring that shift workers in the country get the correct health and safety recognition as in other European countries.

The union is also calling for recognition that driving accidents whilst on work duties be treated as industrial injuries as well as road traffic accidents. The union will campaign to have Government

introduce legislation to protect workers who find themselves injured in what are called no blame/fault accidents.

Unite is calling for improved time off and facilities for union reps and lay officials which applies equally to health and safety representatives

Unite policy is opposed to the UK opt out of the working time directive elements of which are subject to enforcement through the Health and Safety Executive and local authorities.

ACTION TAKEN

All these matters have been raised through the TUC and within the Labour Party especially the cuts to Health and Safety Inspectorate.

Unite has responded vigorously to the ConDem Government's review of Health & Safety legislation and in particular to the Government's Health & Safety proposals for manufacturing. Both the Young Review response and Lofstedt Response cover these issues. The point was made in the Lofstedt review response regarding making occupational road accidents RIDDOR reportable. This issue was also raised by Unite at the TUC Disability Conference and agreed to support.

Unite continues to promote its night work and shift work leaflet. In addition the shift work workshop at Hazards conference was run by Unite. The National Women's Committee and Unite Health & Safety have been raising awareness on the possible link of shift work to breast cancer. The union has produced some information and bargaining materials and raised this through the TUC women's conference.

Health and safety and equality

A number of the policies outlined in the equality section relate to H&S policy, particularly issues relating to bullying and harassment and violence against women and domestic abuse and specific reference to disability sensitive risk assessment and accessibility of health and safety for all.

ACTION TAKEN

Re-launched Disability Equality at Work Unite Negotiators' Guide and launched Unite's Stress and Mental Health campaign.

The union has updated the Unite HIV/AIDS guide.

The union organised a "BAEM workers' health and safety" fringe meeting.

Pleural plaques

The union is committed to campaign vigorously for compensation and justice for those suffering from Pleural Plaques.

ACTION TAKEN

Coverage of asbestos and Pleural Plaques is included in the recently published Unite Health and Safety guide.

This is a compensation issue as well and is being looked at by the union's legal department. The issue has been raised through the TUC and the Labour Party – and is an ongoing campaign.

Fit notes

Unite policy is concerned about the impact of the introduction of fit notes and the union will monitor this and pursue improvements where employee protection has been undermined.

ACTION TAKEN

Health and Safety e-bulletin has asked for information in the past and we continue to do so. Information on fit notes in the Unite HS guide and we promote the TUC fit note guidance.

Women and the menopause

The union recognises that many millions of women are currently working through the menopause. Unite believes that current work practices surrounding targets can have a negative impact on women as they experience the many symptoms associated with the menopause. The union further believes that there is scope for concern around age discrimination, sex discrimination and equal pay.

Unite policy supports the sharing of best practice with employers regarding the problems some women have when working through the menopause and favours the formulation of policies and procedures so that women's health is not put at risk and they are not disadvantaged in any other way.

ACTION TAKEN

The Gender Occupational Safety and Health (GOSH) event at the TUC in February focused on the menopause as an occupational health issue and highlighted new research. The union is continuing to promote the Unite leaflet on the menopause which includes Health and safety advice and a model policy.

Unite organised a fringe meeting and updated Unite women's health pack.

Paid time off for screening

Unite policy is in favour of everyone having the right to paid time off to attend health screening appointments.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite is campaigning to raise awareness on breast cancer and breast screening through meetings, leaflets and at conferences and placing on the bargaining agenda in many workplaces.

Some agreements in manufacturing and elsewhere do have paid time off for health screening of various sorts This will be raised with National Officers as a generic policy to be raised with employers and employers' bodies.

More work will be done as appropriate, for example new work on prostate issues which the health and safety unit will be doing.

Environment

Unite recognises that there is a climate emergency and that the catastrophic destabilisation of global climate represents the greatest threat that humanity faces. The union believes that Climate Change is an issue which requires action at local, national and international level if we are to safeguard the planet for future generations.

Unite supports urgent action being taken to reduce emissions and increase carbon capture. This to include the enactment of a programme of emergency measures with substantial emissions reductions in the short term of the order of 10 per cent by the end of 2010. Unite further supports public investment to stimulate the economy being directed towards green measures with investment made in energy efficiency and renewable energy, public transport and the retro-fitting of efficient insulation to existing housing stock.

