

GENERAL SECRETARY'S BRIEFING - FROM SEPTEMBER 2011

STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

100% Unite Strategy and Organising Report

The Executive Officer and the Director of Organising gave a verbal report on the continued development of the 100% UNITE Strategy and the Organising Department activities.

As reported at the last EC the 100% campaign has moved from planning to implementation and "buy-in and mapping" sessions have been taking place with relevant shop stewards and workplace representatives across the Union. This will be followed by "target planning" sessions and focussed workplace activity.

100% UNITE - Regional Officer Targets

Following the resource intensive preparatory stage of information gathering and preliminary analysis, we are now able to identify and allocate specific workplace targets to individual Regional Officials.

- 92% of Regional Officials (inc. Education Officials) have three targets identified adhering to the Element 1, 2 and 3 target criteria. Please see attached grid.

100% UNITE – "Buy-in and mapping sessions"

There are two key objectives of the "buy-in" sessions:

1. Map potential membership growth in target workplace
2. Obtain commitment to 100% principles from shop stewards and workplace representatives

Organising Department

Whilst the National Organising Department is temporarily dedicated to the launch of "100% UNITE" it has been agreed that organising resource will revert back to the main purpose of the National Organising Department, the development of strategic sectoral organising, in March 2012.

Apart from 100% Unite work The National Organising Department is also developing and maintaining other areas of work, including:

- Honda
- Pilot 2 Membership Retention Strategy
- Analysis of Individual Representation Cases
- Grocery Retail Logistics
- Local Government

The increase in membership from the National Organising Department from January to week ending 02/09/2011 is 7,760

FINANCE

Director of Finance & Operations, Ed Sabisky reported that were it not for the pension deficits, the financial picture for Unite in the 1st Half of 2011 would be satisfactory and, in fact, showing a decent improvement compared with last year.

More specifically, Contribution Income totalled £70.1 million in the 1st Half of 2011 – a decline of £3.9 million versus the same period a year ago reflecting the decline in paying membership. This comparison should start to improve as a consequence of the member subscription increase effective 1st September 2011.

Total Recurring Expenditure totalled £63.7 million in the 1st Half of 2011 – a reduction of £6.6 million versus last year. There were savings in almost every category of expense, including a £1.4 million decline in Employment Costs excluding Organising which fell as a consequence of the drop in the number of people employed by Unite as a result of last year's voluntary severance programme offset by the 3.5% pay increase effective 1st January 2011. This is a promising result which will further improve given that a number of employees only left in the 2nd Quarter or later. Political Expenditure also fell significantly, as a consequence of the extra spending in 2010 owing to the General Election, and IT Costs were favourable by £1.2 million reflecting the decision to abandon Seibel.

As a consequence, Unite recorded a surplus from Contribution Income of £6.4 million in the 1st Half of 2011 – an improvement of £2.7 million versus the 1st Half of 2010.

Other Income amounted to £2.1 million in the 1st Half of 2011 which was down £0.5 million compared with a year ago. Due to recent declines in the stock market, Other Income could well decline further. Non Recurring Items amounted to a net expenditure of £2.8 million in the 1st Half of 2011 – an improvement of £0.7 million versus 2010. Included in the Non Recurring Items are £1.5 million of employee severance costs and the write-off of £1.0 million of irrecoverable VAT on property refurbishments.

Pension Deficit Recovery Contributions amounted to £1.5 million in the 1st Half of 2011 – a drop of £1.0 million versus a year ago. Importantly, while the pension deficit recovery plan resulted in over £30 million in deficit reduction contributions in 2010, the Union was only required to contribute £3.0 million for the whole of 2011 (and then rising to £10 million next year and £12.1 million in 2013 and beyond). However, as reported to the last Executive Council, the Union did make a supplemental £5.0 million deficit reduction contribution to the Amicus pension scheme in July 2011 in conjunction with the sale of 35 King Street (for £13.3 million).

Taking everything in account, Unite posted an overall surplus of £4.2 million for the 1st Half of 2011 – a result which was £3.9 million better than last year.

