



**The
One Hundred and Third
Annual Conference
Yarnfield 2022**



Verbatim 2021

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Official Report of the 102nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Held *Digitally*

**from
Sunday 13 June 2021
to
Thursday 17 June 2021**

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Sunday 13th June 2022

Morning Session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right, so what we're going to do now is, we're going to mute you all, so you've had a, you've had a quick, quick five minutes to, to, to say hello to everybody and now I'm going to go through the logistics. So we're, we're going to mute you. Okay, so by rights you should only hear me now. You can all talk as much as you want and nobody else will be able to hear you.

So first off, you know, obviously thank you for coming to this zoom Conference. We, we do know it's completely different to what we're used to and, you know, we can't wait to all get back together again, but after not being able to run a Conference last year the last thing we wanted to happen was that we didn't have an opportunity to bring everybody together in some format this year and, and technology during Covid has demonstrated we have the ability to actually bring you all together, so we're really chuffed that so many of you have, have joined us this morning.

So, I'm going to go through some logistics, because obviously when we get into the motions, you're going to want to know how you're going to be able to take part. So, if you look at your screens, right, on the bottom, there's something called 'reactions', yes? Has everybody, has everybody got them, 'cause if you haven't, right, you can go to, you can go to, where can you go to, 'participants', which is also at the bottom of the screen, which tells you how many people are in the room and, so if you haven't got 'reactions', go to 'participants', then when you go to 'participants' you'll see everybody's name that's on the call and you'll see a green 'yes' and a red 'no', yes? Cool, cool and, and once, once you go into the voting, either you'll be doing it through the 'reactions' or you'll be doing it through the 'participants'. Obviously in the 'participants' everybody will see that, everybody will see on the screen. If you want to, if you want to click, if you've got 'reactions', click on the raised hand, okay? Cool and obviously if you've, you've not got that, go into 'participants' and, as we can see, the hands in 'participants' are working too. What's that? Cool. Okay and away we go, away we go.

So what, you can all take your hands down now. We work, we work. It may take, it may take us a little longer to count the hands but obviously we will make sure that obviously everybody's vote is taken when we do the motions. We're also obviously going to keep everybody muted during the Conference unless you're the Speaker and we've had a list of Speakers sent to us, so obviously we know who the movers are and the seconders and obviously people that's indicated to speak. Now, we don't want to stop people from speaking so can I remind everybody that, obviously with not doing it as like we would normally do where, where you can get on, can get on the rostrum and speak for ages because we've got lots and lots of hours in a day, because it's zoom and because obviously of the amount of hours that you're going to be spending on it, we obviously want to keep it as safe as possible, so we're asking, we're asking that you keep your comments, your speeches to a reasonable time. I mean, obviously we're saying probably, I believe, to two or three minutes, two or three minutes. I mean, it's, it's amazing how quickly that will, that will go but obviously we want everybody to be able to get their contributions in. Because obviously we're time-limited that was the reason for us asking people to send us in advance what they, what they wanted to speak on to make sure that we can give everybody that opportunity. If we have time, then obviously we will take Speakers from the floor too but obviously we want to also complete the motions that have been laid before us.

Obviously you will see in the chat – so if you look at the bottom of the screen again, you'll see a function called 'chat', which obviously some people have gone into. During Conference, you will be able to contact me and you directly, so if anybody's got any issue or wants to raise any question, you can contact me or Sarah directly in the 'chat'. Okay and I think that's probably it for logistics. It wasn't that complicated, was it? We've, we've brought you all early to go through the logistics but obviously we hope you, we hope you enjoy Conference. We hope the experience doesn't become too difficult we want obviously to value all of your contributions but obviously for you, as it is for us, this is a brand new experience, so if we get through it without any snags, it'll be an absolute miracle but we anticipate there will be one or two, so we just ask for your indulgence and understanding but obviously we will try our best to make this process smooth. Obviously you're all refreshed this morning because you didn't have to spend the night talking to one another in a bar somewhere until the early hours but obviously that is an experience that if you've never been to Conference, you will get to enjoy in the future, and you'll all have red eyes in the morning.

Obviously at 9.15, I think we should officially open Conference, so **welcome to the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union Conference 2021, zoom-style.**

We are really pleased, like I said, when I was opening the logistics part, that you are here with us today. We're going to go through in the normal way that we would do our Conference. Obviously we know there's many first time Delegates. Normally we would say to a first time Delegate, you know, if you're not sure what to do, then, then talk to the person next to you, which obviously we can't do, so unfortunately you're going to have to you're going to have to just go, go through it and hopefully we'll explain it as we go along, but if you are unable to, to understand something that's going on, you don't know where to find the information, if you message us through 'chat', we will point you in the right direction.

So we're going to go into into obituaries. General Secretary.

[AUDIO NOT CAPTURED]

On behalf of Conference, I'm sure we send all our condolences to their family and their friends and obviously, this last 12 months in some Branches has been particularly difficult with people losing their lives due to Covid and it's probably come home even more so about the importance of our workplaces and our strength in those workplaces of having one another to, to, to call upon at our time of need so [unclear...]

... 'participants', who is he? Sean Winfield, John Fowkes, we've both got you down, so I don't know if you're indicating you want to say something? Okay.

Obviously this, this is the first time we've met since 2019, erm and obviously there's been a number of Branches that have come into being, I mean I'm speaking specifically around the interpreters, and we're going to be asking their representative on, on the 'call' at some point during this Conference to, to make a statement because obviously we all understand what it's like working in the baking industry, you know, whether we're in retail or, or in manufacturing but we've started to recruit in, in other areas and so obviously we've asked Agata to, to explain some of the issues that they face in their workplace to give us a bit of an understanding and we're going to be doing that as, as we can, to, to, to give people experience of what, what the workplaces are like during, during this Conference.

Can I welcome all the first time Delegates to to this Conference and obviously I'm now going to introduce the Executive, if I can find them if I can find them, so obviously on the 'call' we have so we've got Pat Kelly from Region 1, we've got John Newman from Region 2, is Jason there? No, it's probably easier, probably easier if I just go down the list, isn't it. Is Jason on his 'phone? So, I believe Jason's on his 'phone we've got Dimitru in Region 3, we've got Jackie in Region 3, John Owens Region 4, John Fitz Region 4 and birthday boy Sean, happy birthday Sean, I believe it's your 21st from Region 4. Region 5, we've got Joe Knapper and we've got Lee Burns, Pauline McCarthy, is Pauline on? We've got a Young Member Representative on, which is Lauren and we've got our Women's Rep, which is Rachel and yes and of course obviously over the water there, we've got Kevin Flood, I've just found as well so that's just a quick introduction to our Executive Council and obviously alongside me I've got obviously our new General Secretary whose Conference this is her first. Obviously I think we would have all liked to have, to have seen Sarah on our platform in, in person but obviously we're going to have to make do unfortunately with just having you on zoom but obviously I'm sure we're wishing Sarah all the best for this Conference as it's her first Conference.

I'm sure, because we never had the opportunity to do it, we'd all like to congratulate her on, on, on becoming our General Secretary and slashing through that glass ceiling that says women and young women can't reach the top of the Trade Union movement and that was an absolute tribute of our members to recognise that there should never be a bar, we should never discriminate against anybody who wants to achieve a position in a Trade Union and so on that note, just to remind everybody, we're going to be recording this. If you don't want your, your, your spot recording or you don't want us to share it then, then obviously let us know. The intention is that we intend to use some of what's said for our social media, erm and obviously to promote what you're doing as representatives and I'm now going to invite Mick, Mick McDonald from Standing Orders to give an opening address to Conference. So you're just going to have to bear with us while we, while we find it [LAUGHTER], while we find it, so we can un-mute

Mick, you should be able now, I can't see him, you should be able now to un-mute yourself.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes, got it, thank you. Magic, isn't it. Right, morning Conference. It's a bit strange this, but I'm Mick McDonald, Branch 577, Region 5.

Mr President, EC, Delegates, General Secretary, I welcome you all to our 102nd Conference. Should have been 103, but obviously things happen. Now then, on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee, I welcome you all. Our Union, the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, this will be a challenge this year for all of us, virtual digital Conference. Never knew what that meant, but here we go. Respect, patience and understanding will be needed by everyone. We've got to respect people and listen to them. This is a new experience for us all, but we will need to deal with everything diligently, patiently and with respect, so that is just my little short introduction.

If you've all got your Agendas, I'd like to bring you to the final Agendas. Are we going that fast, or are you going to have a little talk, you and

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm, I'm going to move onto the Annual Report and Finances, Mick.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Right, okay. Don't forget though, your Agendas start with rule changes, so I'd advise you to have a look through them. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Mick and thank you very much and thank you to Standing Orders because, you know, Conference can be difficult to arrange in normal times. Obviously trying to make sure that, that, that we can be as open and democratic as possible on zoom has needed that we've all had to learn and you know, Mick's had to learn how to come onto zoom. I mean obviously, you know, he went down the shop and first off bought an ice lolly, thinking that we were talking about some sort of frozen, frozen lolly on a stick. We said no, it's digital. Obviously he's moved on leaps and bounds and obviously he's here with us today, which we're really pleased about, and the Standing Orders will be available, so if we do, if we do need to refer you to Standing Orders, we've set up a side, side room on zoom where, where we'll be able to put you in contact with them if there is a particular issue that needs to be raised and discussed and, and that is quite possible, as we go through the day, that that will happen.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: I hope there's no vodka in that bottle, Pauline McCarthy.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Mick and if you don't mind, if you can put yourself back, back on mute, we'd really appreciate it.

So right, I'm assuming everybody's got access to the the Annual Report and the Finances, so So, it's, I don't know if you can see that but it's, but it's like that, just so everybody knows. It says on it, the *102nd Annual Conference held by zoom, 13th – 17th June*, it's got *Treasurer's Report* on the bottom. So for first time Delegates, what we're going to do is, we're going to go through the pages and the pages that we'll start with, the pages that we'll start with, I'll turn that off, the pages we'll start with start in that book on Page 1. So as I go through, if anybody wants to say anything they want to come in on a page, then raise your hand and then obviously we will bring you in. Just the same as at Conference, except obviously we're doing it digitally, but you're, you're, you're welcome to speak on any of the pages if that's what you want to do. Right, again I'll just remind you, it will take us a little bit more time because obviously we have to search. So, Page 1. I don't see anybody with their hands up. Okay. Page 2. Nobody with their hands up, is there? Okay, I don't see anybody with their hands up. Page 3. I take it Diane, that's Dave. Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, it's, sorry yes. Just looking at these, are these reflective of 2019 and 2020, because we didn't have Conference on the the Income and Expenditure for 2019. When I'm reading through it, it says as of, so is it reflective of two years, Ian, that's all?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Did you get that, Dave?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I can, Dave, yes.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, did you hear my question?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, did you not, did you not hear Sarah, the General Secretary's reply?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: No.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Apologies.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: I can't hear you now.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: That should be better, I should deafen you all now. Can you hear me? Because we sat next to each other, I hoped that Ian's microphone on his laptop would pick up, but it didn't. So, they, they are 2022 Accounts, Dave, but on the Accounts you can see 2019 and 2020, so there's a comparison there.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hopefully you can hear me. Thank you, saw you nodding. Erm, Page 4. There's nobody with their hand up, is there? No. Okay. Page 5. No. Page 6. Okay. Page 7. Page 8. Page 9. Page 10. Okay. Pauline, McCarthy. Are you, I take it you're taking your hand down, Pauline, must have been testing it. Page 11. Julie Summersgill, is she on mute herself? Julie, Julie we can't

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Sorry, I've un-muted [LAUGHTER], sorry. Erm, I'm just looking at the section, the Benefits, Grants and Legal Services we've got Legal Defence Costs including the period 2019, it was £10,752 and suddenly it's climbed massively to £71,855 2020. What's going on? It's a massive increase.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Julie, you're right, it is a massive increase, but that's the, the cost incurred for running members cases and over the last 12 months.

We've had a lot of members cases that have gone, gone through our legal teams and solicitors and that's the cost of doing them and we're proud that we've spent that money on those members and those legal cases because in many of them we've, we've won on behalf of our members for doing that, so it is a massive jump, but it's because we're putting more cases through for our members.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I understand that, but obviously how, how many have failed, Sarah? I'm just interested as to how many

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I'm not sure if you're responding, Julie, but I can't hear you. I don't know why, because you're not on mute.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Right. I'm just wondering why, you know, what the success is, how many we've won and how many we've lost.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I can't hear you, Julie.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Still can't hear me, I don't know what's gone wrong.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I believe it's us.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Your terrible background noise, it sounds like we're at the dentist.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: What, what it is, it's when we're switching over, so obviously when, when, when Sarah's answering your questions, I'm having to turn everything off, all my sound down and then when, when obviously I'm trying to come back on, obviously it's

We, we know there's going to be snags, we know there's going to be snags. Sorry, Julie. I mean, obviously the General Secretary responded [unclear].

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: I, I was just asking how many cases have we lost, you know, how many successes have we had and how many have we lost?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I can't answer that at this moment in time, Julie, but I can get the information reported back to Conference at a later time.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Right, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, did you, did you, did you hear that, Julie? Okay, nobody else got a question? Wasili.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Good morning, Conference. The name is Wasili Ali. Can you hear me, Ian?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I can indeed mate, I can indeed. Just, what we've just worked out by the way is once, once Sarah's given you her response, it's going to take us a few seconds to actually, before you, before we can hear you because obviously it's the way, it's the way that the sound system works. So, once, once, once the General Secretary's responded, I, before you say anything else, I will, I will invite you back in to speak, that way you're not speaking to yourself. Okay? So, what's your question, Wasili.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: It's more like an observation regarding the successes or failures which are at the tribunals. For me, the most important thing is a Union which is taking a stand or taking a decision to support more of our members who are wishing to take our employers to a tribunal. I benefitted myself from the assistance I got from the Union in going to the tribunal, regardless of successes or failures, we need to be doing more in challenging these employers. That's the only thing I needed to say. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Wasili. Obviously I don't [unclear] the General Secretary. You're right, I mean obviously supporting our members is the key to our growth and, and, and if they have an issue that they need resolving legally then I think it is the duty of ours to make sure that we give them all the support that we can and our members should know that we will fight for them you know, even in the most difficult circumstances. I also, can you put your hand down please, Wasiliy and we've got Mick McDonald, so we're just looking for you, Mick and then we'll bring you back in and I think that

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: That's it, have you got it, now I'm here? Right, right. I'm just going back to that £102,000, that double-up. Sarah said we won most of them, well, don't we get costs, don't we get costs back? Can you understand what I mean?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Do you want, do you want to try maybe

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: It went from £10,000 to £102,000 and I think, on the costs ...

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: We get some of them, but not all of them go through to tribunal. Can you hear me?

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes, yes, I'm here.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Not all of them go through to tribunal, some of them we settle outside of court and our solicitors

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: So you don't get your costs back.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Not for every one.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes. Right, I just, I mean I just couldn't understand. I thought that if you won, you got your costs.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: If there's a settlement.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Not if it's not been to court, it's been settled outside.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: So you don't get paid for any costs. Yes, it's a bit one-sided. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We've, I've got, we saw, was it Pauline McCarthy? We saw Pauline McCarthy's hand, okay, so she doesn't want to come in. Dimitru.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Hi, can everybody can hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can indeed.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Yes, there is a question here I got for the, just a sec. on the Trade Union affiliations, err, Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union of the Republic of Ireland. So, in 2019 we got £13,964. Can we, can I, can we not, this money were already redirected because in 2020 we don't have any.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: We don't have any in 2020, Dimitru, because we finished our relationship with Southern Ireland back in 2019, so we don't, we don't send any money over to them any more, because we don't have Officials over there, we don't have Branches over there, so that money, that money's not being re-directed to, to a Region like that and it's swallowed up in other costs that we've, we've gained over here.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Okay then, what is the current, so the current sum, where is it now?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I'm not sure I understand the question. What, what money specifically?

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Oh, it wasn't a pot of money, okay. Thank you.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: fund, like everything else does.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's alright, it's alright, the General Secretary's muted me, she's had enough already [LAUGHTER].

Page, Page 13. I did do Page 12, didn't I? I did do Page 12, didn't I? I didn't do Page 12, sorry, Page 12. That's Dimitru, isn't it. Okay. Nobody's indicating. Page 13. Okay. Page 14. Okay. Page 15 and that, that finishes the Account. So we're really going to test you now so we're going to put that document to Conference so can you all raise your hands to accept the Accounts. Hey, like little soldiers. Okay. Thank you, Conference.