The union also believes that the Forestry Commission is a world leader in sustainable forestry and is an invaluable tool in any Government's fight against Climate Change and therefore the union is opposed to the selling off forests to meet short term cost pressures.

Unite policy is to campaign for the prevention of the sale of Forestry Commission forests and to call for the increase of forestation through new planting to implement the Read report, including using our resources to pressurise and lobby the Government to protect the Forestry Commission from spending cuts. The union will also campaign for government action to encourage and persuade every person in the UK and Ireland to plant a tree, supervised by the Forestry Commission, as part of their personal contribution to tackle Climate Change.

The union supports the creation of Green workplace representatives in every workplace where Unite is recognised and supports the introduction and promotion of green technology in workplace processes, products and services.

Unite policy supports the development of "Green Skills" for a "low carbon" economy, and to this effect the union will coordinate an audit of skills required for the future from all sectors, identifying those areas that can produce greatest contribution to reducing carbon emissions.

ACTION TAKEN

The Save our Forest Campaign that Unite was involved in led to a U-turn by the Condem Government. A consultation led by the Bishop of Liverpool is now ongoing about what is the best option for the upkeep of our forests. However the Forestry Commission is still subject to the Spending Review 2010 (SRIO) reductions which will lead to 400 job losses.

Political

Union link with the Labour Party

Unite must be prepared for a great battle to defend our historic link with the Labour Party at local, regional and national level. The union is opposed to the introduction of donation caps which will seriously restrict the ability of trade unions to participate in the Labour Party as local

affiliations and financial support for constituency parties would become illegal. The union's policy will be to work with other affiliated trade unions to determine how this anticipated attack on trade union autonomy can be resisted and the link with Labour can be best defended.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite will continue to defend the Labour Party/trade union link with vigour – and against all-comers whether from the Party or within the union who want to break or diminish the link.

Labour party policy making process

Unite policy is to ensure that Labour's policies have a clear and unequivocal commitment to a new framework of trade union and employment rights, including the repeal of the laws brought in by the last Conservative government which have been

on the Statue Book for, in some cases, 30 years. Union policy is to work with the other 3 largest affiliates (Unison, GMB and CWU) to secure a policy making process which provides for real change at Party Conference.

ACTION TAKEN

Democratising policy formation remains a key objective of Unite and TULO unions – particularly within the context of Refounding Labour discussions and decisions.

Ensuring that trade union and employment rights are at the forefront of Labour's policy programme remains the union's paramount objective.

Development of a radical alternative policy is a priority – our proposal for a new Think-Tank is part of this process. Popularising and winning the battle for such a radical alternative for Labour and Britain is a core objective of the Political department.

Selection of candidates

The union believes that in the ranks of our union, particularly among our shop stewards and other lay representatives, there is a wealth of talent that could and should be mobilised to stand for selection as councillors, assembly members and parliamentarians. Following the general election in 2010, the previous Unite Parliamentary Panel (itself

an amalgam of previous T&G, Amicus and GPMU panels) was dissolved and a single new Panel established. This will be a genuinely new Panel. Members wishing to stand with Unite support for Parliament, the European Parliament and the devolved assemblies will have to be a member of the Panel and give commitments to support Unite policy.

ACTION TAKEN

A new Unite Parliamentary Panel will commence soon with the aim of being ready prior to 2013 selections.

Leadership election

Unite policy favours a system which is open and transparent and that members of Unite's Parliamentary Group use their nominations in a way that ensures all candidates receive sufficient

nominations to be able to stand in the leadership election and thus allow the members and affiliates a say in the democratic election of the next party leader.

ACTION TAKEN

This was done so far as reasonably practical – to ensure that Diane Abbott was on the ballot paper.

Fighting the Far Right

Unite policy rejects the policies and programmes of the British National Party (BNP) and supports the continued fight against the BNP and to continue to support the Hope Not Hate Campaign that is instrumental in bringing together the movement with the Labour Party to achieve this. Unite also supports Searchlight.

Unite also opposes the so called union Solidarity which it believes is nothing more than a front for the BNP. Unite policy is in favour of trade unions

having the right to expel fascists from their organisation.

It is Unite policy to affiliate to Unite against Fascism and to campaign for the removal of BNP members in public services. Unite will also encourage members to actively campaign against the BNP and to organise broad support for mobilisations against future EDL protests. Unite will circulate UAF materials and work with other trades unions to provide UAF with resources and support.