Lay Membership Expenses

There was a discussion about the paper submitted with recommendations on changes to Lay Membership Expenses submitted by Ed Sabisky will be examined further and brought back to a future meeting of the Executive.

Branch Financing

There is an ongoing discussion about Branch Financing at the Council; this will be taken up again at the December meeting.

LEGAL SERVICES

Director of Legal Services, Howard Beckett, report on recent employment cases being pursued by the Union and on developments since the previous EC meeting with Regional Secretaries being sent a copy of the last EC report and advised that the Union is moving to one legal system:

- a) they have been asked to nominate one employee in each Region who will liaise with the Centre to ensure one system is implemented;
- b) guidelines have been issued to Regions about the operation of the one system- particularly in regard to Employment matters;
- c) a number of meetings have taken place with Thompsons Solicitors about adapting their systems to the one system- Thompsons have shown willingness to accommodate all of the changes as quickly as possible.
- d) ALL of our members are now entitled to the same legal services;
- e) a process of review as to our panel solicitors has commenced.
- f) a process of audit has commenced in regard to PI work undertaken by our solicitors, where fundamental concerns as to costs have been identified and as a result changes to the terms of our Self Insurance Premium (SIP) have been implemented;
- g) our SIP has been amended to ensure the scheme is solvent going forward.

Industrial Action Ballots

Following the last EC:-

- a) The department has begun to implement the necessary changes to the Ballot procedure. The procedures have been very detailed to the extent that I have been concerned as to whether Officers would read the procedures much less follow them. The revised procedures will be re issued in the next few weeks. The principle will be for the officers and reps to take ownership albeit for the centre to monitor and check all ballot correspondence.
- b) looked to improve the circulation of information as to what action is taking place and thereby ensuring the following is brought in:-

Copies of all GS Ballot Authorities to Assistant General Secretaries whatever Trade Group they relate to at same time authority given to conduct ballot.

Copies of all Actual Ballot Notices (once served) to AGSs - this will give ballot opening date/closing date and will have copy of Ballot Paper so AGS can see what Ballot Questions being asked.

Copies of all Ballot Results and GS Action Authority (if in favour).

Circulate details of disputes settled. The Legal Department will continue to carry out a regular round up of for a Dispute Report prepared for each EC Meeting.

National Officers and Campaigns and Communications will be copied in as matter of course to all above.

- c) In addition to the ballots mentioned in the Dispute Report we have some major ballot work on Local Authority Ballot re Local Government Pension Scheme - involving all Local Authorities in England, NI, Wales and Scotland - this involves nearly all Unions - Unison majority. Unite has approx 80,000 members. In the past, this has been a single national ballot, but individual ballot notice is served on every Local Authority by relevant officer. Consultation taking place with activists, Committees etc to consider having stand alone ballots this time.

There are numerous other ballots under consideration including Carlsberg; Unilever; Oil Distribution (Tanker Drivers);

- d) The Ballot team is under enormous pressure. There are 3 members of staff and they are working tremendously hard. To have an effective Ballot team we must

ask Officers to take more ownership and must also work closely with Membership and Regions on how to improve membership data.

Update on Jackson

The EC has previously been advised of the civil justice reforms based on those recommended by Rupert Jackson (Jackson reforms) that will have a dramatic impact on access to justice and the union legal service.

The Bill is currently in Committee in the Commons. When the bill returns to the Commons Labour MPs will seek to amend it and propose reforms to road traffic accident (RTA) claims. The Bill is expected to go to the Lords towards the beginning of November. The Government continues to look to the end of October 2012 to implement. Unite has continued to lead the fight against this bill.

Unite is clear - any claims culture exists only with Road Traffic Accidents. The banning of referral fees and the tightening of costs such as Credit Hire costs would resolve any problems that exist in the RTA market. Our members have issues regarding Health and Safety; litigation has a valuable role in ensuring Health and Safety standards are maintained. Our members should not be punished and denied access to justice as a result of the abuses of those who operate in the Road Traffic Accident market.