National President's Opening Address to Conference

So listen, do you know, we got through that a lot quicker than we anticipated. It might not seem like that to you, but we, but we got through that a lot quicker than we anticipated. So, obviously I'd, I'd just like to make some comments for like President's open remarks, because quite, quite clearly when we last met in, in 2019 obviously we, we didn't foresee this pandemic that's taken a grip of the country, that's changed everybody's lives that's caused so much devastation. It's been a really difficult period for everybody, but I think what, what we've seen in 2020 and today, in 2021 is it wasn't the bankers, you know, it wasn't the CEO, you know in fact the politicians probably made the situation worse [unclear] it was our members that have got us through this crisis. It was you, by going to work, that kept this nation fed. You know, for many years, the roles that we perform have always been considered as unimportant. Well, we've shown them, we've shown them, that during this crisis, we are essential and we've always believed that the work that our members do is essential. Under-valued is what we've been in our industry. Under-valued is what we've been as people, because they didn't see us as essential workers. But now people can see that without the food workers, you know, people would be struggling to get by. Without supermarket workers, without the transport workers, you know, our economy, our economy would have, would have, would have absolutely fallen to bits during this crisis. So I think the first thing we'd like to do, on behalf of the Executive, is thank you all for the work that you have done. Thank you all for the roles that you have played in your workplaces as activists. To thank you for keeping people safe, because it was our Safety Reps and our Stewards that made sure that our workplaces were kept safe.

It was our Representatives in those workplaces, like Greencore for example, that fought to make sure that people got their sick pay, you know, to make sure that those workers were protected. People at Warburtons who forced the company into making sure that they received their payments and didn't lose any sick pay when they had to go off because of being unable to attend work due to Covid. People in Hovis, people in Allied, you made sure people got through this crisis without being dropped into debt and that's the work and the role that you have performed during this crisis and you've been an absolute credit to our organisation and to our communities, so we thank you all for that.

In 2019, when we met, obviously we were, we were looking at how this Union would go forward, how this Union would look in the 21st century. None of us thought then that we would be meeting the next time on a digital platform. In fact, probably if we had been told we were going to meet on a digital platform, you know we'd have, we'd have all been voting for, an alternative to what lay before us. But what's incredibly important is that this Conference is being held, that this opportunity to come together has been taken up by so many of you as our Representatives and for us, hearing your voices this week, is critical to enable this Union to progress.

Since 2019, we've also had some significant changes and I think it's right that we obviously recognise the role of our retired General Secretary, whom we will all miss, we'll all miss his humour we will all miss the contribution that he made during his 47 years representing our Trade Union. We haven't got to say goodbye to him in the way that we would have liked to have said goodbye to him unfortunately, but that doesn't mean we're not going to say goodbye to him in the way that we have traditionally done. But again the same can be said about the full time Officials that have retired too. You know, obviously most people will have met Steve Finn, most people will know that Steve Finn was the longest serving full time Official because you couldn't not be in his company without him reminding us that he was the longest full time Official, although I think Tony Lewis actually gave him a run for his money and then there was Dave Dash, who also retired. I mean, Dave was somebody who was very passionate about his role, sometimes could be very passionate when you were speaking to him and obviously the contribution that Dave made, you know from [unclear] in British bakeries as becoming the Regional Officer in No. 2 was tremendous, you know, as all of our Officials have proved, you know. Their, their, their, their, their efforts in keeping people in communication and representing our Branches is essential, is essential for our Union to function properly. You know, we thank all the full time Officials for the additional workload they have taken on during this Covid crisis and we thank them for the work that they do during normal times as well as these difficult times too.

And I think it's very important that obviously we recognise how our Union needs to change and I think the General Secretary's going to be laying out in her opening address about the future that our Union has and that future's going to be one that's based on you, our members, our activists, to build a Trade Union that raises and ensures that people who work in our industry aren't left in a situation as we've recently found out through the Right To Food survey, on having to be reliant on food banks. No food worker, no food worker in our industry should be having to turn to the use of a food bank. Every one of you is entitled to a decent living standard and that means not having to worry about where you get your money to pay your bills. This Conference is going to be very difficult, because we're doing it digitally, but the contributions that are going to be made this week will be essential for building the future that we all want to see, which is a strong independent Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union that ensures that our workplaces grow, that ensures that our members' benefits are improved, that delivers secure work. Secure jobs is what our members should be entitled to and it's our roles as Reps and as Officials to make sure that they are paid the wages that they deserve and I want to finish on this, which is to say that during Ronnie's tenure as General Secretary, he left a legacy that saw our Union move from what some people would say was, was a mature Union to one that invested and brought along new sectors of the food industry, a General Secretary whose support he gave to young workers in places like McDonald's and places like Wetherspoons certainly lowered the age of, of the attendance at Conference for certain and has enthused so many when we've seen all of those youngsters coming and addressing our Conference.

But as I indicated in my opening comments earlier on, perhaps his biggest legacy would be the fact that we elected a female General Secretary, a female General Secretary whom, you know, is our first obviously but more importantly, shows the rest of the Labour movement that we, as a Union, understand that there is no place for discrimination, there is no place for people not to be able to achieve. We are a Trade Union that's open, we are a Trade Union that believes in equality and I've got to say, you know, I'm proud of this Union, I'm proud of the facts that you make decisions about how this Union is run and during this Conference, your contributions will make sure that that will continue. You know, we may be in a position sometimes where we might disagree, but the thing is, at the end of the day, you the Delegates, your Conference will always have the final say on how this Union operates. So thank you very much for, for indulging me for those few minutes. It's not the same as, as being with you but I want you to enjoy this Conference and obviously look forward to hearing from you all as much as possible.

What we're going to do now, it's 10 o'clock, so we're going to give you a 15 minute break, so thank you very much. If you can all be back in 15 minutes.

[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I think we're all back, I think. Okay everybody, everybody got a brew? Everybody's, everybody's okay? Cool, cool. I just wanted to give a shout out to I mean obviously people will have seen recently the strike that was ongoing in Hovis in Belfast and obviously we congratulate the courage of our members over in Belfast that took that action and won their strike getting a significant shift from the company, and obviously winning a 4% pay claim, and obviously we, we congratulate, the workers and I want to make a special mention to Laura as well. I know Laura spent probably 24, 24 hours a day on those, on those picket lines supporting our members and I think you know, she went probably above what would normally be expected, but I would imagine that's just the type of person that Laura is and, so I want to thank all of our members for what they did over in Belfast I want to thank Laura too for, for the way that she conducted that strike, even under the threat of potentially being arrested and obviously I suppose I should give a mention also to Kevin, because obviously he probably had to adjust his life during that strike and, and I know during that strike they received lots of support and one of those organisations that, that supported one of the Unions were obviously Unite Banbury, who sent across a card who are currently on strike.

I'm sure we, from this Conference, want to send a message of support and solidarity to them, who are, who are now facing having to work under new terms and conditions even though they are fighting. They have been sacked, then re-engaged on new contracts, erm and, do you know, it just goes to show in this country that our government is not standing up for working people, it's not raising peoples living standards, it's actually allowing, you know, employers to act in a way which should not be acceptable for anybody to operate. This isn't a company that doesn't have the finances, but what they want to do is improve the people at the top of the company's pay by taking away pay from those who earn through their labour and so I think we want to send out a special message of support and solidarity from the whole of the Conference, but especially from, from our comrades over in, in Belfast who, who obviously received that fantastic support. Erm, so thank you, thank you obviously to, to, to all of those people that did support the strike too, erm

And obviously yes, Laura, we saw, we've seen some of those photographs as well the crèche, the crèche workers over there and it's been fantastic to see so many of our members going and supporting those workers too who are fighting because of the injustices of their employer too, so thank you, thank you very much, Conference, for, for sending that message to those workers that are in struggle, erm and thank you very much to our members that constantly go out and support other workers who are facing hardship and difficult times at this moment.

We're going to go back now to I know we slightly changed it round, but I thought I might as well finish my bit before you went for a brew and then we could get back to normal Conference business. So I'm going to go back now to the Annual Report. So, it's the one obviously that says Annual Report 2020 at the bottom. So, I'm going to go through the pages as we would normally do and again, as we did with the Treasurer's Report, if you indicate if you want to come in then obviously you will be able to raise any questions. Who has? Dave, did you want to come in?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, just a quick one, Ian, on the Financial Report.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We've done that, you've accepted it.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: I know, I put my hand up as a question and it got accepted as, as accepted. We missed eight pages out of it, Ian it finished at 16 and we have 24 pages.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We only normally do the Accounts, Dave. We don't normally do the write-up when we, when we do the Accounts.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Right.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That's just an overview, so, so that's what we normally do. I mean, I'm happy to go back and go through the, the pages if you want.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: No, well it was just a question on Page 17, on postage. We had £169,000 on postage, erm and I just, you know and when we're spending £71,000 on court cases, that seems excessive as well.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Can you hear me?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Yes, so if, when we sent the initial Treasurer's Report out, if you look at the the Working Expenses and Other Outgoings page, you can see that the figures aren't aligned, so it says right at the top in bold, Working Expenses and Other Outgoings £75,332,.

Sso we sent a new version of that out, the Regional version, so if you look at that postage, Page 12, if you look at that on postage, it's actually only around five grand. The £169,000 was the Computer Expenses and Website, it had jumped up when Nigel produced it, so we sent it out apologising for the error and to make sure you got the right document to look at.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: That's fine. I don't know whether you can, yes, you can hear me. That's fine, thank you.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: No problem.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, yes, so just, just, just so everybody knows, those, those pages at the back are just an explanation in more detail. The figures are what we normally go through at Conference, because obviously they have the details of, of what the outgoings and incomings are. So Annual Report. So, start, starting at Page 1, which is basically an overview that's of the Executive Council Annual Report. So for new Delegates, this is a report of the Executive meetings that have been held, and again once we've gone through and completed the Annual Report, we've already accepted the Treasurer's Report, but they come as a pairing, so once, once we've gone through to Page 14 in this document, we will put both of those to Conference so, so they can be adopted by Conference. So, Page 2. Nobody's indicating, thank you. Page 3. Page 4's blank, so Page 5 which starts at the top with the Executive Council Meeting 13th May, 2020. Page 6. Page 7. Okay, 5th and 6th August at the top of the next page, which is Page 8. Page 9, which has got the 4th and 5th November. Okay. Page 10, which has got the 3rd and 5th February. Okay, Page 11. Okay, so Page 12, which has got the 4th to the 7th May. Okay, Page 13. And obviously Page 14 is blank, so I'm now going to put that document and the Treasurer's Report combined to Conference.

Can I, can I see you all raise your hands, if you agree? Okay. Okay and because there's some hands that's not been raised, is there anybody opposing the documents? You can all take your hands down if you, cool and I'll ask if there's anybody opposing it, because obviously not everybody's put their hands up. Can I, can I Okay, that's, that's fine. So, thank you very much. So just, just to remind everybody as well, that obviously we will be doing motions in the morning, so Conference I'm doing fringe meetings in the afternoon, if you haven't signed up for those fringe meetings, you're still able to do so. We've got, we've got some speakers coming along to take part in those fringe meetings too, for example Richard Burgon will be coming to the political one tomorrow and we've got Andy Birchall that will be coming to the organising one. Tomorrow we've also got Ian Mearns. Ian Byrne will be coming, so anybody who's been following the food banks for the football supporters will have seen the amazing work that he's been doing on the Right to Food Campaign, and he'll be coming to talk to us about how, how Liverpool fans, for example, turn up at Old Trafford bringing food to Manchester United's fans food bank which obviously, you know, is a very unusual occurrence. And I believe Manchester United fans did it with Leeds United fans, which shows that despite what normally happens in football, when it comes to supporting one another you know, our communities do absolutely amazing, amazing things. Matthew Brown, you've got your hand up.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Hello.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: I've just seen somebody just drop on the 'chat' comment about opposing and supporting. You can also choose the options of going yes and no, rather than doing a hand count for each option, you can just add yes for support and no for opposing. It'd be a lot easier your end if you did that option.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We, we know that. The problem we've got is, is everybody's got the same (noise) I thought you'd fallen over then.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Aye. [LAUGHTER]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It was a good night last night then.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Something like that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: [LAUGHTER]. Yes, the, the problem is because obviously people are doing it on different formats, they haven't all got the same option, so that, that's why it takes us a little bit of time, because obviously we have to look in, in where peoples hands are going up, erm

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Fair enough, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, yes.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, so, I believe, I believe now we're going to go to the Agenda, aren't we, which is, so obviously again it's a red cover and it says Final Agenda. This is the document with all the motions on so obviously if you're, if you're a new Delegate, you're looking I think it came with the heading of Final Agenda when we sent the documents out as well.

So, the General Secretary's going to put the motion in the 'chat' as well, so, so people will be able to see the motion that, that, that we're speaking on in the 'chat' and I believe it's motion 1, which is, who's speaking on it? John Fox from Branch 405 to, to open up the motions of Conference. I'm just looking for you, John.

1 Rule 14.8.a

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees that in rule 14.8.a we delete the first sentence and replace it with: 'Shop Steward shall be elected from members of the branch, on the basis of one steward for every 50 members or under.'

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Hey, okay, can you hear, everybody hear me okay? Fine. Anyway, let's all have a good Conference, even though we're apart from each other, okay? John Fox, Region 4, Branch 405. Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. That this Conference agrees in Rule 14.8a, we delete the first sentence and replace it with 'Shop Stewards shall be elected from members of the Branch on the basis of one Steward for every 50 members or under'. Now we put this motion in as we believed it would help factories with more than one Branch. These Branches have different procedures and company policies and would benefit from Shop Stewards from those Branches looking after their own Branch. I move this motion, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, we've got Alan Scott down. Is that formally seconding or are you speaking, Alan? We're going to un-mute you.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Yes, I'll just, I'm not going to speak on it, I'll just formally second it for John, yes?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Alright.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is there anybody indicating to speak? Nobody's indicated to speak on this motion we're going to ask Conference, does anybody want to contribute to this, to this motion? Okay, nobody's indicating to speak. Conference, we're going to ask the mover to remit the motion because we believe it may give us some issues but we don't, we don't oppose the motion if it's remitted. Unfortunately we would oppose it if, if it isn't remitted and the reason for that is, is that it's, although the intentions are good, we have currently Branches that operate in workplace, we have Park Cake in Oldham, for example, which has several different Branches that operate there and, and the risk is that if it went through in that format, there is a, there is a chance that the company may reduce our abilities to elect Shop Stewards, because currently our agreements stipulate when we sign a recognition agreement with an employer of what the structure of those Branches are. Now what we've said as an Executive is that we will, if it's remitted, we will take it away and look more in depth into it to see whether or not, you know, our feelings on it are such that it would put us in jeopardy, and obviously report back to Branch 405 of what we've, what our findings are. So I'm going to ask, I'm going to ask the mover if he's prepared to remit, otherwise we're going to go to the vote, erm and, and ask Conference to oppose it. So we're just going to bring you back in Mr Fox. Should be Brother Fox really, shouldn't it.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Yes yes, I'll remit that, back to the EC.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much. Okay. We're going to move onto motion 2, which I believe is Nick Mead and then Terry Povey.

2 Rule 14.8

Branch 253

This Conference agrees to amend 14.8 by adding Environmental Representative to the list of Branch officers and shall read as:

L) Environmental representatives shall be elected from the Members of the Branches. The duty of Environmental Stewards is to implement changes on sites, inspect sites and report opportunities for environmental savings to the branch committee and employees. They shall forward best practice to the EC for discussion.

Environmental stewards to stand for re-election after 2 years' service, and credentials to be progressed through the RC.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Nick Mead, speaking on motion No. 2. Chair, General Secretary and Conference. This is a rule change [unclear]. Rule 14.8 Conference agrees to amend 14.8 by adding Environmental Representatives to the list of Branch Officers and shall read as, 'L. Environmental Representatives shall be elected from the members of Branches, the duty of the Environmental Stewards is to implement changes on site, inspect sites and report opportunities for environmental savings to the Branch Committee and employees.'

They shall forward best practices to the EC for discussion. Environmental Stewards to stand for re-election after two years' service and credentials to be progressed through the RC'. Conference, about two years' ago, we voted unanimously for in favour of supporting Earth Strike. Erm, we know what's happening to the planet at the moment we've got obviously the G7 talking, talking about amongst other things the planet and savings we can, and savings we can make to the planet, not necessarily financial, but the, the longevity of our great planet. Erm, I feel if we don't support this and start showing from within people aren't going to follow us and we know that, that we like to set a trend as a, as a great Union. I urge you to support this motion.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Morning Conference, Chair, Secretary, Delegates. I'm just here to second what Nick had to say and that's all I've got to say on that subject.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is there, is there anybody who would, who would like to speak on this motion? Mr Fox?