ACTION TAKEN

Members of Unite National and Regional Equalities Committees and particularly regional BAEM Committees, alongside other activists have continued to work closely with anti-fascist organisations such as Searchlight and Unite Against Fascism (UAF), particularly in London & Eastern and the Midlands.

Unite is affiliated to UAF and provides some financial support. It regularly circulates materials in relation to events organised and will continue to do so. The union also supports UAF anti-BNP and EDL demonstrations.

Civil Liberties

Unite has serious concerns at the erosion of civil liberties in Britain and declares its determination to resist further attacks and win back traditional rights and freedoms. The union's policy includes:

- Opposition to extension of the period of police detention without charge beyond 28 days and demand that it be substantially reduced;
- Supports the right to protest and demonstrate, including in the vicinity of the Westminster Parliament, to be restored without restrictions on journalists or photographers or other restrictions imposed by recent legislation;
- Oppose the introduction of ID cards;
- Oppose the arbitrary taking of DNA samples and where samples are taken, campaign for the removal of those samples from police files; and
- Oppose detention without trial, the use of non-jury based courts, and complicity in or collaboration with Governments abroad which employ torture.

ACTION TAKEN

The union works to support campaigning organisations, such as Liberty, to achieve these ends. The Unite group of MPs are encouraged to vote accordingly when such issues come up.

Unite has supported the right to protest, and the General Secretary was particularly vocal in support of, amongst others, student and UK Uncut protesters as they were under attack from the police.

Devolved Administrations

Unite policy supports the devolved administrations introduced by the last Labour Government. The union's policy requires that Unite works both on a political and industrial basis to influence decision making within the new devolved administration to the benefit of its members.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite political committees in the Nations, and London have first responsibility for these matters, and, of course, give great attention to these matters.

Peace and disarmament

The trade union movement has always been in the forefront of the struggle for peace and international disarmament. Unite is proud to stand in that tradition. Unite's vision is of a world where wealth and labour are devoted to exclusively peaceful purposes, and where war is superseded by the control of disputes through international law and the United Nations.

This progressive outlook is more relevant than ever when Britain faces an acute budget crisis and public spending cuts are high on the political agenda of the new Tory-Liberal coalition government. The moral and internationalist case for peace and disarmament is reinforced by economic necessities. It cannot be right to spend large sums on weapons of mass destruction when essential services are facing cuts.

This makes the question of diversifying British manufacturing industry away from its over-reliance on defence spending urgent. Unite recognises that many thousands of its members rely on the civil and naval nuclear programmes for their jobs and for retention and development of skill across many sectors. These include shipbuilding, aerospace, transport, mechanical and electrical design, project management and IT, as well as many more in the supporting supply chains. Furthermore the successful renaissance of the civil nuclear industry depends heavily on the retention and development of the skills of these Unite members.

Unite will therefore press the new government to ensure that Britain's legitimate defence equipment needs are met from domestic producers and that

proper forward planning of the defence budget is used to protect jobs and to promote the smooth transition of manufacturing to non-military production wherever possible.

The question of Britain's nuclear weapons system is not about employment alone, however. It is first of all a moral issue, and then a strategic one concerning Britain's place in the world and the international environment we wish to see. Such weapons would, if used, constitute a mortal threat to humanity's survival; they are massively expensive; senior military figures have described them as 'militarily useless' and said that they should be scrapped; and our possession of them encourages other countries to seek a similar arsenal while undermining the efforts being made by President Obama to advance the cause of international nuclear disarmament.

As a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Britain should therefore give a lead in discharging its obligations by not seeking a replacement for Trident and abandoning plans to spend an estimated £76 billion on a new generation of nuclear weapons. The UK needs a policy that would see the jobs and skills of Unite members preserved, and until Unite receives firm commitments to this end we will continue to support our members and their employment. Money saved by ending our nuclear weapons system could be used to sustain the process of defence diversification, vital to our manufacturing future, as well as freeing resources for investment in other socially-useful forms of public spending.

ACTION TAKEN

This has formed part of the continuing lobbying that Unite undertakes with regard to government procurement policy a part of its overall manufacturing sector policy. These matters have been raised at every opportunity by the National Officer for Aerospace and with the Aerospace & Shipbuilding National Industrial Sector Committee. Similarly this has been part of the union's procurement debate and the National Officer for Aerospace and Shipbuilding has also made representations on this matter.