UNITE COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

Unite is shortly launching a new category of community membership contained within a stand alone section of the union. With a contribution rate of 50 pence per week and a package of community benefits agreed with affinity partners, see below, this is a fantastic initiative that unites our membership across the generations, builds confidence and offers hope to a generation, provides practical assistance to those whose needs are often greatest and puts Unite back at the very heart of our communities.

Creating an 'alliance of resistance' capable of extending the fight against attacks being waged across our society by government, a voice for the often disenfranchised and an organising platform for community support, campaigning and collective action.

Non-working members of the community; the unemployed, those not currently in the labour market, unpaid volunteers, senior citizens, carers and students will all be eligible for membership.

While this will be an evolving development, experience on the ground no doubt leading to further discussion and the need for review, this proposal addresses the immediate practical issues that require resolution, including; constitutional and organisation arrangements.

In the first instance a community branch will be established in all areas where we currently have an established Area Activists Committee. Support will be provided providing access to meeting rooms, communications, print, IT and post.

The opportunity to engage in community activity, actions and campaigning will draw many people into the Union. As this is an evolving development assistance will be provided to regional administrations to address initial demand, queries and questions by a central Community Support Unit based at Holborn.

Community members will be able to play a full role in the activities of the union through the developing branch structure and they will also be able to play a direct role in the non-industrial structure of Area Activists Meetings and Committees as well as a Regional Political conference and Committee structures.

The Council also agreed the following offer to members for Community Membership which has been specifically designed to offer achievable services which can be offered remotely by our affiliate partners.

Package Offered to Unite Community Members

Financial Health Check

This incorporates:

- * Debt Counselling/Management from Payplan:
- * Unite Discounted Insurance Products
- * Tax Refund advice:
- * Financial Miss-selling advice
- * Welfare Benefit Check Up:

• *Back to Work Service*

This incorporates:

- * Job Web Site:
- * CV writing:
- * Application Letter:
- * Interview tips:
- * Email address creation:

• *Hardship Grants*

• *Gas and electricity comparison service*

• *Unite Current Account (incorporating Unite Emergency Cash Facility)*

• *Legal Benefits*

These include:

- * Legal Helpline:
- * Personal Injury Claims:

• *Free Personal Accident Cover (upto £2500)*

• *Retail Benefits*

These include:

- Unite Prepaid Debit Card: the card itself is free to the member. Members using the card will enjoy discounts at leading High Street retailers including Asda, Argos, B&Q, Boots, Comet, Debenhams, Pizza Express M&S and Topshop
- Vision Express Discount Vouchers: these provide savings on eye tests, glasses and contact lenses.

WORKERS UNITING

International Director, Simon Dubbins submitted the Workers Uniting Action plan for 2011-1012 which was agreed by the council this included the organisation of **Workers Uniting Congress** – according to the statutes this will take place in London

in London on 11-12 November 2011. There will be 35 participants each for the USW and Unite, 25 voting delegates each and the remainder as observers. The Unite delegation to be made up mainly from EC members.

Budget – during the first Workers Uniting Steering Committee meeting a draft 3 year budget was decided upon which allocated each constituent union of Workers Uniting to allocate £160 000 respectively for each of following 3 years. It was agreed that this budget would be maintained during this final year and to discuss and decide upon a new budget for activities at the coming Workers Uniting Congress in November 2011.

ADMINISTRATIVE & ORGANISATION ISSUES

Constitutional Structures In Unite

The Council unanimously carried a number of amendments to the constitutional structures within the union which in many cases will have the effect of changing the Rules where appropriate.

Branches and workplace reps – the period of office for branch officers will now be for three years (bringing this into line with the period of office for workplace reps decided at the Rules Conference in June). There will be a defined period of office for both branch officers and workplace reps (for both legacy sections) which will run from July to the June three years later.

The first new period will begin in July 2012.

For established branches the AGM should be held in June 2012, notice for which and a call for nominations for branch officers must be given no later than the May preceding the AGM.