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Yes. Thanks, thanks. Conference yes, I'd like to support this motion. Reason being, it's with me being on the the Board of Manchester Environmental Education Network and I think this, this will be very active and very, actually catch up with some Unions, because a lot of Unions now have got Environmental Reps, erm and I do think we, we actually do need them, and we could keep the companies to account, especially with transport now and with transport having to, to change over to electric cars by, well, they'll only be able to get electric cars by 2030 and vehicles. This, this will be a [unclear] for our Union, yes. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nicolae, you had your hand up then, it's gone back down, did, did you want to come in?

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Yes, hello, do you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can, we can indeed, mate.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Good morning, everyone. I'm happy to be here for first time. In regards to motion 2, I'm not opposite the motion, I'm not agreeing with the motion, I'm just thinking because of our structure of the Union and of the Branches, is not maybe ideal to put Environmental Shop Steward but not make him, not make him a Steward, to make him a Representative like the same like a Health and Safety one, because we, I mean many of us have disagreements and then we put the small titles, more titles, which, I mean, [unclear] will bring any disagreements in a few of the Branches, if it makes any sense.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Nicolae. Is there anybody else who would like to Pauline? Pauline Mc, we're going to un-mute you. We've got Mark Hilton as well. Can't hear you, Pauline. Quietest you've ever been. Aye, we can hear you now.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: Is the motion, whoever knocks you off, has to knock you back on? Erm, I'm just here to support the motion really. It's really important that the environment has become really, really important because not just in little England but we all need to work together and if companies are pushing environmental work, so we need to be involved within that, so I think it's a really good motion and I would support it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Mark, Mark Hilton.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, it's a really good motion. I'm just slightly uneasy on the wording when it says, 'the duty of Environmental Stewards is to implement changes on sites'. I get the idea, but we're not the employers, we can't implement them and I just don't want to introduce the position and have somebody then like, I'm a bit uneasy about the companies then trying to hold the Rep to account for any failure of that, if you get what I mean, but otherwise I do support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Wasili.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Good morning, Conference. I'm not here to oppose the motion. I'm sitting on the fence, like the guy Nicolae. My suggestion would be, I'm able to follow what employers are doing maybe to improve on the Health and Safety Reps. Our managers now are called Health, Safety and Environmental Managers. Why don't we do the same, call our Reps Health, Safety and Environmental Safety Reps, maybe to make it easier, instead of trying to change the wording of the, add, not Environmental, in front of the Health and Safety. That's it, thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: John Owens.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432, EC Member: Just a point of information on this, is that obviously last year we, I sit on the Health and Safety Committee for Region 4 and last year we did change the title of the Committee to the Health and Safety Environmental Committee because it's, really important not just in our workplace but our home life to improve the environment.

You know, we may not see a lot of the benefits for our children and our grandchildren and I think it's a great idea.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I'm, I'm not seeing anybody else indicating to speak, so one last shout-out. Is anybody wanting to speak? Okay, Tony Mansell.

Brother Tony Mansell – Branch 258: Morning, Conference. Erm, I agree with John and I'm on the Health and Safety Committee for Region 2 and like he said, a couple of years' ago, I believe it was on, Region 2 put it through on a, change the title to include the word Environmental. I think it would take it on the next level as well so yes, I agree.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Do you want to take your hand down, Tony, so I don't get, get me confused. Anybody, anybody else? Okay. General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, we would ask that you support this motion. Whilst we have extended the remit of Health and Safety to cover the environment, we believe it can only be of benefit to the Union collectively to recognise Environmental Reps in Branches, that can be trained and operate in a greener, cleaner way. Our industry releases a large number of emissions into the atmosphere and members and Reps should be holding discussions with employers to make sure any changes they make become greener and less detrimental to your terms and conditions. Sharing best practice as well, we should all strive to do. We would ask that you support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Right of reply, Nick?

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Good.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool. Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour, please show. Okay, if you can all take your hands down. Okay, those, those against? Okay, that's carried, Conference. Before, before, I just want to give some, some information as well, because I've been asked a question about why we didn't bring Standing Orders in before we started the motions. I just want to give an explanation. Because, obviously, this is a digital Conference, we, we, we did all of the stuff upfront, which is why we were asking people to meet certain timelines and the idea was that what they would do is, it would enable us to try and get the Conference running as smoothly as possible, to get as many people in to speak as possible so that's, that's why we sent out the message requesting that, that people gave us advanced warning about motions that they wanted to speak on whether or not they were going to be motions that they were going to continue to stand with or if they wanted to withdraw them and we also asked people to composite motions in advance of, of today's meeting, because obviously we realised that meeting Standing Orders as you would normally do in a physical Conference, would be pretty impossible to happen so that's why we're not going to be asking, during this Conference, for Standing Orders to tell us what motions are standing. The Final, the Final Agenda has been laid out and that is standing as the motions that we will be going to go through today, unless it's indicated to us, and then I will as the President, indicate if we get a withdrawal for any motions but it's for that purpose and that purpose only, so I just wanted to make that point of clarity. Okay, so, Wasili, you've got your hand up.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Yes, Ian, I've got my hand up. I want to send a message. I can hardly hear Sarah Woolley when she's speaking. I can hear you clearly, I don't know what's wrong with the microphone. She's coming in garbled up, I can't hear a word from your microphone, I don't know why.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Let's see if we can do something about that.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: turn it up somehow. No, it's not that. Now there's a likelihood that it might be louder, so if you want to say something Sarah.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Is that better?

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Yes, I can hear you now. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool, it was, I had my microphone on too low, we weren't close enough.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We were socially distanced, but for you we'll bring that socially distanced, we're in a bubble. Okay, , we're on motion 3, aren't we. So, the mover of motion 3, all we've got is Region 4's Regional Council, we never, we never got an indicator of who was speaking. Okay, cool.

3 Rule 14.5

No4 Regional Council

That this Conference agrees to change the wording in paragraph four of this rule to read 'the secretary will be allowed annual expenses of 4p in the pound instead of the current 5p in the pound.'

Brother Paul Knight – Branch 459, Region 4: Morning, Conference. Rule change 14.5. That this Conference agrees to change the wording in Paragraph 4 of this Rule to read, ‘The Secretary will be allowed annual expenses of 4p in the £, instead of the current 5p in the £. This was discussed obviously about 16 months ago at one of our Regional Council Meetings, erm and the discussion on the day was all about saving money to help the Union and saving money, you know, to secure the Union for the future. I would like the Delegates to support this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I nearly forgot to turn my mike on then. We we need a seconder or formally seconded from Region 4. So Mandy and well, John, did you want to speak?

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: No.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, okay.

Sister : I do want to speak, but I don’t want to support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right, okay. So, so John, were you supporting the motion, because obviously I need a

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Well, I was going to second this motion for you, for, for the Region, yes, so, so that they could it could be debated on and yes, so I’ll just second it, formally second it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, cheers. , speakers? We’ve got nobody that indicated that they wanted to speak, so, so obviously from the floor. Oh sorry, no, no, I was wrong. We’ve got, we’ve got Mark Hilton first and then we’ve got Douggie Johnson and Dave Suddards and then I’ll bring in speakers from the floor. So, I’ve got you, Mandy. Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes I’ve been asked by Branch Secretary, Sean Molloy, just to inquire. I get the piece about saving the money, but I also just question has it become, are we incurring any less expenses as a Branch Secretary to justify this? Especially given the recent events of Covid etc, etc. The money we’re laying out for it is exactly the same, so I’m just wondering why we’re a penny worse off? I’d like someone to explain it to me please. That’s it.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hello? Is it alright for me to speak?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes Douggie, sorry, yes, I mean

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Sorry, sorry, sorry

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I’ve, I’ve, what I said was, because we know who the Speakers are, so obviously you were next and then it’s Dave Suddards, then I’m going to go to the floor, yes. When Douggie’s finished Dave, we’re just going to un-mute you. After Douggie’s finished.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Oh right, right, thank you very much. Erm, I’m opposing this motion. Erm, I think yes, we’re experiencing difficulties. Yes, membership is down, but I think is the way settling our constant dilemma by cost-cutting, because what I think will happen is we’ll lose more and more and will cut and cut until there is nothing left to cut. I mean, I’ve seen, I’ve seen it like where we do road shows and we haven’t got things like pens to hand out, this is a way of promoting our Union, to gain new membership. You know, every other Union does this. You know, if you want to see how expenses are used to increase our membership, I think we should look at somewhere like Greencore, where our Branch Secretary, Nicolae, has put expenses back into the Branch, he promotes the Union, having open fun days, Christmas party, hardship monies from the Branch. I mean this apparently is the legacy of our late President, Dennis Nash. He was Branch Secretary at Greencore. This is the way to promote the Union, put back the money to the members. This is why they’ve built, I think they’ve built such a strong, vibrant Branch at Greencore, or we can carry on with cutting and cutting and we can carry on cutting until there’s nothing left for us to cut. I ask you to oppose this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You okay, Dave?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Oh right, is it me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It is mate, yes.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes. Although I’ve indicated that I was for this motion I’m for this motion if the Union is in such a dire situation that we need to support it in this way, then yes, I am for this motion, but people will only look at this as well as like Douggie’s just said, it’s only a penny. It’s 20%, it’s a saving for the Union on the current expenditure what we’ve got there of £200,000, £206,000 I think, roughly each year, which is a massive saving for the Union. What I will say is, the 5p a year, or the 5p Branch Secretaries get, has been the same, I don’t know before, but I’ve been a Branch Secretary for 16 years, it’s never risen, but inflation, paper, ink, everything else what we, it costs us to, to, to do the Branch Secretary’s position effectively is going up.

So although I'm for it if the Union is in such dire straits yes, but if not, then I'm here to oppose this motion and as I say, 20%, are we cutting everything 20% across the board to save, or is the other and the motion doesn't say where this money's going to be directed to. Erm, as I say, there's a number of motions what we're coming to about biannual Conferences, well, if we're saving £200,000 a year off a Branch Secretary, problem saved, you know, so I just want to open the debate on it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Speakers from the floor now, so the order that we're going to take them in, so as soon as one Speaker's finished, we'll then un-mute the other one. So, I'm going to call Mandy first, then I've got Nicolae and then I've got Pauline McCarthy.

Sister Mandy Mason – Branch 423 (Blackpool): Me now?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It is.

Sister Mandy Mason – Branch 423 (Blackpool): Right. I seriously object to this. We have, where I work, the management are constantly giving one another five grand bonuses, while they take off the worker and here we are, in the Union, where people above are putting in for pay rises every year and getting them and we are asked to give money up. As has already been said, everything's going up, stationery and everything else. I'm not asking for an increase, but I think it is so greedy to take away. That's me.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Yes, hello. Hello everyone, once again. Erm, I am full solidar with, with Mandy, full solidar with Douggie. It's just I believe is the how the motion is put. We put the motion in the bit that we, I mean everybody's saying that we will take from Branch Secretary. Put the question in another way. Why do you believe that you take from Branch Secretary? Is a lot depends how you look on this problem. If we take this money and put back in the Branch, you want to, you know, you want to save 20%, but you will save this 20% on the back of your members. If you believe that that will work, I have no problem by this. I strongly believe that will not work and this is the reason why I am opposing for this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Pauline's not coming in. Can you take your hand down, Nicolae, for me please, so I don't get you confused. Julie Summersgill.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452: Hello. Yes, I know it was put in before Regional Council, but obviously there was a lot of debate and round at pre-Conference and, you know, I do see this as a personal attack on, on Branch Secretaries and we do get good and bad Branch Secretaries. Erm, you know, we're constantly getting extra things put on us and paperwork that we need to complete and we've had to do even more so and, you know, scan things across for funeral benefit, etc, etc and it just seems to me that yes, we are sort of targeting Branch Secretaries and, you know, I raised it myself there's other ways the Union could be saving bigger pots of money, you know and I've been told previously, because I mentioned about the ex-General Secretary who's living in the Head Office, the cars that are given out at retirement, you know, the workers, us on the shop floor aren't given cars when we retire, you know, we get something off the company but it's nowhere near as much and I do feel that it is an attack on Branch Secretaries. Like you said, it depends on the Branch as to how they use that money and like we've heard from Douggie, you know the guy at Grencore is putting everything back into the Branch, you know, they've got hardship funds, we send flowers out when members have passed away or make a donation and it, it does seem quite a hit on the Branch Secretaries. So I will oppose this.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, is, is there anybody else? Can you take your hand down for me, Jules. Okay, so I've not got any, anybody else indicating that they want to come in. Listen, let's first off make it very, very clear. This isn't the Executive that's put this motion, it's Region 4's Regional Council that proposed this motion. This is obviously the people that attend Regional Council, this is our lay member and our activists who believed that what they wanted to do was put forward a proposal, because they can see, as, as I think lots of people can see, the financial issues facing Trade Unions. I mean, just in this last week for example, the government has announced a further attack on Trade Unions, which is going to put a levy onto this Union equivalent of about an additional £70,000.

Now, as an Executive it would be wrong of us if somebody puts forward a proposal to save money, not to support them, you know, because as far as we're concerned, the membership of this Union, you know, has a right to have a voice and has a right to make a contribution and, and if it proposes a, a reduction, I don't think it's doing as an attack, I think that's, that's wrong. I just want to correct Dave's figure of £206,000, it isn't, it's £20,000, it would be £20,000 saving, erm and obviously that money would be used in, in other means as, as all of our money is used, to pay for the, the things that we do as a Trade Union, but let's, let's be absolutely clear, this is not an attack on any Branch Secretary. This is a constructive proposal based on what people have seen in our, in our accounts to try and assist the Union through difficult times.

As an Executive, we would ask you to support the motion, but again not because, you know, we want to take anything away from anybody, but purely because, you know, a motion has come from a Region in our Trade Union that believes it's the right thing during this time for us to do and we, we understand, you know, that, that this, you know, would see a reduction potentially in the income of Branch Secretaries, but there is a way to make that come back up, that's fine, recruiting more members in the Branch for example. You know, the bigger the membership in the Branch, the bigger the contributions are to those Branch funds. So, as much as, you know, we want to support our Branch Secretaries and our Branches, you know, it would be wrong of this Trade Union not to support a position that's been proposed by a Regional Council based on facts and, you know, we understand, you know, the passion and, and just to, just to, just to clarify as well, Dave, when you mentioned that you'd never seen an increase, it actually used to be 7½% that we gave to Branch Secretaries several years ago but at that time the Branch Secretaries decided to reduce it from 7½% down to 5, so it's not the first time that the Branch Secretaries, erm and Branches have actually put forward proposals and I can assure you, the Executive would never have, have come with a proposal at this moment in time to reduce the Branch Secretaries expenses, but we applaud the, the decision by Region 4 Regional Council.

We applaud the fact that they've looked at the accounts, we applaud the fact that they are putting forward a proposal and on other areas, the Union is cutting back, the Union has reduced in, in certain areas. So, to say that we haven't made any cutbacks, you only have to look at the number of Officials we have, you only have to look at the number of clerical staff we've got. You know, the reductions that's been going on, largely due to our drop in membership, which again, you know, is, is only at just over 15,000, does put this Union at risk. The best way, you know, to improve that position is if we can recruit, you know, and get as close to 100% in all of our Branches. That would put this Union in a good financial position today, tomorrow and into the future. We don't like the idea of cutbacks, but we also don't like the idea of the only way of raising our money, our income, because people will notice when they looked at those accounts, the income we used to get from, from the legal services was cut as well, the government took that away from us. You know, so we haven't got the subsidy any more that the, that we used to get. We used to get hundreds of thousands of pounds and that was more money that we lost as an organisation, but we would ask Conference to support the motion.