Unite raised the issue of job losses at BAe Systems at the 2011 Labour Party Conference and secured the Conference's and Party's support for the workers.

International

Unite policy supports the creation of Workers Uniting to build a global union with the United Steelworkers of America to create a better and fairer society for working people. Unite supports the creation of a global union so that can workers fight back against multi-national companies. Unite policy is to extend the links established to other partners in Europe, USA and elsewhere around the world.

The union's policy is to create a visible and sustainable link under the umbrella of Equalities.

Palestine

Unite policy fully supports the Palestine trade union movement (PGFTU) in its struggle to free itself from oppression. Unite supports the right of the Palestinian people to national self-determination and to the creation of a viable and secure Palestinian state that coexists peacefully with Israel and so supports a negotiated settlement based on justice for the Palestinians.

Unite policy is critical of the British and Irish Governments and the European Union in having failed in their obligations under International Law – in terms of the Geneva Convention, the UN and the

International Court – to challenge the activities of the Israeli government. The union's policy re-iterates its concern at the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and reiterates its call for an end to the blockade and for a re-opening of the crossings in and out of Gaza.

Unite policy is to actively and vigorously promote a policy of divestment from Israeli companies and will encourage companies to apply a policy of ethical investment in terms of pension fund holdings, and seek to ensure that investments are therefore withdrawn from Israeli companies.

Unite will actively and vigorously promote a boycott of Israeli goods and services similar to the boycott of South African goods during the era of apartheid. Unite will proactively support such a boycott policy by working with other trade unions and NGOs on a program of educational activities, by a media campaign and by working alongside human rights and humanitarian relief organisations.

Unite policy opposes Israeli military aggression and demands an end to export trade guarantees to British companies trading with Israel. It also demands that Israel demolishes the so-called apartheid wall, stops the artificial stranglehold of the economy of the West Bank, and allow free movement of Palestinian civilians.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite has expressed its utter condemnation of the attack on many occasions and in different settings. It has been expressed to the PGFTU directly during the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign (PSC) delegation visit to Palestine and in many of the motions that we have tabled and supported in the European and Global Union Federations. Other important related activities are detailed in relation to the Composite below.

Unite has organised and supported the PSC fringe at Labour Party Conference 2010 – very significant turnout and important attempt to move Labour Party policy in the right direction. Unite supported a further fringe this year with a speaker and hosted Mustafa Barghouti as keynote speaker.

continued...

Unite has launched a campaign to increase awareness and support for the boycott of settlement goods, PSC chair Hugh Lanning addressed the Unite Executive on the issue and its importance as did a Unite member who participated in the land convoy to Gaza.

The union submitted a motion to the 2011 TUC Conference on the 'Arab Spring' which contained an important part on Palestine calling for an end to the blockade.

It also helped draft and disseminate the statement of the April 2011 Palestine Solidarity Campaign delegation, calling for boycott campaign, TUC to re-emphasise its position and not to inadvertently undermine the boycott campaign through ITUC activities.

Unite supported and contributed to the TUC PSC fringe meeting.

A Unite delegation to Palestine is under preparation – possibility to undertake jointly with other unions.

Latin America

Unite supports workers in Latin America in their defence and maintenance of the progressive changes made in recent years. Unite policy supports the work of Cuba Solidarity Campaign and calls for a policy of engagement with Cuba.

Unite policy supports the continued campaign to stop the murders of trade unionists in Colombia.

Unite is committed to support and affiliate to Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, Bolivia Information Forum and Justice for Colombia and encourage branches to affiliate to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

In addition Unite policy is to work with the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and the TUC, to help educate its members and the public about the reality of life in Cuba, and the day to day difficulties the Cuban people face. Unite will continue its commitment to the campaign to free the Miami 5.

Unite will also promote branch, chapel and regional solidarity visits to Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia as a means of encouraging cooperation and engagement and also visits to Colombia and has written to the Foreign Secretary asking them to lead a delegation to Cuba to explore areas of mutual and common interest.

Unite policy is in favour of normalisation, without any preconditions, of all relations between Cuba and the UK and opposes the discriminatory European Common position on Cuba. The union will continue to support VSC's Venezuela Under Threat campaign and its association with the "Latin America" series of conferences.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite continues to affiliate and support all Latin American solidarity campaigns.