For new branches, especially those that come into existence after the EC meeting of December 2011, elections for officers should be held in the early part of 2012 which will also count as the appropriate election for taking office in July 2012.

The change to Rule agreed by the Rules Conference allows for workplace reps' elections to take place on a frequency of up to every three years; should industrial circumstances, or particular workplace traditions, dictate that elections are necessary more frequently than three years that is permissible, but under no circumstances less frequently. Elections, other than casual vacancies, should always take place in June to ensure synchronisation with other aspects of the union's constitutional structure.

RISCs/AACs/Regional Equalities Committees

The term of office of those elected to these Committees is now for three years starting from September 2012, therefore the period of office of the current Committees is extended by one year.

A maximum of two extra seats are to added to each AAC for retired members and a maximum of two extra seats are to added to each AAC for community members. Regions should advise of exact numbers in the current review of the composition of AACs.

Regional Young Members' Committees and Regional Retired Members' Committees

The term of office of those elected to these Committees is now for three years starting from September 2012, therefore the period of office of the current Committees is extended by one year.

Regional Committees/NISCs/National Equalities Committees

The term of office of those elected to these Committees is now for three years starting from October 2012, therefore the period of office of the current Committees is extended by one year.

National Young Members' Committees and National Retired Members' Committees

The term of office of those elected to these Committees is now for three years starting from October 2012, therefore the period of office of the current Committees is extended by one year.

Regional and National Political Committee

The term of office of those elected to these Committees is now for three years starting with the Regional Political Conferences in the New Year of 2013; therefore the period of office of the current Committees is extended accordingly. The Committees are to meet on a quarterly basis.

Membership of the Executive Council Members

The Rules Conference in July agreed that there should be two additional constituencies on the Council, 1 representing Disabled Members, the other representing LGBT members. The following timetable for a ballot to elect these 2 members was agreed by the Council and allows for them to be elected in time to attend the March 2012 Council meeting. The ballot rules and guidelines for this election will be similar to those for the full Council election, with me acting at the Returning Officers, Electoral Reform Services being appointed as Independent Scrutineer and Professor Keith Ewing being appointed as Election Commissioner.

Notify branches and workplace reps of the timetable – Despatch of Nomination Forms	7 November 2011
Nominations Period	14 November 2011 – 6 January 2012
Last date for Receipt of nominations	11 January 2012
Last date for Acceptance and Receipt of Election Address	13 January 2012
Voting Papers Despatched by Independent Scrutineer	30 January 2012
Deadline for Voting Paper to be returned to the Independent Scrutineer	Noon on 22 February 2012
Count	pm on 22 February 2012
Declaration	23 February 2012

New Rule Book

Following on from discussions at the July Executive Council the revisions requested have been incorporated into the rule book and the EC guidance on various rules has been attached at the end. The Council agreed that the book could be published following any further administrative changes to be made as a result of the paper agreed on Constitutional Structures and updates to the exiting EC Guidance on implementation of rule as a result of the rule changes already agreed. Invitations into issuing a loose leaf book to allow for any rule changes to be incorporated without the need to issue a completely new book each time.

National Industrial Sector Conference 2011

It was reported that due to the Public Services day of action due to take place on 30 November 2011 the schedule for the National Industrial Sector Conferences had been amended as follows:

Sunday 27 November:	(AGS Gail Cartmail) Community, Youth Workers & Not For Profit Construction Education Health Local Authorities MoD & Government Depts.
Monday 28 November:	(AGS Diana Holland) CAT Docks, Rail, Ferries & Waterways Passenger RTC, Logistics and Retail Distribution Food Drink & Tobacco Rural & Agriculture
Tuesday 29 November:	(AGS Tony Burke) Aerospace & Shipbuilding Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Process & Textiles Electrical Engineering & Electronics Metals (inc Foundry) Vehicle Building and Automotive Graphical, Paper and Media
Wednesday 30 November:	Day of Action
Thursday 1 December:	(AGSs Gail Cartmail & Tony Burke) Finance & Legal Energy & Utilities IT & Communications Motor Components Servicing & General Industries

**Equalities Conferences 2012
Distribution of Delegates**

The distribution of delegates by Region across all 5 equality strands was agreed by the Council. They also agreed that in a similar fashion to the NIS Conferences, delegates to the National Equalities Conferences would for this occasion be, the responsibility of the regional equality committees. As with the Sectors, should an allowable regional delegation be larger than the regional equality committee concerned, nominations may be sought from appropriate members not currently members of the committee.