We believe that, you know, it's, it's valued, a valued contribution from the Region. We also understand that if Conference doesn't support the motion, it's, it's, it's not going to be a massive issue for us, because we, we will look at what we do to address it and for us, the most important thing is to encourage you to do recruitment and as for some of the information that we've asked Branch Secretaries to complete, that was about making sure we understood the potential in your workplaces for growth of the Union. That's why that mapping information is critical, because it will identify whether we need to be recruiting Stewards to help with the growth in those Branches, or whether we have the opportunity to recruit members in those Branches because our structure isn't right. So, we would ask Conference to support the motion and obviously, Paul, you have the right of reply.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459: Thank you Mr President. This was discussed 16 months ago and I just, it's been brought here today just to let people have a debate, because that's what it's all about. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Can I remind everybody, because it's a Rule change, right, it's 2/3rds for Rule changes, so it's not a straight 50/50. Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay, can those that oppose the motion please show? That, that motion's lost. Okay, No. 4 was withdrawn. No. 5, motion 5, which is, I think it's you, Kevin and then after that it's

5 New Rule

No 7 Regional Council

This Conference agrees to ensure an appeals process can be accessed when Emergency Motions are not permitted to proceed to Conference by the Standing Orders Committee. As with any democratic process, an appeal should always be an option however the current position is that if the Standing Orders Committee deem that an Emergency should not proceed there is no next stage of appeal.

Within the rule book, Appendix 1, section 2.g) To consider Appeals, this section does not clarify if the appeal is regarding the suppression of Emergency Motions and clarity around the right to appeal a decision taken by the Standing Orders Committee needs to be addressed.

The appeals process should also look to nominate the Standing Orders substitute or one experienced delegate from each region to conduct the appeal stage as the Standing Orders Committee have already been involved in the process at the first stage of the Emergency and will not be permitted to influence the appeal stage. The mover and seconder of the Emergency to have the right to address the appeal panel and put forward the case of why an Emergency should proceed.

We should always strive for a democratic process within our union so we ask for your full support of this motion.

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716, EC Member: Yes, me now?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It is indeed, pal.

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716, EC Member: Morning, Conference. Delegates, National Executive. We're asking you to fully support the motion which covers the reason for bringing it forward in the first place. We have no system in place to support a [unclear] process for emergency motions in Standing Orders. It might be deemed that they should not go forward for debate. This motion was the result of our Region in 2019, not being permitted to bring an emergency motion forward and the replacing of the National Officer following retirement. The reason we brought it forward, this was an emergency motion, was because the full information was not available to our Delegates until the Sunday morning. Given the Union finances at the time, we thought it was not appropriate to replace the outgoing General Secretary on the basis of affordability, nothing to do with personalities to be fair. The motion was suppressed by Standing Orders, as they felt it was information we already had, which we reiterated we did not get the full information until we arrived at Conference in the morning. Following that, we feel it would be a no-appeal process and replace it to be a more fairer process, when that has been considered fully and without bias. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Mark McNally.

Brother Mark McNally – Branch 703: Morning, Delegates. I'm putting the motion on Standing Orders. Delegates, NEC, I am seconding this motion on behalf of our Region, as I believe that every process [unclear] process in order to ensure [unclear]. We always ensure that processes within our workplace are [unclear] outnumbered or not entirely [unclear]. I will look to this now as [unclear] in the future. If emergency motions are suppressed by [unclear]. As the motion states, the Appeals Process can be made up of one Delegate from each Region or the Scrutineer. It doesn't have to be a hard process to follow [unclear]. It is there for when we need it. I ask you to support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So we've got Nick, Nick Mead.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I'm against the motion and my reasoning for it. Whilst I agree with what's trying to be achieved with the motion, I'm against that there's no actual Rule change within the motion. If the motion had been in the Rule 22 area, which is all about Conference and was specific to Conference and emergency motions regarding appeals and decisions made by the Standing Orders Committee, then my vote would definitely have been with you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Dave Suddards.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I'm here to, I'm here to support this motion and as the last speaker said, it isn't a change of Rule, it's a new Rule, erm and as I said, I'm here to support this motion. Everything should have an appeals process although I understand the difficulties of Standing Orders and the time limits if, if it is getting out of hand that we're getting excessive amounts of motions, then it needs to be re-looked at, but I do believe that there should be an appeals process where, you know, one decision is, is not the final decision.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I have got an indication from Laura Graham to speak. Obviously Laura Graham is an Official of the Union and it's not normal practice to allow employees of the Union to talk on Rule changes so I haven't got a problem with inviting Laura to speak if Conference is okay with it. I mean, is anybody opposed to, to allowing Laura to speak? So, I've got Kevin and I've got Pauline McCarthy.

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716, EC Member: Hello. Ian, I'll just remit it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You're going to remit it?

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716, EC Member: I'll remit it, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh, okay. We haven't even got, fair enough, fair enough. What, what we will do as you're remitting it, we will look at the procedure we will make sure that there is a fair system applies, we believe there currently is, but we take on board the comments that have been made and, and obviously as an Executive when we meet it will be part of our discussions to and obviously if there is some improvement we can make, then, then obviously we will bring it back to, to the next Conference. In which case now, we have got to motion 8 and I believe this is you, Sarah.

8 Rule 22.1

Executive Council

Replace the rule with: 'A physical Conference of duly-elected Delegates shall be held at a venue nominated by the EC every two years. Arrangements and expenses of a nominal sum shall be determined by the EC. In the interim years a Digital Conference shall be held to deal with elections and rule changes.'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference we were disappointed that the two motions on this topic were withdrawn, but we were advised that the Regions supported a biannual Conference and were calling for this.

We want to, to focus on, you know, our membership and therefore income is continuing to fall and paying in excess of £80,000 per year for a Conference pulls resources away from other areas of work such as organising and whilst it's great to get away to Southport for a week in June, we're not currently seeing a subsequent uplift in membership on our return to Branches and we've got to do something different. We need to run Conference and we want to run Conference in order to remain democratic as an organisation, but we also need Conference to make a real difference to our Branches and our industry as a result.

We felt, as an Executive, that by putting this motion in and adding in an interim digital Conference now that we've experienced the potential of digital platforms that, that would only deal with non-changes in elections unlike a physical Conference which would do both of those and general motions as well, it would help ensure Branches will continue to be able to secure, we would, apologies, microphone problems, we would, we would, we felt as an Executive that by adding interim digital Conference, now that we've experienced the potential of digital platforms, that would only deal with Rule changes and elections unlike a physical Conference which would do both of those and general motions, it would help ensure Branches will continue to be able to secure release and would give us the opportunity to run training sessions and fringe meetings as we've tried to do this year, to increase engagement with a larger membership, encourage our members to become activists and even Reps, give Conference a greater purpose and save the Union money as well. Due to lack of support, we're looking and we will remit the motion and bring it back next year as an Executive with a clear structure around how two different types of Conference would look, but Conference please be clear, we cannot continue as we always have done whilst the Union is shrinking and we need you organising your workplaces and striving for 100% density because that's the only way we're going to turn the Union around and ensure there are finances available for annual Conferences and other events, so we're going to remit the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank, thank you, General Secretary. Motion No. 9, which is composite 1. Sorry, it's the composite of 9 and 12. We're going to put it in the 'chat' and who's speaking on it? So, we've got Region 4 speaking on the composite. We, we need, we need a speaker from Region 4, on this, on this composite. Speaker from Region 4? Is there anybody moving this motion? If we don't get the mover from Region 4, this will fall. Okay, I'm going to ask one more time. Mover from Region 4? I know you've got your hand up, Nick, but obviously I can't bring you in because you're from Region 2. Okay, last final shout and then obviously the motion will fall. Oh Paul, Paul, hey.

Composite motion 1 [Rule 22.16 (b)]

Region 4

Replace the first 5 lines of the rule with:

To elect from Conference delegates on the following basis;

1 executive member per 3000 or part thereof members in each region.

For this rule change only upon agreement the rule would be implemented straight away and would implement the change to the 2021 incoming Executive.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Okay, Conference. I don't mind reading this Rule out, let's get some debate going. Rule 22.16. That this Conference agrees to change Rule 22.16, 'number of Delegates to sit on the Executive Council to be changed based on the number of members in each Region, based on one member per 3,000, or part thereof, members in each Region'. This will enable us to reduce the number of people on the EC and allow us to increase with increase of membership. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, we ask you to support this composite. As we've covered several times, membership is shrinking. We currently have an Executive set up for around 50,000-ish members along with the cost in normal years to go along with that, meetings, travel, equipment, etc, but we're a long way away from that level of membership. This Rule change would ensure that all Regions have a seat that's more relevant to their membership levels and allows for growth going forwards. What we've learnt over the last 12 months during the pandemic, is that there are more efficient ways of working and we can still operate effectively as an Executive with fewer Representatives around that table, training the role, especially as we now have the ability to meet virtually as well as physically. The lower number will still allow us to operate a Financial and General Purposes Committee and other Committees that are needed as well. We ask you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, have we got, who's indicated? So, we've had, we've had no indication of people that wanted to speak, so we're going to open it up to the floor, so obviously Nick, you, you were definitely in there first, mate, definitely in there first.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Mr President, I, I have a query on, on the wording at the top. Composite motions, composite motion 1 – 9. Does that not mean we’re compositing Rule, motions 1 to 9?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: No, that’s my that’s my technical error. It’s a dash to say that it’s motions 9 and 12 that have been composited.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: That was why my hand was up, that’s all.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. obviously open to the floor. Anybody want to speak on the motion? It’s no good putting your ‘phone in front of your face, Pauline. Okay, Cash, I’ll bring you in. Un-mute yourself.

Brother Kashmir Dosanjh – Branch 333: I have. Morning, Conference, Delegates. I agree with the motion, because I think it’ll be more fairer, because it will be comparable with the actual membership of the Region, to how many Executive members there will be in there, so I agree with the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else? Nobody’s indicating. We, we haven’t had anybody oppose the motion so there is no right to reply which I’m sure you’ll be glad about, Paul [LAUGHTER]. So we’re going to go to the vote. Remember it’s a Rule change, so again it’s, you know, we need you all to vote first off, one way or the other, erm and it’s 2/3rds for the Rule to be changed. So, all those in favour? Okay, can you please take your hands down. Okay, those against? So the calculation, the calculation is there’s obviously 57 voted in favour, so obviously that, that, that equates to 2/3rds, over 2/3rds, so, so that motion’s been accepted. So that, that Rule will change and accepted. What that will mean now is obviously when we go, when we go to the balloting process, which obviously we would normally highlight at the beginning of Conference, but because we knew that this motion was coming up and we didn’t know which way it was going to go, we, we haven’t, we haven’t held in the normal way the way we conduct those ballots, but it will be based on this new Rule, so we will be electing based on the, the new Rule, which will be a calculation of one EC member per 3,000 per Region. Okay, erm and we’ll sort that out this afternoon and obviously you will, you will take part in that balloting process tomorrow. We’re going to send instructions, I believe, about how that balloting process will take place. You may have already received it, but you’ll probably receive it again to make sure you all have the opportunity to, to take part. Right so, so motion 10 falls because you just passed the composite motion which was part of No. 9 No. 11’s been withdrawn and we’re now going on to motion 13.

13 Rule 22.7

Executive Council

Insert at the end of the rule ‘In the case of a digital meeting being held, the deadline, delivery and collection of nominations and ballot arrangements may be amended as determined by the National President and SOC.’

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, this is simply an exercise to allow us to be able to operate in future in line with our Rule Book should we find ourselves in a position like we have in the last 12 months [unclear] online Conference. It’s a tidying-up exercise and we just ask you to support it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it’s formally, formally seconded. We’ve got an indication, did we have anybody? So, we’ve got Dave Suddards who told us he wanted to speak.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You see, it confuses being called Diane, Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I know, sorry [LAUGHTER]. I don’t have an iPad, I have a computer and it doesn’t, it’s ageing like myself. Yes, I was against this motion because I don’t and can I say, can we not see Sarah, or can the sound when Sarah’s speaking be improved, because there’s a shocking echo when Sarah’s speaking so when you say it’s a tidying-up exercise I don’t understand, insert the Rule in case of a digital meeting be held, the deadline, delivery and collection of nominations and ballot arrangements may be amended as determined by the National President. I don’t understand the motion, so, oh, the understanding I have of this motion is, if you’re not happy with what we’re doing, you have the power, without coming back to Conference, to change it. Is this correct?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I mean obviously we can’t, I mean if you’d have asked

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Right.

(Dave Suddards & Ian Hodson talking over each other)

If it’s on that basis then, if it’s on that basis, which is how, that is how I read it, Ian, then I oppose it. It’s not that I don’t trust you to do anything, but what’s the point of having Conference if you can change anything what we like or dislike. So, that, that’s the only point I’ll oppose it on and that’s and I don’t want you to explain, that’s fine. I’ve put my point why I, why I oppose the wording of the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it's okay. John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. It's just a point of order this on Rule 13, yes. It says, by the National President and the Standing Orders Committee. Now the National President and the Standing Orders Committee do have the, at a normal Conference, to actually do this, yes. So it, it's and this is about being a digital Conference, yes. So it, it's going to be totally different to the digital Conference as it is as the normal Conference, so therefore the National President and the Standing Orders Committee will have the chance to change the way how the voting procedure will actually be, be delivered. That, that's all I can say on, on this. If that answers your question, Dave. Okay, mate.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is, is there anybody else indicating that they want to speak? And because Dave, Dave opposed, obviously we've got the right of reply. So I hope this will clarify the position. General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Can you hear me okay? (echo) I pressed the wrong button and I've muted myself and that's what happens when I, when I do that, so I'll not do it again. Conference, the purpose of this is we've obviously found ourselves this year in a global pandemic. We've tried to work as close to the Rule Book as we can, but we can't physically be together to comply with the Rule Book as, as rigidly as, as we would normally do [unclear]. All this is doing is saying in future, if we find ourselves in a position that we have done in the last 12 months, I hope we don't because we don't want to go through this again, but we're more prepared. We've put something in place in the Rule Book that allows us to say we can't have a physical Conference, because we're in a global pandemic, we can make amendments to the Rules to be able to run it smoothly. That's all this is about. It's not about us being able to say oh, we don't fancy doing it as a physical Conference this year, we're just going to do a digital one. This is about if we find ourselves in a position where we need to hold a digital Conference, being able to work to the Rule Book, as we would do normally.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay to the vote. Those in favour? Remember, it's a Rule change, so therefore it takes 2/3rds. Has everybody finished voting? Everybody finished voting? Okay, so can you take your hands down. Still got two hands up, if you don't mind. Okay, those opposed? Everybody finished voting? That's carried. Motion 14. General Secretary.

14 Rule 22.11

Executive Council

Remove Rule and replace with:

'Resolutions involving alteration of Rules shall normally take place at the digital Conference except in exceptional circumstances. In which case they would have precedence over all other Conference resolutions and shall be debated on the first day of Conference. Any change of Union Rule shall stand for a period of at least two years'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, in line with us as an Executive remitting motion 8 around the biannual Conference and holding a digital Conference [unclear] we're going to remit motion 14 too, because that was in line with that, it was that class so we'll remit the two and do some work and bring it back next year. Did you hear that?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Alan, what Sarah said was, we're going to remit the motion in line with the remittal of the motion that we remitted earlier, motion 8. See, you were on my screen, so I could see you said that, right [LAUGHTER], I'm a lip reader [LAUGHTER] and yes, I'll have that pint when I see you, mate. Erm Okay before we take motion 15 we're going to have a quick 10 minute break. So, I make it 11.44, so back here for 11.55.
[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Welcome back. So, motion 15, which is General Secretary. We're, we're going to attempt to doing something and see if it makes it easier for you to hear Sarah.

15 Rule 22.19

Executive Council

Remove the first sentence and replace with:

'Nominations, which should include a short biography of no more than 200 words why the nominee should be elected to the EC, should be handed to the General Secretary in writing on the first day of meeting and the election to take place on the second day.'

Insert at the end of the rule: 'In the case of a digital meeting needing to be held the deadline, delivery and collection of nominations may be amended as determined by the National President and SOC'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: That should be better and it should be my face that comes up now and not Ian's, oops, I need to turn my camera on though, so you can see my face. That's better. Okay. Conference, we believe that we should strive to have the best Representatives as possible on the Executive. In order to do this, Delegates like yourselves need to be aware of who you are voting for. We put this in place this year that the 200 words maximum nomination form due to having a digital Conference and not having the opportunity to speak to nominees before electing them. However, we feel that the Executive Council's position is an important role in our organisation. The Executive is charged with running the Union and therefore should, going forwards, let Delegates know why they are the right people to do that. We've inserted the last paragraph again so that if we find ourselves in this position in the future, we could fully comply with our Rule Book to do so. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it's formally seconded. Anybody indicating to speak? So, I've got Nick Mead and then Mark Hilton and then Dave Suddards. We'll un-mute the next Speaker and you can just follow straight on, you don't need to wait for me.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I'm withdrawing saying anything.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh right, okay. Mark Hilton.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: I'm with Sean. I've re-read it through, I've nothing to say on that one.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Dave Suddards.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I missed the motion. Am I speaking on motion 15?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You are, mate.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: It took a while for me Yes. Well, I'm for this motion. What I call it, I think it, people should know who they're electing and why, why they're electing them, so yes, I would ask Conference to support this motion. The only one disappointment I would say is that we're already doing it, or we've already done it for this Conference, but I still support the motion and I think, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we've got no other indicating Speakers in advance, so we're going to take Speakers from the floor, if you indicate. Douggie?