Unite GS Len McCluskey addressed the TUC Latin American fringe meeting and underlined support for various causes.

Unite also participated in a senior delegation to Cuba during May 2011, organised participation of US and Canadian unions SEIU and USW, along with meetings with Miami 5 wives and senior Cuban politicians.

Tony Woodley organised and participated in Miami 5 meeting in Los Angeles.

Unite is supporting participation of Colombian guest in Unite sector conferences and also the Justice for Colombia fringe at the 2011 Labour Party conference. In addition Unite is arranging meetings with the Colombian Ambassador to protest at the killings of FENSUAGRO activists and imprisonment of Liliyany Obanda, and is encouraging USW to join the 'Partnership for Life' agreement with FENSUAGRO.

Venezuelan guests coming to Unite sector conferences, continued participation of Unite in Venezuela Solidarity Campaign (VSC) organisation and associated solidarity activities.

Afghanistan

Unite opposes the war in Afghanistan and calls for the withdrawal of British Troops from Afghanistan.

ACTION TAKEN

Unite included reference to this policy in one of its motions to the 2011 TUC Congress and secured the wider support of the trade movement

EU Trade in Service Agreements

Unite policy opposes the EU agenda of trade in services to open up the labour market and develop a race to the bottom on workers pay and conditions. The union opposes the temporary transfer of cheap labour by trans-national companies and its policy is to raise awareness of such issues at UK and EU level as well as through global trade union federations.

ACTION TAKEN

Issue has been raised in various European and global trade union federations, discussing the possibility of more coordinated action via the Brussels Office.

The matter was raised through the TUC Executive Committee where this is a key issue. Unite spoke at the TUC Congress on this matter. The demand from India under Mode 4 for significant number of intra-company jobs to be made available to Indian workers covers many sectors of Unite and there will be discussions across the Union in this regard.

EU

Unite policy is not in favour of withdrawal from the EU.

ACTION TAKEN

No action has been required

Ireland

Manufacturing

Unite policy calls for a much greater, integrated and innovative drive to create a major Green Products and Services sector, involving development of new technologies, products and services in wind and wave energy, biomass and other bio-fuels, energy conservation products and services and environmental protection services using the skilled and engineering facilities at our disposal and to design and build where necessary.

Union policy is in favour of a new industrial strategy to implement a programme that ensures skills are not lost due to the recession and that the skills base is greatly expanded based on innovative learning. Policy must include both an expansion and a redesign of the training infrastructure. In this regard particular attention must be paid to developing the capacity of indigenous industries to grow, innovate and export.

Unite policy supports the establishment, by both Governments of proper pension protection for workers in both states.

Unite policy is in favour of a review of existing policies and programmes in the Agri-Sector.

Health

Unite policy opposes the unilaterally imposed pay cuts on health and public sector workers and the threatened further cuts in pay, pension benefits and jobs disregarding the very low paid nature of many Unite members in the health services.

Pensions

Unite policy welcomes the publication by the government of the National Pensions Framework but has concerns about the absence of provision of pension protection in line with the ECJ rulings and also the lack of a supportive strategy for defined benefit arrangements.

The union favours the introduction of full pension coverage and adequate income arrangements in retirement as a right and not a privilege.

ACTION TAKEN

Manufacturing and Indigenous Economic Growth

Unite is pursuing two initiatives. First, as part of promoting the development of green technologies and de-carbonisation of energy production (wind, wave, ocean, etc.), Unite is leading the opposition of partial privatisation of Electricity Supply Board (ESB), the main public enterprise energy company. This is an investment-led company with plans to increase investment over the next ten year by ten times their current revenue.

However, the history of privatisation and partial-privatisation in energy companies throughout the world is one of collapsing investment in favour of promoting short-term private shareholder value. The Irish economy and, in particular, our energy sector desperately needs investment. Protecting the ESB from privatisation is the first, albeit, defensive step.