Standing Orders Committee 2014

The SOC for 2014 will be elected on the following basis:

Women's Conference	2 delegates
BAEM Conference	2 delegates
LGBT Conference	1 delegate
Disabled Members' Conference	1 delegate
Young Members' Conference	1 delegate

Timetable

Names of elected delegates and motions (maximum 2 per regional equality committee) from the regions must be received by 6 January 2012.

Motions (maximum 2 per national equality committee) from the national equality committees must be received by 13 February 2012.

Policy Conference 2012

The Policy Conference in 2012 will take place from 25th to 28th June 2012. The Conference will take place in the Brighton Centre. Taking into account the schedule of constitutional committee meetings for 2012 the Council agreed the following timetable proposed as follows will allow for the submission of motions by all constitutional committees and branches and of amendments.

Invitation to submit motions despatched:	28 November 2011
Deadline for receipt of motions:	10 February 2012
Invitation to submit amendments:	19 March 2012
Deadline for receipt of amendments:	18 May 2012

Proposals regarding the make up the delegation to the conference will be submitted to the December meeting in order that election can take place during the first quarter 2012 cycle of Regional Industrial Sector Committee meetings.

Policy Conference 2010

A report on policy implementation following the 2010 Policy conference and a Unite Policy Manual setting out the Unite policies agreed by the Policy Conference and the Executive council were considered and endorsed by the Council.

PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT

During the Council meeting the General Secretary reported that Roger Jeary, Director of Research would be retiring from the Union at the end of 2011 and that Simon Dubbins would be taking over the responsibility for this department along with maintaining his responsibility for the International Department.

He also reported that he had appointed Maria King to the post of Director of Personnel and Development Designate pending Ray Fletcher standing down as director at the end of March 2012.

Standard Terms & Conditions

Talks to arrive at one set of terms and conditions for all Unite employees have continued with the individual bargaining units, to the extent that the Officers' ballot on the union's proposals will be completed by 27th September. New contracts of employment are being issued on the basis of the proposed terms and conditions.

Unite Personnel Policies and Procedures

Discussions will take place on the introduction of new key Unite Personnel policies and procedures (e.g. Grievance; Discipline; Dignity at Work etc) once the above exercises are complete.

Bargaining Units

The Union is making proposals to each of the three main groups of employees (Officers; Staff and Organises) for a rationalisation of the respective Bargaining Units to simplify representation and to create three "Unite" bargaining units.

Organisational Integration

All staff have now been relocated from King Street to Holborn.

Only a handful of staff remain at Hayes Court pending decisions on the location of Print and Dispatch activities.

Job Evaluation

Considerable progress has been made on the Job Evaluation exercise with over 60% of employees having now received their outcome letters.

Recruitment

All regions now have a Regional Women's Organiser (RWO) appointed following the internal recruitment process.

Since the last EC meeting, the Political Director post has been filled substantively following an internal selection process.

As a result of the above appointment, the vacancy for Regional Secretary London and Eastern Region was advertised internally and following a selection process a substantive appointment has been made.

Following the post of Unite Director of Personnel & Development (designate) having been advertised externally, the short-listing exercise is under way in preparation for the selection process.

TRADES UNION CONGRESS

The TUC Congress has taken place. Unite moved composite motions on two of the most significant debates, Trade Union Rights and an Alternative Economic Strategy. Unite also move its motion on the Middle East.