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Right, can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Do you know what, I'm in two minds with this, yes. I'm in two minds with this. I'm kind of in favour of all, of written statements, although you've heard me speak so you know I, I speak as much as I like, so I don't think 200 words is enough, you know. I just, I, I just wonder what about if somebody stands who suffers from dyslexia, what would, what, how would you, how would you overcome that, you know. That's, that's all I've got to say, if that's alright. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nicolae.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Yes, hello everyone once again. You know, obviously we saw this motions and everything before obviously the Conference and, and I, I spoke with, we spoke about that and the only question was, open question, yes, okay, we [unclear] let's say we get the reason for that. Will not be ideally how we're doing the, other Unions, to put the photo of the person who we want to vote for, because remember, let's say for me, this is first Conference. I didn't, I didn't need even too often even with the, the people from my Region. I mean, I don't speak about the rest of the Region, like Region 1, 2, 4, 5 and stuff like that and then I believe ideally will be to put a photo of the Dele, I mean the, the person who is standing for position. That's it for me. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Mick McDonald.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Right, can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can now.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Right. It's just a point of order on these. You've got Rule, motion 13 carried, but you've, it's also duplicated on this one, the exact same thing. It's already carried that the digital meeting, all the deadline delivery and such. Can you see it?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: So

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's an addition.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Well, that's already there. I mean, that doesn't even need putting in. It's going to be put in, but obviously it's carried there, on Rule 22.7.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: As it's a point, as it's a point of order, I'm going to, I'm just going to correct you.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Right, go on.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Because, because obviously this is about the short biography(?), but obviously we were, we were clarifying where it will fit in the Rule and it will come under Rule 22.19, which is different to Rule 22.7, so, so obviously that's just to answer your point of order, Mick.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I do appreciate what you're saying, but it's going to appear somewhere else in the Rule.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: I mean if this falls, if this falls

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, but this is changing Rule 22.19, mate, it's not, it's not impacting on Rule 22

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Ahh, that's, so that's already going to be in then, 22.7?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, yes, that's, that's done, yes.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Okay.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Separate Rule.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Okay.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Does anybody else want to speak? Obviously nobody's opposed the motion so, so there is no right to reply. I'll remind everybody again it's 2/3rds of the, of the Delegates so obviously we're going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, has everybody finished voting in favour? Okay, can you take your hands down. I can tell you now it's been carried, but obviously for, for good measure, I'm going to, I'm going to record the number of votes against. All those that voted to, to support, can you make sure you take your hands down, then I can go to, to those who are opposing. So the people who have now got their hands up are the ones that are opposing. Okay. So if you're opposing it, raise your hands now. Has everybody finished voting? So there's only 7 rejecting that motion's been carried. It's 16. Okay, motion 16. General Secretary.

16 Rule 22.20

Executive Council

Insert at the end of the rule: 'In the case of a digital meeting being held the deadline, delivery and collection of nominations and ballot arrangements may be amended as determined by the National President and SOC.'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, as before, this is just, I'll not use the phrase 'tidying-up exercise' because I take your point on board, Dave, it doesn't necessarily tidy it up, but it is just to allow us in future, should we become in a position where we have to hold a digital Conference, that we can do so and we can fully comply with the Rule Book.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And it's formally seconded. Have we got any indications of people who wanted to speak? So we've got Dave Suddards which we're going to come to first and then Mark Hilton and again, like I said before, as soon as Dave's finished, Mark, we'll bring you straight in. We've, we've, we've unblocked Mark first, haven't we? Oh right, okay. So Dave Suddards and then Mark Hilton.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning, Conference. I have actually said it before but yes, Dave Suddards, Branch 561. Yes, I'm here to oppose this, not because I don't trust anybody or don't think they can do it. The thing is, this is the first digital Conference, so we're making Rules for the first digital Conference while in a digital Conference. I would have thought it would have been better to see how it went this year and then bring the Rule changes. If everybody says wow, that were fantastic, yes, we can do this and bring the Rule changes next year unless we're going to go completely to digital Conferences, but I haven't seen a motion saying that so yes, I'm opposing it on that part. Also, with deadlines I don't like dead, I personally don't like deadlines. Branch Secretaries, they're under enough, a lot of pressure to meet a lot of deadlines from the employer and now the Union's saying it it, if there's going to be deadlines, put the deadlines in so that we can see and then we can, we can oppose it on that if we don't fully believe they're realistic, but that's the reason I'm opposing this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. We've got Mark Hilton.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, I'm asking you to oppose this, for exactly the reasons Dave's just said and that's all about that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. That, that was, those were the indicated, oh, so, so now we're going to take Speakers from the floor, so I'm going to go Dorian Jones, John Fox, Angela Robinson and then Nick Mead. Can you un-mute yourself, Dorian, from your end? Should be a box that's come up. There we go.

Brother Dorian Jones – Branch 253: I have nothing to say, I don't know why my hand was up.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Say again.

Brother Dorian Jones – Branch 253: I have nothing to say.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh, okay. Can you take your hand down for me then, please. Okay, so John Fox, Angela Robinson and then Nick Mead.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President. I'm here to support this motion, because I, I don't think we, we should actually get into a situation as we did last year, where we didn't have a, a Conference. We need, we need to be able to keep the EC and the, and our Rule Book up-to-date, yes, with everything that is going on and I do think that it, we, we need it for, for our Branches as well, yes. So I think, I'm, I'm fully in support of this this motion. Please support.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 582: I'm also here to support the motion. Nobody expected Covid and I think without zoom, we wouldn't be where we are today as a Union, as any I mean we have zoom meetings regular, [unclear] meetings, new work and I think we need to prepare, because we don't know what's going to come next. So, please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nick.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Pretty much just, just echoing what, what Angela said, but also we've already carried this this Rule change for a different motion, so why would we be against it? We've, we agreed it on motion 13, so it should be a simple no-brainer. Support the motion, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody else wish to speak? Can you take your hand down for me, Nick, so I don't get confused, please. So, there's nobody else indicating they wish to speak, so I'm going to call the General Secretary back on the basis that it was opposed.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks. We put the Conference together as we have done this year to enable us to hold a Conference. We're not out of the global pandemic yet, we don't know, as Angela said, what's coming next and, and we want to be prepared, we need to be prepared. We can't be in a position where we're starting from scratch, trying to work around a Rule Book that doesn't fit for a digital Conference, because the only other option is not to have Conference and like has, put my teeth back in, already been mentioned, we shouldn't have been in a position that we were in last year, where we couldn't hold a Conference, where your voices couldn't be heard and Nick makes a good point. We've already agreed this in other areas of the Rule Book, this would be no different. We would look to do the deadlines as we have done this year, granted they would likely be refined slightly and people would be aware of them much further in advance, but equally if something happened and we had to do something last minute in order to have a Conference, we need to be able to change those deadlines as well. All we're trying to do with these motions and these Rule changes is to make sure that we can continue to run effectively as an organisation whatever crisis and global pandemic throws at us.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? And remember it's a 2/3rds, so obviously the figures are important, we'll be counting them up. Okay and, and, and can I ask you to take it down. The motion has been passed, but I just want to record the those that want to vote against. So don't put your hands up yet to oppose it. I want to get down to zero on here first, so I know I've got everybody's answer down. Still got one hand up. Right okay, we're down. So, those against? So, everybody finished voting? Okay, with only 10 opposing that, that, that Rule's been carried. So, Rule, sorry motion 17 and that's us. Okay.

17 Rule 2

Executive Council

Replace Rule 2 with;

2.1 New Branches and Administration

Any ten or more members employed in the same workplace or for the same employer who desire to form a branch of this Union, must apply to the relevant RC. No expense shall be incurred until authority has been obtained from the RC.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Ian, can I just say something before you start?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: It's not a point of order, just thanks for the chocolates.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: They've just arrived. I'm like yes, get in.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That's, that's, that's, that's wonderful. I'll tell you, we're magic, us. Everybody else's are being delivered later [LAUGHTER]. Okay this, this is, there's a Rule change that any 10 or more members employed in the same workplace or for the same, same employer who desire to form a Branch of this Union must apply to the relevant Regional Council obviously no expense shall be incurred until authority has been obtained from the Regional Council. So, it's increasing it from the current five to 10 for a Branch to be created. Obviously it's formally seconded by the Executive and there's only been one Speaker indicated in advance, which is Nick Mead.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I'm against the motion for the following reasons. When we as a Union are losing members, why would we want to start restricting people who wish to, to form a Branch? If you've got a Branch in place, the chances of getting more, more members grows, you know. If you've got nine staff who want to join and form a Branch, why would we want to restrict? You know, it gives time, allows for more expansion and I believe the Rule should remain at five as is current.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So obviously because nobody else has indicated in advance, we're going to take from the floor. We've got Terry and then we've got Nicolae and then Mark.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: I, as Nick just stated why would we want to reduce the chance for forming a Branch you know, limiting it to, erm [unclear]. There are a lot of small companies out there looking for and I'm thinking, you know, perhaps [unclear] restaurants and things like that. So, you know, they might not have enough, more than 10 employees, you know. So, very likely they'll have five employees, why would we want to restrict ourselves?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nicolae, then Mark.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Can, I mean, can I understand what's the context, because I see the Executive Council put the motion, but we don't, I mean at least I don't understand why was this decision taken, because I'm agree with both my colleagues previously who were speaking. I mean, because from our point of views, don't make sense, but I don't understand what was the, you know, idea on, on this motion and I believed that we should have a context why we done that. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: I'm trying to, ah, yes just back everything they've said. I don't care whether we're five, six, seven, eight or nine members, everyone's got a right, why would we lower it?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you. Mr President, Conference. I'm, I'm in a postal Branch, yes. If the postal Branch is run effectively and organised properly or correctly then, then they work, yes and these, these people can go into the postal Branch. Ours seems to work, we get 15, 16 members at our Branch meetings every time which is like average, sometimes we've had 20, yes, that's more, more than what some other Branches have, yes and we, we welcome other people coming in to give their views, erm and to get a lot of different views as well, yes and get, get a lot, lot of understanding of what they, they require within their work, workplaces. As you can see with the motions this year, our Branch has got 25 motions in, which is a 1/3rd of all the motions so you can see how, how actually the postal Branch actually works. Now if the people in these small Branches joined us, yes, or joined a postal Branch and the postal Branch was working correctly, then I can't see any reason why they can't go into these Branches instead of making another Branch up, yes. So, I support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is there anybody else? Dave Suddards. Okay, Dave?

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can. Yes.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Can you hear me now? Yes. Dave Suddards, Branch 561. I'm here to oppose this motion. Well for John's Branch what Regional Branch is run fantastically, not all Regional Branches are, so to just put five in there, we lose them. If, if there's a problem round cost, then we need to be addressing the cost, not the, the what-you-call-it, the actual amount of members, erm and, and if we have a Branch Secretary there, well [unclear] to tell you amount of members in the Branch, but we must [unclear]. So that is my reason for opposing it. If you've got somebody in a workplace who is willing to go out and, and get members and form a Branch, we should be encouraging them. Ian Wood did fantastic work at CSM but we can't, with 500 potential food workers there, we can't get in. We've four or five members in there and, and this is where, you know, [unclear].

I do oppose this motion. I believe if we've got five members, we should be encouraging them and [unclear].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody else? Put your hand down for me, Dave, please. Nobody else? Okay, so obviously exercising the right of reply because it has been opposed. I mean, clearly this is an administrative issue the administration of a Branch. So we set up a Branch and an office because we've recruited five people. Those five people may end up going down to four, so we then have to unpick that Union and put them back into the District Branch, because they're no longer recognised as a Branch and when it comes to small Branches, I mean yes, we, we believe organising small Branches and growing those Branches is, is critical and the reason for 10 is, is why we put five people in that Branch, they then get the same voting rights as a Branch with 100 members at Conference, then potentially could send 2/3rds of their membership to Conference if they, you know, obviously are a young Branch with young workers in it and we have no issue with that, but if we start to recruit lots of small Branches, it won't be long before people on this call today will feel that democracy, you know, isn't working in their interests, that democracy is being slightly swayed because there's lots and lots of little cafe Branches that we've, we've picked up which will have the same voting rights as Branches of 350 members.

Now, we don't believe that that was fair and what we were trying to do and by addressing it as saying, if we raise that amount of numbers that's required to form a Branch, then we will apply more organising to get to that number, so it will force us, instead of just recruiting five people, to actually go out and get double figures and when you've got 10 members, you are far more likely to build a Branch than if you've got five members, because the moment you've got five members, everybody can say well, we've got five members, I've signed a, I've signed, I've signed that Branch off and I've got a recognition of being in the workplace, which is what we should be aiming for, but we can sign that Branch off and then say right, just, just get on with it and maybe it'll do something and we've got far too many examples where that has happened, the moment we've got the Branch recognised, there is no growth in those Branches, so by raising it, by raising it to 10, means that people will spend more time and effort to achieve 10 workers in that workplace and for that reason, we believe is the right approach to take.

Also from the approach that, as this Union changes as we go through the next several years, we are moving into new parts of the food industry and we also want to protect the people who have been with us for longevity and we feel that if people who have recruited five people in their workplace send two people to Conference and that is quite possible, that we could have, at the next Conference, 15 Branches, it's possible. I mean, you can shake your head, but it's possible. We could have recruited 15 Branches with five members in, because those are predominantly young, they could change the way the voting happens at Conference and people on this call today would feel that that might be unfair and unjust and so we're trying to give some balance to making sure that, going forward, that we have protected the interests of our traditional industry, but recognise the importance of growing in the new industry too. So from that perspective, we believe it's the right thing to do. I mean it's not really an impact on, on cost as such, because obviously one of the things that we, we, we know is, is that, you know, five people are not going to incur lots of costs, there isn't a massive payout for, for a Branch with five members. If there's only nine members in that Branch and they're in as, as John Fox pointed out, in the District Branch, they have the wider support of a wider group of workers and the example that 405 gives us is that, you know, not only do they organise themselves in, in that Branch but they go out and organise around their communities too, actually creating new Branches forwards.

So it's not that we'd be losing anything, we'll actually be gaining something because we will probably build more stability by recruiting more people to actually get them recognised by the Union as a Branch. So, the administration side of it, the Conference side of it, the organising side of it, we believe will benefit by moving from five to 10 and we would ask you to support it, because we believe it's the right thing for us to do as an organisation. Very few Unions would set Branches up with just five people. You know, we used to, we used to say, it used to be seven and we lowered it, we lowered the threshold so we could have more Branch names on our books and that was the reason for doing it, but that isn't necessarily the right approach. The right approach is to grow Branches, grow membership and that's the key to our future and that's the key to our success. So, accepting lower numbers doesn't necessarily mean we are going to grow those Branches.

As I've said, if you look at many, you get the Regional reports when you go to Regional Councils, look how many Branches we have on our books that have been five members or six members and have never changed. They would come off those books and we'd have to spend time organising them to get them recognised as Branches. So, we would encourage you to support this motion. So, I'm going to go to the vote. Those in favour, remembering it's a 2/3rds majority because it's a Rule change. Sorry, you obviously didn't hear any of that, did you? [LAUGHTER] I said the motion's actually passed, but obviously I'm going to record obviously those that oppose it. So if you could please, all of those that's voted, take your hands down and then obviously once I've gone to zero, I'll indicate and then I'll ask those that want to oppose it to raise their hands. Still got two people with their hands up. Okay. Those, those against?