Unite's second initiative is to launch a major set of policy proposals to promote indigenous enterprise in the Republic and the North. This would be a major intervention but a significant challenge. The Irish indigenous enterprise sector has been an historical failure. Irish industrial policy in the Republic - such as it is - is almost wholly concerned with providing incentives to foreign multi-national which now account for almost 90 percent of our exports. This sector has only a limited relationship with the domestic economy. Irish indigenous activity has been primarily rooted in property, financial and distributive activities, with demands for lower taxes, lower wages and lower regulation - essentially low-road enterprise activity. *continued...*

The Irish economy needs a long-term strategy to build a strong, dynamic indigenous sector capable of producing goods and services in the international marketplace. Unite intends to start that debate and challenge employers and the Right over issues of high-road enterprise development.

Public spending cuts

Unite has been successful in getting Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) to adopt a clear statement opposed to any further cuts in current public spending in the Republic. This is a significant advance on previous positions which reluctantly accepted cuts. On this basis, we can as a united trade union movement, campaign against further cuts in pay, employment and conditions. In the North, Unite is actively involved in the upcoming public sector stoppage.

Unite is currently taking the Government in the Republic to the European Court over its failure to implement EU Directives regarding pension protection in to national law. This failure has led to pension funds collapsing with members losing retirement benefits.

Pensions

As to the wider issue of pension coverage, UNITE intends to ask ICTU to work with other social organisations in the area of pensions and pension coverage to develop a plan that can unite all interests behind a progressive policy of ensuring that every worker has an adequate income in retirement.

Organising

Unite policy is committed to the organising of workers and rebuilding of shop floor trade unionism. It is committed to aim for a spend of up to 10 percent of income within three years of the establishment of Unite for organising to ensure Unite will be a growing union.

The union will review, develop and refine its organising strategy on a regular basis to ensure that it remains focussed on sustainable growth and exploits all opportunities. Unite will explore all opportunities for growth including mergers, green field targets and individual officer targets. The policy supports the increase in the numbers of organisers employed in the regional organising units and the number of national and regional organising campaigns and to expand the training programme for lay activists.

The policy is to also reinvigorate and re-launch the 100% campaign.

Unite's organising policy will ensure:

- that all Unite organising materials used by the national/regional teams are available on line for workplace reps to download and tailor to their own companies
- that an organising toolkit be developed for all workplaces to use in their day to day activities – both online and in hard copy format
- this should include a workplace checklist so that an organising audit can be undertaken at all companies
- that the organising training modules are available online for workplace reps to access in short two hour sessions.

ACTION TAKEN

The Unite EC has been presented and consulted upon the Unite strategy for growth and Unite 100% campaign during the past six months.

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A full review of the union's education programme has been undertaken and structured to ensure the maximum number of activists are able to benefit from the union's education programme.

Also a review has been completed on membership conditions and categories and has also been subject to decisions at the Unite Rules Conference in 2011

With regard to inter-union disputes impinging upon the union's ability to organise This issue has been pursued by the senior officers of the union and was included specifically as part of the union's Trade Union rights motion to the 2011 TUC Congress. A number of issues being raised directly through the TUC's procedures are ongoing. Others issues raised informally through the TUC have been resolved.

The matter of the TUC principles guiding inter-union issues has been raised by the General Secretary and AGS with senior TUC officials.

Young Workers

Unite policy is to focus a campaign aimed at youth and school leavers, utilising resources and affiliations with organisations such as schools, youth organisations, colleges to ensure the broadest possible awareness of the vital role that Unite continues to play in British society. Recruiting and organising new members is now a major priority for Unite.

The union's policy is to develop and put in place a structure to facilitate effective support for potential members proceeding through higher education into the wide variety of businesses and professions that they will occupy.

Unite will also support trade union education by providing resources for the education department to engage with schools and colleges in delivering trade union history and concepts.

ACTION TAKEN

The Equalities Department has been working with Community, Youth Workers & Not for Profit sector to develop an organising campaign. Working with the National Young Members Committee, it has re-launched Unite's Schools Pack and more of our young members have been trained to deliver this training in schools.

Unite Charter for Young People as developed by National Young Members Committee was launched on International Youth Day. The Charter covers job opportunities for young people, education and training and community involvement.

Campaigns and Communications

Unite policy is opposed to victimisation of trade unionists and the union is pledged to fully support any Unite representatives who are subject to harassment, victimisation, de-recognition or dismissal for trade union duties or activities.

Unite fully supports the campaign "Justice for the Shrewsbury Pickets" and is committed to stepping up the pressure politically and legally in support of the campaign objectives.