Unite seconded a motion on the Independent Commission on Banking and one on PlayFair 2012 and we participate in the major debates on Pensions and Health and Safety as well as seconding the composite on the Thameslink Rolling Stock Contract and Bombardier and the emergency motions on abortion rights and Bombardier.

Elsewhere in the last two months Unite has been heavily engaged in discussions with other unions within the TUC on public sector pensions and this will be reflected in the industrial reports to the EC.

The TUC is undertaking a review of the arrangements for this year's shortened Congress and Unite has submitted a response reflecting our wish to see all future Congresses returning to the full status of previous years.

Unite members on the TUC EC were instrumental in persuading the TUC to amend its submission to the Low Pay Commission on the National Minimum Wage to reflect the cost of living in the increase in the NMW and to make further amendments relating to the exclusion of Hotel Sector from the fair piece rate and calling for the Agriculture Wages Board to be retained.

The council agreed the scheme of representation in accordance with the election of 2010 delegates and assuming that TUC Congress will not be a reduced meeting in 2013 it is recommended that the delegation for each year should be:

One delegate to be elected by and from each Regional Committee	10
Six delegates to be elected by and from the Women's National Conference	6
Three delegates to be elected by and from the BAEM National Conference	3
One delegate each elected by and from the LGBT, Disabled Members' and Young Members' National Conferences	3
Thirty-seven delegates elected by and from the National Industrial Sector Conferences (see overleaf)	37
Chair and Vice-chair of the Executive Council	2
Six delegates from the Executive Council (at least 3 of which must be women)	6
Total	67

Additionally, the delegation will include:

- General Secretary plus supporting officers and staff, as appropriate
- nominees to the TUC General Council and General Purposes Committee (if not already delegates).

NB Conferences should elect delegates for 2012 and 2013 and a substitute delegate (extra if necessary to meet any gender and ethnic requirements) who could provide cover in either year in the case of an elected delegate being unable to attend. The EC and Regional Committees can elect on an annual basis.

Sector Conference	Delegates	Remarks
Servicing & General Industries	3	at least 1 of which must be a woman and at least 1 of which must be BAEM

Finance & Legal	3	at least 2 of which must be women
Health	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Passenger Services	2	at least 1 of which must be BAEM
Local Authorities	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Food, Drink & Tobacco	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Aerospace & Shipbuilding	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Road Transport (Commercial)	2	
Civil Air Transport	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Chemicals, Pharma, etc	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
Community N4P	2	at least 1 of which must be a woman
VBA	1	
GPM	1	
Construction	1	
Energy & Utilities	1	
Motor Components	1	
Metals	1	
Docks & Rail	1	
Education	1	
Rural & Agriculture	1	
MoD & Govt Depts	1	
EEE	1	
IT & Communications	1	
Total	37	at least 10 women and at least 2 BAEM

EQUALITIES

All parts of equalities are involved in organising with others to challenge unfair, unequal and unnecessary cuts, and to build a strong campaign with the wider community.

Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Duty

Following the meeting between the AGS for Equalities, AGS for Services, National Officer Local Authorities and Legal Department, guidance is being drawn up. Unite Equality Act Officer Briefings have now been arranged in the final regions where they have yet to take place. Our clear aim to achieve mandatory pay audits and statutory rights for union equality reps remains.

Unite Branch Equality Reps – as part of Branch reorganisation activities, it is essential that Branch Equality Reps are elected, as agreed at the Rules Conference, to support organising, representation and involvement of all our members.

Family Friendly Rights - Pressure To Cut Back as pressure mounts in both public and private sectors to cut back expenditure for workers, Unite needs to ensure the important gains made, particularly in enhancing legal minimum rights, are not undermined. The negotiating arguments that won these rights must not be forgotten.

A fitting tribute to the memory of Jane Barker, researcher who provided vital bargaining information to support such gains, would be to protect and build on them.

Migrant Domestic Workers

A powerful and effective protest was held opposite parliament, where migrant domestic workers used brushes to sweep up and make visible the invisible domestic work. Unite's response to the government's consultation on abolition of the overseas domestic worker visa has been submitted.