Everybody finished voting? Okay, so only 15 people opposed it, so therefore that motion is carried. Okay Conference, Conference obviously motion 18. So, obviously for, for, for clarity, the reason why this motion was submitted is because there was a number of motions that were proposed that was changing the format of our Regional Councils. Obviously to bring the Rule Book into line to make sure that we weren't running out of kilter with our National Meetings it is a tidying-up exercise in preparation for, for those motions that may change it. We don't believe it will have an impact on whether those motions are passed or not, all it means that if, if the future a motion is proposed and, and accepted by Conference that we won't have to change these particular Rules. So, so if you look, it's basically saying that each Regional Council should elect from these nominations three Executive Representatives to sit on the Regional Safety Committee, the Regional Safety Committee shall meet at least one week prior to the Regional Council on a quarterly basis and replace it with, the Regional Safety Committee shall become an agenda item to the Regional Council, because everybody knows that the Regional Council is where it's safety meetings take place and we've got a number of motions like this because of the way that we currently do things. So, obviously we want to replace it with meetings of the National Safety Committee shall be held at least one week prior to the EC meeting because if we change the format of our meetings, because there was some proposals to move to 3 meetings which obviously changed the dates in the Rule Book obviously if we don't change these, then it will be out of kilter and again, I just emphasise the point that even by changing them, doesn't mean there's been an automatic acceptance that we are going to change, but it just protects us going forward, that's all. So, we would ask Conference to support it and obviously the motion is formally seconded by the Executive. So, we have indications of So, we've got one, one in advance, which is Mark Hilton and then I'll take Speakers from the floor.

18 Rule 4

Executive Council

Remove the following:

'Each RC shall elect from these nominations three Safety Representatives to sit on the Regional Safety Committee The Regional Safety Committee shall meet at least one week prior to the Regional Council on a quarterly basis.'

Replace with:

'The regional Safety Committee shall become agenda item to the Regional Council.'

Remove the following:

'Meetings of the National Safety Committee shall be held at least one week prior to the EC meetings on a quarterly basis.'

Replace with;

'Meetings of the National Safety Committee shall be held at least one week prior to the EC meetings.'

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, obviously I continue to support this for the reasons said. You've said everything, I don't need to say no more.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Mark. So, I did, I did have, I did have some Speakers indicating to speak have, have, have those that indicated to speak changed their position, they don't want to speak now? Okay, does anybody else want to speak on the motion? Okay, in that case then we're going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Remember it's a 2/3rds, so we're looking at the numbers. Has everybody finished voting? Okay, I can tell you that the Rule change has been accepted, but obviously I'm going to record the, the opposition so if everybody can take their hands down. Okay, so those, those against. Has every, has everybody finished voting? With only five against, that Rule's been accepted. Motion 19, which is us. General, General Secretary. Give me two seconds.

19 Rule 14.13

Executive Council

At the end of the first sentence insert after 'document': 'or social media content'

Insert 'Regional or' between 'all' and 'appeals'.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: We're getting slicker, we're getting slicker. Conference, in our new digital world, whilst on social media can have a major impact on the Union positive or negative. This change to Rule is to ensure that we don't find ourselves open to complaints if content is posted on what is seen from the outside world to be an official social media page or group, especially as we've mentioned previously in a world where a Certification Officer has now been given extra powers and can investigate Trade Unions without a complaint being made. We just want to make sure that our message is consistent and that everybody sees it. That's it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And it's formally seconded by the Executive. Do we have any indicators of Speakers? There's been no indicators of Speakers, so I'm taking Speakers from the floor. Nobody want to speak? In which case then, we're going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Remember it's 2/3rds, so we're going to look at the numbers. Has everybody finished voting? Okay, I can tell you it's, it's, the, the Rule change has been accepted, but if you can all take your hands down and obviously record those who oppose it too. Okay, those against? Has everybody finished voting? Nobody want to vote? So everybody's voted? So with just one that opposed it, that, that Rule change has been accepted. Okay, motion 20. General Secretary. Two seconds.

20 Rule 15.4

Executive Council

Insert before the last sentence:

'In accordance with rule 22.5'

Insert at the end of the last sentence;

'The £5.00 fee will not be payable where food is supplied by the Union.'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, this is a tidying-up exercise. It feels that that's my phrase of the day. There's conflicting guidance and position on what expenses and when should be paid, mainly in the Rule Book currently, mainly due to it being referred to twice in slightly different wording. This amendment to the Rule would ensure consistency across the board, so everybody knows where they stand, whether at Conference, a Regional Council meeting, a training course or otherwise. It's simply just to make sure that there's, there's no grey areas.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it's formally seconded by the Executive. We've had no indication in advance of anybody wanting to speak on it. So Speakers from the floor. So, we've got Mark Hilton and, and Nicolae and Dave Suddards and Mandy Mason. So we're going to go to Mark first.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Aye, aye, it just depends what time you set off and what breakfast costs, don't it and I'll leave it at that. Did you understand?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nicolae.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Sorry, I mean I was having some technical issues, sorry for that. How I understand from the motion 20, we're saying that we don't pay the £5 fee when, when the food is supplied by the Union, but we all getting doing that, then what, I just don't get this. Maybe I'm just confused, but I don't get it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I've got Dave. I, I know you had your hand up, Mandy, but you haven't got a hand there now, so I don't know whether, whether you did want to come in. If you do, you'll have to put your hand back up, because it's gone down. We've got Dave Suddards next.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, well I support the motion. It's, it's a bit ambiguous in its writing. Are we saying that we're stopping paying travelling expenses as well, because the Rule says £5 plus travelling expenses for each meeting. Now, you're replacing it with £5 fee will not be payable where food is supplied by the Union. So, are we scrapping travelling expenses as well? Well could it not say that? That's my, that's my, well, that's my thought on, on whether you want to remit it or, erm I'll be opposing it because it's not clear.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We've got Pauline McCarthy. Right, Polly?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: Right, so I'm just going to come in on what Dave said about whether if, if you get fed or if you don't get fed, food, sorry. So, in Region 5 it's been the way for a long time where we don't take any payment if we get fed, so I think that's right and proper. So, I'm just supporting the motion really. Rule change, sorry.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is, is there anybody else that wants to come in? Can you take your hand down as well, Pauline, please.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582: Don't call me Polly, I lied.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Terry.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Yes, I'd just like to Delegates. I'd just like to agree with what Dave said. I mean, does that line even need to be there. Should it be somewhere along the lines of expenses will be paid and leave it at that. I mean, basically it's saying oh, we're not going to pay it, but we wouldn't pay it anyway. It just seems a bit ambiguous to me.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, any, anybody else? Mick? Can you take your hand down as well, Terry, please.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Yes, the thing is, I'm looking here at 22.5, a £5, £5 fee shall be payable to duly elected Delegates when at a BFAWU Conference or held away from the workplace. A £5 fee will not be payable where food is supplied by the Union. That's if there's food there, it's supplied by the Union. It says that on 22.5.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is there anybody else? Can you take your hand down for me as well, Mick, please. Nobody else is indicating. I mean, I think, I think you opposed it, Dave, so maybe with the right of reply, we might be able to clarify some of that. So, I'm going to call the General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks. Just to be clear, all we're doing is adding a sentence to the Rule that's already there. We're not removing anything in that Rule around travel expenses, we're not suggesting that we're going to be removing travel expenses. All we're doing is tidying it up. So at the minute, all it says is Delegates will get £5, but if you look at 22.5, it's clear there that Delegates don't get £5 if the Union is putting food on, which creates a grey area and some are getting [unclear/coughing] and we want consistency. So to be clear, expenses for travelling will still be paid. All we're saying is, if food is put on by the Union, we don't then pay you the £5 for food, because you're being provided it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference, we're going to go to the vote. Remember it's 2/3rds, so we're looking at the figures. Those in favour? Okay, has everybody finished voting? Okay, I can tell you that Rule has been accepted but obviously we're going to record those that oppose it. So if you can all take your hands down, please. If you can take your hands down, there's a couple of people left. Mark, can you take your hand down, you have done now, well done. Okay, those against? Has everybody finished voting? Okay, has everybody now finished voting? Okay, I've got a final figure of four opposing it, so obviously that, that Rule has passed. Thank you very much. So, we're now on to Rule, motion 21, which again is us, isn't it? Okay, the General Secretary's going to do this, so I'm going to go on mute.

21 Rule 17.1

Executive Council

Insert at the end of sentence 5, after the word 'industry': 'and refer to the person specification and selection criteria'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, this, this is literally just to bring us in line with what happened in the last election of an organising Regional Secretary by a person specification and selection criteria was circulated and used in the process, it's as simple as that.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's formally seconded by the Executive. Do we have anybody indicating they wish to speak? No? There was no advance notification of anybody wanting to speak, so I'm going to take Speakers from the floor. Anybody? Okay, so I've had no Speakers indicating they want to come in, so I'm going to go to the vote. It's 2/3rds, just to remind you. So all those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, I can tell you, I can tell you off the figures the Rule change has been accepted, but obviously we're going to go for those that are opposing, so if you can please remove your hands. Down to zero, still got four hands up. Okay, those against? Okay, I can, I can tell you that that motion passed unopposed. Okay Conference motion 22 we are, we are looking to remove a word from, from the Rule which is Region. Clearly the the way that we currently structure ourselves in Regions, erm and currently the way that we work doesn't necessarily mean that we, we require the, the word Region to be that Rule, because a lot of the administration stuff now is done centrally and we will be obviously moving to more of a central function when it comes to administration. So, so we're asking Conference to agree that the word within the Region is removed and it's formally seconded. Do we have any indications of Speakers? There was no indication of Speakers, so I'm going to take from the floor and the first one is Paul White and then I've got Mizuma(?).

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Hiya, everybody. Good afternoon. I'm here to oppose this, as if we take away words within the Region, we're left with any FTO may apply to the EC. To me that sounds like yes, an FTO in our Region from any other part of the country and vice-versa and normally the way that we [unclear] our Regional Council [unclear] for our own Officers or, you know, Regional Secretaries and Organising Secretaries in our own Regions. So, we're taking away that right by doing this. I don't know how other people feel about it, but it's just one of those things now that the EC, you know, we used to pick who, who is going to be in our Regions when clearly for me it should be left to the people that are in those Regions and are we going to get the same support from those Officers if they're from the other end of the country possibly not, but I'm here to oppose this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we've got Mark Hilton Mohinder, sorry we've got Wasili next, then Mark Hilton and then Mohinder.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Good afternoon, Conference. President, General Secretary. I just want clarity. I'm leaning towards opposing the motion because I'm [unclear].

There must be a reason why that way Regional working [unclear], so there is lack of clarity in the motion. I've seen a few of the motions that lack clarity, maybe a bit of meat on the bone, you're asking us to make an informed decision as to how to vote for this motion. So based on that lack of clarity and being a [unclear] centralising staff [unclear], making power concentrated in area only one central position is never good for democracy. So based on that, I'll be opposing the motion. Thank you for your time.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: So putting this motion tentatively whilst I agree with the idea that I would like someone from my own Region [unclear], it's not always possible. In the last couple of years we've actually had a young lady from the wrong side of the country representing us, ie not from God's county and she did an excellent job and she was doing that job because there was nobody else available and I think you know, in this day and age, we've got to respect that and that's all.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Do you still want to come in, Mohinder? You, you had your hand up before, Mohinder. No, okay. Can you take your hand down for me, Mark. Alan Scott.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: National President. I just want to say, you are chairing the meeting this morning, it's been good, it's been alright, but we're running out of time here. 1 o'clock is the deadline for today, unless you're going to a fringe meeting. There's a very important game going on in about an hour and we're running late. So, thank you, bye.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Understand that, Mark. Obviously we've taken the Rule and we're, we're going to try and get through it, Alan. Anybody else? Okay, so first off, point of clarification. You do not choose your Regional Officer. This is not about electing any full time Official, this is not about electing any Officer in the Region. Your role of a Regional Officer is outlined what their job is. We're currently in discussions about how that role will work in the future, because currently the role that they're supposedly employed to do according to the Rule Book is actually not done by them, they do other roles now.

So, what we, what we've, so what we've tried to do is, is to make sure that if going forward there is a requirement of the Union to put in place Regional Officers, then, then of course we would appoint from that Region, but if the Regional Officers' role changes substantially, then potentially there will be the Regional Officers' position as it currently is. We have administration that is done regionally currently but again as, as the Union changes, as technology improves, it won't necessarily be in your Region. I mean, that's not suggesting that, that we're looking at taking any Offices out, it's not looking, saying that we will remove any functions, but during Covid for example, a lot of our clerical staff have opted now to work from home, which means that our Offices will become centralised and those functions will become centralised, because the communication network will go to a central point, it could be Pudsey, it could be Manchester, it could be Birmingham, it could be Head Office, but whilst that within the Region remains in the Rule Book, there will always be this argument that will take place that we must comply with that Rule. Now, it's not a behind-the-door issue, it's not a behind-the-door discussion, we're talking with our Regional Officers and we've asked them to explain the role that they perform now and it isn't necessarily the role that they will perform going forward and again, that will mean that possibly next year we will be coming back with a change of the current Rule that governs Regional Officers, but that won't happen until we've finalised the discussions with the Regional Officers' Group.

So, it's not about removing democracy. You currently do not select your Regional Officer. You absolutely have never selected your Regional Officer. This does not impact in any way, shape or form on the election of Officers in your Regions. So, I want to clarify that and just point out that you can see yourselves what's happening in the Union. I mean, people in No. 7 know that we no longer have an Office in No. 7, people in No. 1 know we no longer will have an Office in No. 1, because they have opted to work from home and that changes everything in line with, with, with, you know, modernisation of our working arrangements. So, we don't believe it will impact on your democracy in your Region. We don't believe it will have an impact on how the areas are functioning. We just believe that it, it needs to change to enable us to modernise what we do as a Trade Union. So, on that note, I'm going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Okay. Has everybody finished voting? Okay, I can tell you the Rule's been accepted, but obviously I'm going to record those that oppose it. When it takes it down to zero. Can you take your hands down, please. Okay, those, those, those against? Has everybody finished voting? Okay, with only 10 opposing, that Rule was carried.

So, at seven minutes past one, as, as Alan Scott rightly pointed out I've been a terrible Chair and I've exceeded my time limit. So, obviously we're going to call this session to a close. We look forward to seeing you in the fringe meetings later on this afternoon. Thank you for your indulgence. Thank you for, for how, how this morning's gone. I know it's a new experience, but hopefully you've found that we haven't tried to remove your democracy, you have had an opportunity to take part and obviously we look forward to seeing you in the morning at 9 o'clock. Thank you very much. Have a good day.

Monday 14th June 2021

Morning session

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: What's going on at the moment is we're just finalising the the emails that get sent out to people so they can take part in the voting this morning for the EC elections, so as soon as, because obviously it has to be timed, you see, so obviously we're tech, technologically timing, but it doesn't fit with the timing that we've got. So, just, just to, just to let everybody know do you want to, introduce you to everybody now, okay, that'd be, that'd be better, because obviously Sarah's got the, the General Secretary's got the information [LAUGHTER]. So we call the General Secretary to, to, to talk about the, the voting and where the voting's taking place. I just need to un-mute myself now.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Morning, everybody. So, we've set it up so that you will receive an email, with a voting link, to be able to do the, the ballot. So Regions 3, 4 and 5 all need to have a ballot, and you will receive an email. That will go out at half past 9. If you haven't got an email, so when we break for the first break, if you haven't received an email, if you can drop me a message in the 'chat', just to me, with an email address, it may be that we've got an incorrect one or it's just not worked, I can send it through again. We are aware that there's a number of people that we don't currently have email addresses for and I'll contact them today via the 'chat' to ask for an email address, so that we can get it sent to them as well, or a mobile number, whichever, whichever's easiest. We've opened, we'll open it at half past 9, we'll close the vote at 2 o'clock, so that means you're not having to worry about spending the 15 minute break getting into your email and doing the vote, you'll have an hour after Conference closes and then we'll get the results. It'll come in a PDF form and we'll, we'll announce them first thing in the morning. A bit different to how we normally do it, but hopefully, as yesterday ran as smoothly as it did, this will too, but please, if you don't receive the email, let us know and we can get it sent to you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay while, while we're on the subject of voting we are currently non-compliant with the ability to attend the Labour Party Conference because there's been no female nominations for the Labour Party Conference. So obviously we need women to put themselves forward who are members of the Labour Party to be able to be compliant so if you are a female Labour Party member, and you would like to attend Conference, the Labour Party Conference then obviously Okay, so, we'd ask you to put your, your name in the 'chat' so we know, and then obviously we can we can make sure that we are compliant. So, the TUC rota's been done, – are we advised who's going? Right okay, okay, that's cool. Right, so obviously voting, Sarah's explained the voting. If you're a female Labour Party member, you want to attend the Conference, which I believe is round about the 13th September in Brighton then, then obviously please, please make us aware.