The union has agreed to launch a campaign throughout the union in support of the Morning Star and to encourage members and branches and regions to become shareholders in the Peoples Press Printing Society.

ACTION TAKEN

Steps are in hand to pursue these issues.

CSEU

The Executive Council accepts that Unite members should not be expected to pay for the impact of the economic recession through cuts in pay or longer working hours. We believe that Unite, and its previous constituent unions, played a significant role in the achievements of the 35 hour week campaign initiated by the CSEU in 1988. The Executive Council continues to support Unite members in their struggle to reduce working hours and would welcome the opportunity to utilise the Funds established by the CSEU for its campaign. However it is important to understand the complex legal restrictions which the CSEU and Trustees have to overcome in order to access the residual monies held in the Fund given the significant passage of time since the fund was created.

Unite is the major affiliate to the CSEU and played a major part in the CSEU 35 hour week campaign. As part of the campaign financial calls were made on all CSEU affiliates for funds to support the campaign at the beginning of the campaign. In July 1989 it was decided to establish a dedicated fund and a national levy on all members based on one hours pay. The 35 hour week Support Fund was established under a set of rules which differentiated between contributions made before September 1989 and those made after that date.

These latter contributions from the levy are currently held in Trust and amount to around £15 million.

The 2005 CSEU Biennial Conference passed a resolution asking the Trustees of the fund to investigate the extent to which the money remaining in the fund might be capable of being applied for uses other than the very strict application laid down in the rules of the trust deed that it be spent on "no other purpose than

supporting members involved in industrial action in pursuit of shorter working hours."

Since the resolution was passed, the Trustees have taken extensive legal advice from solicitors, Lovells and Leading Counsel, Michael Furness Q.C. In essence they have been advised that the money remaining in the Fund is held on trust and cannot be used for any other purpose than that for which it was originally collected, namely the support for industrial action in pursuit of shorter working hours. The Fund can only support those members who actually contributed to the Fund through the national levy and cannot be used to finance new campaigns or even stage two of the original 35 hour week campaign.

The effect of the Trustees' legal advice in practical terms means that, unless a further campaign for shorter working hours is to be instigated and industrial action undertaken by those members who contributed to the Fund, the money remaining in the fund will simply continue to accumulate without any prospect of it being applied for any use whatsoever in the foreseeable future.

The Executive Council has received a full report of the legal options open to the Trustees of the Fund and whilst the outcomes can never be absolutely certain, Leading Counsel has advised that a tenable solution to an apparent impasse would be an interpretation of the rules which would lead to a reconvening of a meeting of the district representatives held on 9th June 1989 at which a decision would be taken as to how the residue of the Fund is to be spent and providing that this decision is acceptable to the CSEU, the CSEU EC would immediately terminate the "dispute" which in turn would trigger the winding up of the Trust Fund.

The meeting would then formally resolve how to spend the residue, which must support the following proposals which remain within the aspirations of the original fund:

- The 35 hour week campaign should be restarted at the earliest opportunity, with the fund being made available to all CSEU affiliated Trade Union organised Committees / Branches.
- That as part of the campaign the fund is also available to the aforementioned groups to be used in defence of their current basic working hours where an employer seeks to increase their working week.
- That the 35 hour week campaign is re-launched and re-energised with a call for a levy of the members across the CSEU and it's affiliated Unions of a nominal £1 per month but rising to £10 per month when dispute benefit is being paid to ensure the fund remains active thus protecting the fund from being orphaned.

- That the dispute benefit is to be agreed by the Lay Delegate Conference.

The proposition outlined above would have to be ratified by the Court and there is a possibility that it may not be approved. However the only alternative would be to leave the Fund as it is until some point in the future when it would be paid to the Crown as bona vacantia as there are no longer any of the original donors left who would be in a position to undertake "industrial action in pursuit of shorter working hours."

The Executive Council is fully supportive of campaigns to secure shorter working hours for Unite members. However, the legal advice received by the Trustees to the Fund briefly summarised in this statement makes it clear that until such time as the Courts have approved the proposals outlined above, which may take some time to prosecute, access to the fund as it currently stands is not possible.

ACTION TAKEN

The matter is now in process.

The representatives on the CSEU continue to monitor developments and the General Secretary of the CSEU has issued a statement to the CSEU Conference setting out the process that is being followed. Situation is painfully slow as the union is dealing with different groups of Trustees and will have to go through the Courts to make alternative arrangements which will be complex to say the least. The matter will continue to be raised with the General Secretary and EC of the CSEU.