Regional Women's & Equalities Organisers - Update

A positive meeting was held with the Regional Women's & Equalities Organisers, and following discussion with the General Secretary, it has been identified that the RWEOs will no longer be seconded to the regional organising units, but in addition to their agreed equalities responsibilities, will have a part allocation of members to service in a sector/area appropriate to equalities/growth, to be agreed by the Regional Secretary with the Assistant General Secretary for Equalities.

Unite Membership Information

Membership Information related to equalities is due to be reported in the Membership Report for end of quarter 2 2011 figures. Further monitoring will be collected with new Unite membership cards.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The General Secretary and AGS Gail Cartmail reports on activities in Public Services including the campaign on pensions. The day of industrial action on 30 November, announced at the TUC the previous week, was reported and details of the preparations Unite is making in connection with the necessary ballot for industrial action were given. The campaign against the cuts had been built up over the year and communications with members about the action including campaign literature will be stepped up over the following weeks. As reported elsewhere the schedule for the National Industrial Sector Conferences has been amended to take into account the day of action. The need to work with the other unions concerned was emphasised.

POLITICAL

Refounding Labour

Unite has been working hard with TULO colleagues to ensure that Labour's Refounding Labour discussions contain positive proposals which can modernise and democratise the Party, in a manner which empowers the membership. Any view that restricting the democratic rights of Unions will help in that direction are absurd, and Unite alongside TULO has made very clear that such suggestions will not be supported. All the indications are that our work has paid off – we are hopeful we will see a positive report and Rule changes we will be able to support, although final propositions have not yet been released. We will remain vigilant. Unite and our General Secretary have played a key role in this process which has had its difficulties.

Scotland

The Scottish Region has been addressing restructuring proposals, and leadership matters arising out of the difficult defeat earlier this year at the Holyrood elections. While we argue that policy was at the heart of the defeat, changes to the Party and its organisation were inevitable. We successfully headed off some bad changes proposed in the leadership electoral college – with good liaison between Political Officers in Scotland and myself. The autumn special conference of the Party in Scotland will be important.

Unite4Ken

While we will continue to work hard to change Labour for the better, through better organisation, and a sustained campaign to win back the party, for our values – reconnecting Labour with its roots, we will also campaign hard and better than anyone else to defeat the Tories.

Our next big challenge is to defeat Boris Johnson the right-wing Tory Mayor of London. This is the second most important – by number of voters and responsibility – elected position in the UK – and will be treated as a national referendum to some extent, so this is receiving much attention at the National Political department. At the policy level, discussions are well advanced with the Region and Ken's team, especially around promotion of trade unionism within a Fairness agenda.

Parliamentary report

Parliament has been in recess for most of the summer. However, for the second time parliament has been sitting for 2 weeks in September. During these two weeks the Unite political department has been working with the MPs and the Labour party on several areas including the Health and Social Care Bill and the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders bill.

Parliamentary Selections/Boundary Commission Report

As previously reported the Labour Party is currently half way through Parliamentary selections for 26 seats. There has been limited Unite involvement. However, we were very effective in supporting Tom Beattie for Corby. While he ultimately lost by just one vote, it was clear that we can make a real difference in supporting candidates. We comprehensively defeated the initial favourite who was heavily promoted by the right-wing New Labour Progress group.

There will be no more selections until late 2013 as a consequence of the Boundary Commission report which brings upheaval to all but 77 constituencies. The proposals are a disgrace. The whole concept is, of course, an attempt by the Tories to gerrymander Parliament so as to entrench a Tory majority in Parliament and should be opposed as anti-democratic.

Anti-fascism

Unite has been very much involved in mobilising against the EDL who declared a national mobilisation and march through Tower Hamlets. Particularly coming on the heels of the revelations that the Norwegian mass murderer Breivik had close links with the leadership of the EDL and had marched on previous EDL marches in London, this required the movement and community to mobilise.

Organisation

The National Political Committee and Regional Political Committees will follow the cycle of meeting dates issued nationally, with committees mirroring NISC and RISC meetings respectively. This will provide a clearer route of accountability for these committees.