Obviously this, today is a pretty poignant day really, I mean if, if you remember a few years' ago we was at Conference, we came into the Conference Hall to hear about a building that was on fire, and, you know, there was a significant loss of life and, and, and that fire was caused because of the cosmetic reason because of where that building was situated. That building was situated in a very affluent part of London and because they believed that building looked a bit of an eyesore, they cladded it to make it fit in more with the locality. That cladding has been put on at least another 17,000 properties throughout the country, putting peoples lives in jeopardy and at risk and still there has been nobody held accountable for that loss of life which was really just a political decision, and about you know, cutbacks to the safety and security of people that lived in those homes. So I'm going to ask us all to, to pay our respects now and, and we'll hold a minute's silence for all of those people who lost their lives in that terrible Grenfell tragedy.

[MINUTE'S SILENCE]

Thank you very much, Conference. Obviously yesterday we was paying tribute to the people that worked through the pandemic. Yesterday we was talking about the way that our activists in the workplaces had supported our members and how that had had, you know, an impact on the communities by keeping people in the communities safe too, but also I think it's right that we also recognise, you know, many of our members who have been activists that are now retired for the work that they've been doing, you know, we often sometimes probably forget the people who do retire but continue to support this Union, continue to promote this Union and obviously we wanted to send a message of gratitude and thanks to, to all of those members and all of those activists that retired but continue to support this Union and thank, thank them for their loyalty and service to our Trade Union over the years.

We're going, we're going to open this morning as well, and, and this is a real pleasure we're going to open this morning as well with welcoming our, our new General Secretary to give her inaugural, it should be on a platform, but her inaugural comments to Conference.

Delegates, please, please welcome our new General Secretary to make her first speech to us.

General Secretary's Opening Address to Conference

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thank you for that. I need to un-mute myself now, that's not a good start is it, I did, I did, I remembered to un-mute myself. Conference, it's an absolute honour and a privilege to be able to address you today as the first female General Secretary our great Union has ever had and hopefully not the last. I want to thank everyone that supported me in the election process, especially my own Branch 580 and those that have over the last 12 months, Ian, Adrian, Janet Summer. I have asked some ridiculous questions at times and they've, they've coped with that, but especially my family, Tony and Paul, because they're the ones that have had to deal with off-camera Sarah hitting the ground running in a new position, in a global pandemic and it's not been smooth sailing. I've gone through numerous bottles of hair dye and numerous bottles of gin and whilst it's not the same speaking to little squares on a screen as it is being together in a Conference Hall, the pride I'm feeling is still very much there.

I'm conscious that we don't have the same amount of time as we normally would, so I'm not going to go on too long, but I wanted to start by saying how immensely proud I am of each and every one of you here and those members and Reps that are back at your workplaces, continuing to work throughout this pandemic, feeding the nation, putting yourselves at risk in factories with hundreds of people, serving the public daily and fundamentally changing your ways of work in order to keep safe. You truly are collectively the key workers that we have always known our membership to be. You've done an amazing job challenging employers and making sure that safety measures that have been put in place are complete so that they are effective and haven't impacted negatively on other health and safety aspects and that is why, as a Union, we haven't seen the catastrophic death levels that other areas of the economy and non-Unionised workplaces have. That isn't to say we haven't lost any members throughout the pandemic, we certainly have and our thoughts go out to all of their families, but because of the hard work of our Reps on sites, many more families have been spared the heartache of losing a loved one.

As an organisation, we've managed to continue to function during this global pandemic. So a change in General Secretary, without the ability to have a proper hand-over, we've closed offices and staff working from home, we've had to adapt to meeting virtually due to restrictions and pulling off organising our first ever digital Conference, complete with multiple fringe meetings that you need to sign up to, open to the wider membership. Can you imagine us having that conversation two years ago? We would have deemed it impossible, yet here we are. We've continued to run national campaigns such as the Right to Food Campaign and raising statutory sick pay, which we will continue to build on as we are committed to improving our industry as a whole across the board. And Conference, I couldn't address you today without mentioning a few things and, as Ian did mention them yesterday, firstly our retirees.

2020 saw Ronnie, Steve and Dave retire from our Union after decades of individual membership and hard work supporting members in their workplaces and at the beginning of 2021, Pauline and Grace from the offices also retired, again after years of supporting Branches and Officials and I've said this in print a few times, but I know you will join me in wishing each and every one of them a long and happy retirement. It's such a shame that we're not together in person so that we can celebrate properly, but I'm sure once we're out of that pandemic, in good old BFAWU-style, when we're all together again, we will have the opportunity to do so. We felt the loss of Dennis Nash in August, a shock to many of us and whilst I never had the pleasure of working with Dennis, the stories I've been told about him over the last 12 months have always been positive and full of admiration and of course without him, we wouldn't have the Credit Union we have today and our thoughts continue to be with Dennis' family and those from his old Branch and his Region that remain close to him. Lastly, the English Learning Project was cruelly taken away from us this year. We still very much have fantastic projects in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland that continue to flourish and support workers in our industry developing themselves, but it has left a hole in England. The team were fantastic and I know they've all remained members of the Union. We thank them for everything they've done, certainly over the last 18 months through the pandemic. We're working on structures and support for the ULRs in England, so that all the hard work over the last 20 years doesn't fall by the wayside, because you're never too old to learn. No-one knows everything and there's always opportunities to try something new and develop yourselves.

Education is a passion of mine. I've received a vast amount through my Trade Union membership and I want to ensure that members for generations to come can also do that. Conference, the food industry is the, the biggest manufacturing unit in the UK. We are biggest contributors to the economy, yet are at the bottom of the pile when it comes to investment, including in skill and education but across the board. New technologies are bought by employers rather than the industry invested in by the government and we know throughout the last 12 – 18 months you have been the forgotten key workers, recognised in name but hidden due to working behind the scenes producing the food everyone needs in order to survive.

Me and Ian have been talking over the last few months, the National President, apologies, about the way our industry is done-down and I'll be honest, it frustrates the hell out of us. People talk about the food industry like it's a place to go when there's nowhere else, an industry that doesn't need skills, that doesn't need a university degree, so deserves low pay and precarious contracts. Well, I'm proud to have worked in the food industry. I'm proud to have worked at Greggs. I wonder how many people can make 64 sandwiches an hour and know the recipes off by heart and I know it's really sad, but I still do, well, the one from when I was making them a few years ago. I'm sure some have changed a little bit since then. I wonder how many people know the correct temperature to keep sausages in a hot holder and for how long without putting customers at risk? What to do if a fridge or a self-selector breaks down, or how many have the ability to crowd-control queues of customers, especially at Christmas when everyone's grumpy because they're rushing around and nothing's done fast enough. I wonder if people knew the training that was required to be a mixer, to ensure the right ingredients are used and allergens that can literally kill people are added in correctly, or the physical toll of standing on the end of an oven, tipping bread out of hot tins, takes on a person. How challenging it is to keep up with boxing fondant fancies or Yorkshire puddings or putting cherries on the top of a Bakewell tart, or having the ability to know a line isn't running just by the noise that it's making, or having to clean down intricate parts of a machine to ensure that a new product can be made on it with no cross-contamination. I wonder if they would still see our industry as unskilled, because I know and we all know that not everyone is cut out to do these jobs and yes, a university degree may not be needed, but one mistake can be catastrophic.

So going forwards, we want to change the narrative about our industry, we want people to feel proud to work within it and the wider public to understand the skills that are needed and used every day to produce [unclear] and join us in putting pressure on the government to increase the standards in pay, terms and conditions and of course investment, because you deserve more. We shouldn't be in a position where people in our industry are still going hungry because they are paid too little to survive. Conference, I'm not going to speak for much longer, you'll hear enough from me over the next few days, but I want to end with this. I am committed to this Union still being here long after I've retired, but in order to do that, we all need to work together. I am not the Union. You and the members are. We have to stop third party in the Union and remember, we are powerful when we come together. We force change as a collective and the more in that collective, the more change we force, because we are the Union. Just look at what has been achieved in the last month at Hovis over in Belfast. We need to strive to get to 100% membership in our workplace. It's not going to be easy, no-one pretending, no-one is pretending that it will be, but it is possible and we can't be afraid of trying something different, because what we have always done has stopped working. Membership is and has been for a while in decline and we need to turn that around. There's no magic wand to do that, one thing won't work in every workplace and it will be hard, but if we want to remain an independent Trade Union for the next 100+ years, we must try. We have to share with each other what has worked well and what hasn't and lift each other up, not tear each other down and I'm going to end with an ask, Conference.

Engage with the Branch mapping, engage with the many different digital meetings we are planning and talk to you and your members about these [unclear] and engage with the different ideas that are generated from those, so that we can support you going forwards in local, regional and national campaigns designed to make your lives and our industry better. Things will look different going forwards. I'm not Ronnie, I'm not Joe and I stood on a platform of change. We've come a hell of a long way in 12 months, mainly because of the situation we've found ourselves in, but we've got a long way to go and I can't wait to be able to come and meet those of you that I don't know yet and work with all of you to build our Union together. Solidarity and enjoy the rest of Conference and the fringe events.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, thank you very much General Secretary. I think that lays down a view of where we're going as a Union and I think we obviously welcome your comments. I'm sure everybody else is, I'm seeing in the, in the 'chat'. Conference, we're going to be joined by Ian Mearns at 10 o'clock but that gives us an opportunity to go back to our Agenda so if we can go back to motion 23. Let's have a, have a quick sip of a brew before I invite her back in to move the motion.

[BREAK]

23 Rule 21.1 (a)

Executive Council

Remove 'at the HO or such place as deemed convenient'

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Morning Conference, again. Conference this, this motion on the Rule change, I don't want to use the phrase 'as a tidying-up exercise', but that's exactly what it is. It is, it's been many years since the Executive met at Head Office, it will be extremely expensive travel cost-wise to do so, hence therefore removing at Head Office or such place as deemed convenient allows us to hold digital Executive meetings that we've been doing over the last 12 months and allows us not to be bound by physical meetings at Head Office going forwards. It's just to make sure that we're operating within the Rule Book to a tee.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's formally seconded by, it's formally seconded by the Executive. Have we got any Speakers on it? We've got no Speakers. Do we, does anybody want to speak on the motion? Anyone? In that case then, we'll go to the vote. Those in favour? Has everybody finished voting? So that looks like it's carried, but obviously for, for recording purposes, if you can all take your hands down. Thank you very much. Those, those against? Has everybody finished voting? Okay, with only three opposing, that motion was carried. So that, that brings an end to the Rule changes, so this is, this now moves to a simple majority vote. So for the new Delegates, what that means is, is whereas with a Rule change you have to be, you have to get 2/3rds of, of the Conference Delegates voting with now these general motions, it's just simply based on the majority for or against. So I'd like to invite the Speaker and the mover of motion 24, which is Branch 405.

24**Branch 405**

That this Conference agrees that:

We as a union will not tolerate racist comments made verbally or by the means of social media. As a Union we need to set an example and embrace our diversity.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Good morning everyone, Conference, Mr President, General Secretary. I'm here to move this motion which is, this Conference agrees that we as a Union will not tolerate racist comments made verbally or by the means of social media. As a Union we need to set an example and embrace our diversity. Now, this to me, it speaks for itself, so I'll not go any further, yes and I move this, this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I believe Alan Scott's seconding it.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Yes, I am yes. Yes, I am. I don't want to speak on it, I'll just second it please, yes. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Any Speakers? So, we, the ones that have identified in advance is Douggie Johnson and Nick Mead, so I'll get Douggie up first.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hiya. Do you know what, what a sensible and decent motion, you know. I think really, again I agree with John and the motion speaks for itself. I mean the whole raison d'être as a Trade Union is, has always been to fight discrimination, you know, it's one of the things the Trade Union movement was founded from, you know. I mean, I know we've fought sexism by electing our first female General Secretary, you know, which is another way of fighting discrimination, who's even got her own Wikipedia page by the way, you know. Congratulations there, Sarah [LAUGHTER], you know but what a brilliant motion. Vote for it, please. Thank you.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Speaking on behalf of this motion. I support this motion. In this day and age, why do so many allow the use of racist comments? Sports personalities show their solidarity for the movement by taking the knee and gets boo'd from the crowd, or they have to switch off their social media for a weekend. We, as an all inclusive Union, should have this ingrained on our souls, but it should go further, it should include any comment verbal or written against any person with regards to their race, colour, creed or sexual orientation. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay we haven't got anybody else that indicated in advance, but happy to take Speakers from the floor if anybody wants to speak. Okay, Sean Welsby on behalf of the Executive. Sean, Sean, we're trying to find you. So you've been asked to un-mute, Sean.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419 (Warburtons), Executive Council Member: Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hey.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419 (Warburtons), Executive Council Member: The Executive would ask you to support this motion. There is no place in society for any form of racism, so and everything that has been said has got to be agreed with, surely. So, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, there was no opposition, so therefore there's, there's no right of reply so we're going to go straight to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, if you can take your hands down and I take it you've all finished voting. Can you take your hand down, please. Just got three, two, right, those against? Everybody finished voting? That was passed unanimously. Motion 25, Branch 561. Dave, obviously when he comes on, we'll know whether it's Dave or Diane actually. Aye, it's Diane today, I've seen you [LAUGHTER]. We had to, we had to remember you've had an alternative ego, obviously an alternative name on the screen.

25**Branch 561**

That this Conference agrees that Executive Council do a full review of member benefits with the aim of making savings. So any savings made may be put into other more urgent member benefits such as legal, representation, steward and safety rep training.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning Conference, from Dave or Diane Suddards, whichever you [LAUGHTER], whichever you want. No, Dave Suddards, Branch 561, Hovis (Bradford). Morning National President, morning General Secretary morning Conference. Motion. That this Conference agrees that the Executive Council do a full review of member benefits, with the aim of making savings so any savings made may be put into other more urgent member benefits, such as legal representation, Steward and Safety Rep training. Now, in fairness that sounds like we're having a go, erm and it's only doing what the actual Executive and Sarah and Ian have been doing all so far in Conference, tidying-up. The only thing I'd like to, to bring to the point is the, the Safety Rep and this was wrote in 2019 and brought back to Branch in 20, December, sorry, 2019 for this Conference. The training now under the GFTU is good I've just done an equality course which was fantastic. the Northern College, I can't, I've never been down to Quorn, but the Northern College training is good. The it's, it's back at, back where it was before the pandemic yes, I can only applaud that. But as for legal representation and help legally, our employers are way ahead of us in legal and changes to law.

I feel we're playing catch-up all the time in disputes, in cases, so when I say legal representation, legal help I know it was questioned £71,000 at the beginning of Conference could there be savings more to divert, because the legal help's, well we've had some massive successes in Northern Ireland, I believe at Greencore. So the lasting cases and there's one now Asda Limited versus Brierley, that's going to be massive changes for all for all, for some of our members and a lot of poorly paid people. There was one in 2019, Flowers and others versus East England Ambulance, over holiday pay. These cases are lasting cases. I'm not saying we've thrown money frivolously at them, all I'm saying is we need, we need the money to take these employers on and also the knowledge for Stewards and Branch Secretaries to also start the cases if need be or be up there with our employers, because our employers are throwing buckets of money at this. I know the Union's not got a load of money but, as I say, any savings we can make and divert it back to the members, it's a great recruitment tool. I know at Bradford I'm a bit of a, I like to take them on sort of a person, but I retain membership by, we get people coming at Bradford and saying I want to join the Union because I know you'll defend us. I just ask Conference to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it's being seconded by Wasili.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Morning, Conference, Delegates and National President, General Secretary and comrades. Here to second, support the motion. Unfortunately Dave has taken all my thunder, talking about most of the points I had, but I'll just do a summary. My main focus is on legal representation. From experience, I've realised or observed that we came to play catch-up. The attitude when it comes to issues that are legally challenged or where we have challenged the employer and taken cases to employment tribunals. Obviously employers have got deeper pockets and have solicitors at their disposal, we can never compete with that, but at least [unclear]. We need to be prepared instead of playing catch-up outside tribunals. I've observed both so that it is allocated to the cheapest available [unclear] the Union, it's Thompsons. Some of the advice that they allocated us when you go to tribunals, they seem half-prepared, and we've already lost the cases before going to these tribunals, so what we are suggesting or requesting Conference is to support this motion so that we get some of this legal help or assistance prior to getting to these tribunals.

Even our full time Officials or Branch Secretaries, they struggle to get access to these solicitors or legal representation prior to going to tribunals. That advantage of having challenges done legally is with a lasting effect, you know, it's in Employment Law. We do win some of these actions or demonstrations, whatever you want to call them, against the employers, but some of these employers like Hovis, sorry to mention my employer, they tend to be vindictive or revengeful afterwards and we have suffered a lot, we've lost Branches or companies or sites have been closed, but when you challenge them legally and it's lasting, they tend not to be vindictive. So in short, I'd like to ask Conference to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we've, we've had Mark Hilton who, who indicated in advance that he wanted to speak on this motion.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: It was our lovely beleaguered Branch Secretary, Sean, that said he were going to speak on this, but obviously due to [unclear] troubles he's not here. I'd just like to echo everything Wasili (? spelling) and Dave said. Post-Brexit, Covid, the companies are coming harder and faster at us than ever before and any saving we can make that goes towards representing our members, we've got to support. Simple as.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, we've got Julie Parry, 452.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Morning, Conference. I'm actually going to oppose this.