Administration

The Unite the Union Executive Council affirms that Unite is a membership and lay activist lead union.

The Executive Council's first priority after Conference will be to consider how the decisions of the Policy Conference can be put into practice to the maximum benefit of members. Accordingly, the Executive Council will consider an implementation paper at its July meeting.

The decisions of Conference will be widely circulated to branches and constitutional committees and published on the Union's website. A document will be prepared summarising policy so that at future conferences existing policy will not necessarily have to be re-debated.

The union will continue with current practice of looking at contribution increases every two years. The union has yet to consider and finalise Unite rates for newly retired members. The union's modern benefit structure will continue to concentrate on members at work.

In the next period, the priority will be to finalise integration of Head Offices and Central/Head Office Departments under a single General Secretary and a new Executive Council, both elected by early 2011.

The union will be conducting a consultation exercise prior to creating a definitive set of branch and workplace structures as soon as possible. This consultation will commence as soon as the current elections for General Secretary and Executive Council are concluded. However, in the interim, where progress can be achieved, i.e. harmonisation of branch funding etc., this will be accomplished.

The union will set common dates for the election of all branch officers and workplace representatives. At a time when the Union is reducing its workforce, the Executive Council regrets it will not be possible to employ full-time organisers to support

branches. The union will examine the special needs of members working on their own in security, sales and home work to improve communication and support.

The union has agreed in principle that Area Activist Conferences will be convened more regularly.

Last year, Unite Education trained 16,000 reps equivalent to 100,000 teaching days. Courses are concentrated on Union representatives through our regions to minimise travel and accommodation costs and maximise their effectiveness. Payment of loss of earnings is only made in exceptional circumstances as Unite strongly believes that employers should pay for education leave. The union is also committed to protecting all its activists, including shift workers, by taking employers to an Employment Tribunal who refuse time off with pay.

Unite recognises that a modern communications strategy is required to keep activists and members informed of progress. To this end, the Executive Council will post its minutes on the Union's website in a timely fashion. These minutes will continue to show recorded votes to underpin our commitment to accountability.

In terms of membership integration, Unite has set the ambitious target of moving to one system by the end of 2010. Members who are recorded as having excessive arrears are being excluded after being offered the right to rejoin. The union's records on ethnic background also need further work. Where appropriate, membership audits will be used to update records. The union needs to fully support its retired members associations and reach out to the wider trade union community through trades councils and other labour movement bodies.

The union will examine the suggestion of a 'Your Democracy' page and look to see how this might lead to restructuring of the Union's website.

Rule 18 sets down the list of representatives elected at work and these include shop stewards/ workplace representatives. Unite is a Union for blue and white collar workers. Equally, the list of membership categories is covered by Rule 3.

The Union's organising strategy has an international dimension as part of a coherent strategy.

In terms of representation, all members are important and the Union seeks to treat them all equally, however long or short their membership. Members facing redundancy should receive immediate full-time officer support.

As a Union which leads on work life balance, a robust policy on Childcare is essential. The union will introduce Unite arrangements arising from the implementation report.

Unite will ensure that its full-time officials are trained to best practice standards in terms of representing members and presentation skills.

Unite has begun a review of how the Union's purchasing power can support our organisational work in sectors which have been traditionally difficult to achieve recognition and proper collective bargaining arrangements.

Unite is committed to a review of all recent conference arrangements and will ensure that sufficient time is made available for all normal conference procedures, including an amendment process in the future.

ACTION TAKEN

The union's Executive Council has considered an implementation report arising from the union's policy conference in 2010 and this manual has been published to provide members with information relating to the progress made so far.

The EC has considered contribution rate and has applied an increase with effect from October 2011. The retired members' rates is still under review along with wider proposals for a new category of membership – 'Community members'.

The integration of central office functions has been completed under the new General Secretary during 2011.

Consultations are continuing on proposals for the union's Branch and workplaces structure and following the Rules Conference in 2011 processes put in place for the election of Branch and workplace representatives.

The union continues to make progress to the full integration of the union's membership and its Campaigns and Communications department is in the process of taking forward a Communications Strategy for the 21st Century.

The union has produced a Childcare Policy.



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