A draft Political strategy is in preparation which presented for debate and agreement at the National Political committee and the next EC.

Labour Party Conference

It was reported that plans were well advanced for an effective Unite presence at Labour Party Conference in Liverpool. We have two main fringes – one concentrating on Employment Rights, one on the Economic Alternative. A contemporary motion on the phone hacking scandal was agreed for submission to the conference.

Employment Rights and Fairness at Work.

Both the new Think Tank and the new parliamentary group are important to developing our case in a new way which inserts collective bargaining and the right to strike at the centre of our progressive economic policy. This case is increasingly being made on an international level – defending trade unionism against attacks as austerity programmes are introduced, and emphasising that trade unionism is part of the solution not a problem.

EC Political Statement

A statement moved by Martin Mayer on Unite's political involvement was agreed by the EC. It resolved to:

- Maintain its grip on UNITE political policy towards the Labour Party
- Ensure this Union's motions and amendments are ultimately decided and endorsed by the lay membership
- Give leadership and direction to the UNITE Labour Party Conference delegation
- Take immediate steps to develop a coherent strategy to defeat New Labour and win back the Party for working class values. This cannot be achieved by the old failed tactics of compromise and concessions from the trade unions.

REMITS FROM REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COMMITTEES:

Free Card: This resolution submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee was remitted for consideration at the December Council meeting in view of proposals to be brought forward on Rule 10.

Canadian Asbestos Mining: This resolution submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee was supported by the Council in its call for the Canadian Government to overturn the Quebec Government's decision.

Health and Safety Unit: This resolution submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee was remitted in light of a report for the Director of Research that the new Health and Safety Unit is now well established in Research and is currently reviewing its priorities to ensure that the union continues to provide the high standard of service to members and activists across the wide spectrum of health and safety issues.

Hazards Campaign: This resolution submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee calling for branches to be encouraged to affiliate to the Hazards campaign was supported by the Council.

Lay Member Expenses: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee was left on the table, in light of ongoing discussions at the Council regarding lay member expenses.

Pension Salary Sacrifice: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee was noted.

Bombardier: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee calling on Unite to make every effort to get the decision changed was supported in light of the Union's on-going campaign.

Telephone Switchboard Facilities: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee was referred back to the North West Regional Committee and

Director of ICT Dominic Hook to resolve the situation with regards to telephone switchboard facilities in the North West Regional Office.

12 Point Peoples Charter: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee was noted.

1911 General Transport Strike: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee calling on the TUC to support the installation of a plaque or a rally to commemorate the centenary of the event was supported by the Council.

Higher Education: This resolution submitted by the North West Regional Committee expressing solidarity with student in their protests against the devastating cuts imposed by the ConDem government in higher education and condemning the actions taken against Unite Workplace Rep Bryan Simpson and calling on charges against him to be dropped was supported by the Council.

Payments to Derek Simpson: Resolutions submitted by the Wales Regional Committee, the South East Regional Committee and the South West Regional Committee were remitted in light of the Council's previous decision on this matter and a further report by the General Secretary on the matter.

GPM Sector Membership: This resolution submitted by the Wales Regional Committee was remitted in light of the ongoing Branch Consultation.

Rules Conference 2011: This resolution from the London & Eastern Regional Committee calling for a review of the running of the Rules Conference was supported by the Council.

National Demonstrations: This resolution from the West Midlands Regional Committee requesting that parking arrangements should be taken into account for future demonstrations was supported by the Council and will be referred to the TUC.

Fixed Term Contracts: This resolution submitted by the West Midlands Regional Committee calling on the Union to engage in a full survey of workplaces was remitted with a view to the examining how it could be implemented.

Unique Colour Identity: This resolution from the West Midlands Regional Committee to select one colour to give a specific identity to Unite the Union was supported in light of the decision of the Campaigns and Communications department to use red as the main colour for Unite campaign merchandise.