Yes, I understand the sentiments that, you know, they want people to do a full review and try and make cutbacks where they can, but a lot of the things that are in our member benefits are actually enticements to actually get people to join. Union sick pay, we've got people, members now on new contracts who don't get company sick pay, so that £7.50 a week can be a lifeline. Also the Funeral Benefit, I mean you notice we, we did the obituaries yesterday, there was quite a few from Branch 452 and although it's not the be-all and end-all, it certainly helps people in their time of need. You know, we have people that obviously they've, they've had a bereavement and then obviously things are more complicated because there might not be life insurance or stuff, so I think these things help and, and we definitely use them as a recruitment tool and especially when we're suffering with the austerity and, you know, we're not particularly getting great pay rises or any pay rises

You know and we know the Union subscription's not changed for the last couple of years and, and that's a positive, but if people start seeing things taken away and chipped at, you know, it might be a case of well, what am I paying my £3.15 a week for, you know, we have that conversation with some people now, because it's like what's in it for me, what do I get out of this and like I said, a lot of the members' benefits is our recruitment tool what we use and say it's not just about representation, you know, if you get yourself in any bother and you need a grievance or you're in the disciplinary or an investigation, you know, we've got the likes of the sick pay, the 40 years free card, you know and people have paid into the system for 40 years. It's a fantastic achievement for those individuals to say you've stayed with the Union and now you get a card and a cheque in it and I think if we start taking things away, I think we might have further recruitment problems or we might lose membership that we've currently got. So, I oppose that on those grounds.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Nicolae.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Good morning everyone. My name is Nicolae, I'm representing the Branch 357. I believe I'm opposing the motion, the reason being, I mean, myself like a Branch Secretary, I'm working, you know, quite a lot with, with the members' benefits and with the requests and stuff like that and to be honest, I don't quite understand today's [unclear] what we can give you, like like previous Speaker was saying and I agree totally with that, I don't understand what we, you know, can review and put in another pot because we, we have the people who are in the Union for many, many years and they never have any legal things, they never go for nothing, they was working. Yes, they was claiming sometimes some sick benefits because in, in, in my workplace, about 90% of the contracts don't have any, I mean, they have statutory sick pay and if it's a long sickness this £7.00 will help a lot and I believe from this reason I'm opposing this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay anybody else want to speak? Can you take your hand down, Nicolae. Paul White. Paul, you seem to have turned your camera off.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Yes, wrong button [LAUGHTER]. Yes, good morning Conference. I'm going to oppose this motion today because I believe that when I'm trying to sign members up in the shop, new people, introduce them to, to the Union one of the, the great selling point to me is, is telling them about all the benefits that they can receive, you know, from the Union, so it's not all just about you know, you know, being represented in, in, in, in workplace disputes or things like that. I really find it a great tool when I'm selling, you know, what this, what this great Union brings you know. I'm supporting this, opposing this motion today and I hope you all think about it carefully. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any, anybody else? Can you take your hand down, Paul. Anybody else? Okay, before I bring Jackie in to speak on behalf of the Executive, the Executive would ask the mover if they would be prepared to remit the motion and, and the reason for that is, is that we believe the intention of a review of our benefits isn't actually about wanting to reduce what we offer to the membership, but I think the word 'savings' obviously makes it look that way. The, the Executive is looking at our benefits anyway to improve on them not to reduce them so we would ask before, before obviously the Executive comes in, because we are going to oppose it otherwise. We're going to un-mute you, we're going to un-mute you, Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I'm happy to remit that Ian, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, motion 26, 253. So it's Nick Mead, Nick Mead. I'm just going to find you.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Motion 26. This Conference agrees that all Agendas produced by this Union include ‘Environment’ on the same line as Health & Safety and shall read as Safety, Health and Environment.

We’ve stood on this platform for many years asking people to support environmental issues. It’s a simple no-brainer. We should put it on the Agenda, get our employers to do it if we can, and ensuring it’s discussed at every meeting. We’ve already done it in Region 2 we did a vote on it at Regional Council about 15 – 16 months ago, and I know it’s, it’s already there for us, and I know it was mentioned again yesterday by one of our comrades, that it’s already been done. Fully support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, who’s seconding it? Terry, Terry Povey. Terry, the reason I didn’t come back to you by the way is because we knew you was already on.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Yes, that, that’s [unclear]. I had a few issues this morning, not sure what went on, but there we go. Yes, here to second this motion. Obviously we had this discussion yesterday about adding the word ‘Environment’ to the Health & Safety Repts. Just a bit of a no-brainer really in all honesty. Yes, I urge you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we’ve got nobody, oh Pauline McCarthy’s now indicating that she want to speak. So anybody from the shop floor that wants to speak, just raise your hands.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I’m, at our Branch we’ve already got Health, Safety & Environment on our heading, so it’s really important because environment across the country, across the world is important for everybody and I think the more we talk about it, the more we do about it, the better it will be, so I agree. Support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else? Can you take your hand down for me, Polly, Pauline (laughter, sorry). Douggie Johnson.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I support this motion. I think Pauline put it quite rightly. I mean, support this motion. There is no more important issue that faces the world than climate change and our environment and if we put it on first place, getting talking about this, you know, we can do, we can start spreading the message that something has to be done, because at the minute it’s, the Atomic Bulletin Scientist has now moved the the closest to deadline, which is the clock that, you know, if you reach zero, if you reach 12 o’clock, games over for the human race and it’s now at 90 seconds, so we’ve got to start talking about it, we’ve got to make action, we’ve got to do something about this or we will not have a world to survive on. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody else? Okay, Joe Knapper on behalf of the Executive.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons), on behalf of the Executive Council: Morning, Conference. Obviously, we would ask Conference to support this motion. It makes absolute sense and given the Rule change to Rule 14.8 last, yesterday, we’ve got to support it. Please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, nobody opposed, so therefore there’s no right of reply, so those in favour? Has everybody finished voting? Okay, if you take your hands down. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? Okay, with no opposing, that was passed unanimously. Motion 27. It’s Nick Mead, Nick Mead.

27

Branch 253

This Conference agrees that all agendas and minutes are distributed as electronic format only and only produce 1 hard copy format for signature and file.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Speaking on behalf of motion 27. Motion reads as, this Conference agrees that all Agendas and minutes are distributed as electric format only and only produce one hard copy format for signature and file. I repeat my points from the last motion if we have it on the Agenda, we have the Repts, why should we not lead by example? Let’s save the trees, reduce the plastic, extend the life of our planet. I believe this did come up as a motion several Conferences ago as well to do with recycling some of the paperwork we get for Conference. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Terry Povey.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: We okay? Cool. Thank you, Ian. Yes, here to second the motion. Yes, it’s a no-brainer really. I mean as one Nick, Nick said a few years’ back this sort of thing was put forward before. It’s now in electronics in computers and everything else has improved so much we could do away with a lot of the excess paperwork and yes, it would be so much easier really to use this sort of system to to bypass all that and again, save the planet. Okay. I urge you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Mark Hilton. So Mark, Mark Hilton. You, you indicated in advance?

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, I'm actually here to oppose this motion, purely based on the wording and the word is 'all'. I totally support the other parts of it and I believe as far as possible we should do that. What if, however, by saying 'all', we're binding ourselves. What if there's an emergency meeting? What if something gets lost? What happens if we need to produce paper copies, for whatever reason? So that's the only thing I'm saying. If we say 'all', then that's it. I'm opposing on that can't remember the word, on that score.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Too comfortable in that chair, Mark [LAUGHTER]. I've got John Fox indicating first, erm and then Dave. Obviously I'm taking Speakers from the floor, so if you make us aware, then we'll bring you in. John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. Conference, I'm here to support this. Being a board member of Manchester Environmental Education Network, it only seems right to put this forward and I do have my reservations, yes and, and through my job as project worker for the the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union Learning Services I have my reservations on this about whether everybody can use the technology that that we have. Sometimes that we do need to produce some paper copies for, for these people. So I do support this wholeheartedly, but I do have these reservations, yes. I support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning, Conference. Dave Suddards, Branch 561, Hovis (Bradford). I'm here to oppose this motion. Although I [unclear], I'm the same as Mark Hilton is with the word 'all'. Are we going to start doing away with Union noticeboards and send everything electronically, our minutes to meetings, send them to everybody electronically that's what it's saying. Are we going to do away with the Union's magazine and send that electronically? Do we have the facilities at the moment to do that electronically to all our members? So while I do agree with the sentiment of it and I do wholeheartedly agree with it, I have to say no on the word 'all'. I oppose this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. I've got Pauline McCarthy, Julie and then Nicolae.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I'm here to support this motion, because common sense has to come in to this, it has to be reasonable. If a Branch can get electronic, why not use electronic. It's not saying that has to happen, it's saying that it's reasonable. The Union's always reasonable. If you can't receive electronic email, you'll get a letter. If you can't receive electronic paper, sorry paperwork, you'll get paperwork. So it is, the Union do that now. If you ask for a Rule Book to be sent to you, you'll get a Rule Book sent to you, but if you ask for a Rule Book electronically, you'll get a Rule Book electronically, so what's different? I think common sense has to come in to it. So support, please.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can, yes.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Yes, sorry. I'm here to oppose this motion. Obviously it might be a savings to the Union but we're still having to print stuff out for our Representatives, so not everybody has got internet access at home, not everybody's got Smartphones, not everybody's got printers. Our company have just brought in a new payroll system, paperless, all to be done on your mobile 'phone and the issues we've had, especially with the older generation, myself included, you know, anybody older than myself, they haven't got these things, you know, they haven't got mobile 'phones, they haven't got laptops and tablets and things, iPads, so they've really been struggling and HR have been inundated with people coming down and they've had to make them email addresses and they're having to get family members to get things redirected for them. Erm, anybody with impairments or anything, the company is still trying to print things out for them so, you know, not everybody's got the technology. Yes, it could be a savings to the Union, but as for saving the trees and everything sorry, Nick, it's not happening because, you know, we're still printing stuff off in our Branches. So and to sit here today you know, we've all got copies of everything in front of us, so yes, it's savings for the Union but it's not always practical. So, I'm opposing this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I believe the next was Nicolae, wasn't it? Nicolae.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Oh sorry, was just a lot of hands there and I didn't understand it's my turn. Erm, I'm, I'm totally agree with Julie and I will oppose this motion and let's be honest with each other. I get the idea on this motion but like was mentioned, we need to think about every single one. We don't think, you know, we need to think about all the sites of our Union, about all our Representatives and all the work that we are doing. I have, personally in my Branch, two Reps who don't know how to do that electronically and I believe because the motion says, this to be electronic format only, I'm opposing this motion. A lot of job work we are doing, we try to help our comrades, to help, you know, our teams and then if they are unable to do that, we need to look into that and then I believe this motion can be live but not, not in all areas of our Union. This is my believing. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And we've got Joe, Mick and then Joanne.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons): Good morning, Conference. Up here to oppose this, for exactly the same reasons as Mark Hilton and Dave Suddards. If this goes through and that word is 'all', that means it's the finish of all, of all printed matter and as a Union we cannot function like that, it's impossible. We've got too many members that are in the later stages in life that aren't computer literate, so wouldn't be able to pick up any communication and stuff. So, please oppose. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Mick.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577 (North Yorkshire Postal): Not on, haven't you got my picture [LAUGHTER]. Right, the thing is, firstly when I saw, when I first saw this I thought yes, that would be good, but then I thought well, I had some trouble once with my computer, I couldn't get booklets and such coming through. So therefore, the word 'only, for digital format only', if that wasn't there, I could support it and if there was an amendment to it that said 'but a hard copy could be requested'. So, instead of supporting this, I'm going to oppose it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Joanne.

Sister Joanne Henderson – Branch 529: Yes, I'm here to oppose this motion and the reason is, you've got a lot of people out there with learning difficulties, like myself, I'm dyslexic and sometimes when you get it in a format with computer only, it's very difficult for people such as myself. I only have a mobile 'phone, so actually to find the link to join this zoom meeting, I couldn't actually find it, even though it was there in plain sight, I had to ask another Delegate invitation link and also the meeting ID just to join this. So sometimes it would be quite difficult with people. I understand you want to save paper, but sometimes paper is the only link that people have. So, I oppose this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, can you take your hands down please, Mick and Joanne, if you don't mind. I'm gonna bring the mover in, because I believe he wants to remit the motion, is that right?

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Yes I'm going to remit the motion because of some of the points that have been raised, but can I just clarify the original motion was only about Agendas and minutes and did not include noticeboards or pamphlets or books or any other things. So I'll remit it and I'm sure the Exec will look at it in due course.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, thank you very much. Listen, listen Conference, I know it's seven minutes past, I've asked, asked Ian Mearns to join us at quarter past, but I'm going to send you out for a brew. Obviously Ian Mearns is then going to come on, and, obviously give his spot, and then we'll have another brew when that's finished. So, if you don't mind, I just want, I just want to send you away for 10 minutes this time. I hope that's okay and you've got plenty of time to do whatever you need to do.

[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hiya Ian, we've asked you to un-mute, are you there?

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Yes, I'm here.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Aye, hey, no jazz hands this year either [LAUGHTER]. Thank you very much for coming along. Obviously this is a brand new experience for us but you know, we did actually consider, as an Executive, to, to actually look at putting it back until after the 21st of June Conference, but none of us had the confidence that actually lockdown would be lifted and, and we were determined that we couldn't do what happened last year and not have a Conference so, so obviously we've given it a whirl and I think most of the Delegates would say that it's actually not been an unpleasant experience at all. I think we've been able to be quite democratic, we've been able to have debates, which has been great. People have been able to make their contributions so in this new world of technology that we've discovered because of Covid I think it's probably going to enable us to do in our Trade Union, something that we've not been able to do in recent years, which is probably encourage more meetings online with our members and improve our communications, Ian. So, I just wanted to, I just wanted to make you aware of that and, and obviously I think everybody on here who has been before will know who Ian Mearns is, but for those who are new Delegates, Ian Mearns is the Chair of our Parliamentary Group. Erm, people who receive the Parliamentary Report will be seeing the good work that Ian Mearns does in Parliament for us as a Trade Union. Obviously Ian Mearns is a, is a fantastic working class MP who we're proud to support who has always stood by our Trade Union so I'd like to invite Ian Mearns to give his address to our Conference.

Ian Mearns' MP Address to Conference

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Well Ian, thank you very much indeed and it's a privilege to be with you again this morning. It's such a shame that we can't be all together in that big room at Southport but you know, it is, things are what they are and from the news today, it looks like you've been entirely justified in not postponing the Conference until after the perspective re-opening on the 21st June because that's, looks like that's receding now

We'll find out definitively probably later on today what the government intend to do about that, but it's, but it continues to be a privilege of mine to chair the Parliamentary Group on behalf of the Union and, you know, despite the overall political situation, I think that the Parliamentary Group of the Union is probably in as much, about a stronger position as it's been in, in many a long year, with a very healthy membership you know, over, well over 30 MPs in attendance at, at the Parliamentary Group meetings are very, very healthy. Erm, we continue to be supported and, in the Parliamentary Group by erm, Solidarity Consulting who sprang from Union Services which used to be led by our comrade and friend, who's no longer with us, Simeon Andrews, but we continue to be supported by Michael Calderbank, who provides the secretariat services via Solidarity Consulting and with, with colleagues Richard Hanford and Charlie Allen, they provide services to a whole range of Trade Unions who form part of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group in, in, in parliament. Erm, the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group continues to, to work very effectively and I think the only thing is we do miss getting together in the physical sense but, you know, our Parliamentary Group is, is very, very strong and you know, we continue to be very, very active.

You'll see from the Report in the early day motions, which I put down and early day motions are just a matter of bringing things to the attention of the Houses of Parliament and to Ministers and to the Shadow Front Bench so there's, there's a whole range of issues which have been raised by the Parliamentary Group there and you can read them in the Report. Erm, the, the, the action within the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group on a whole range of things, employment rights, health and safety skills and training, you know, all of the things that we've, we've been doing for years, we've continued to do despite the fact that we've been working largely remotely. For my own part I have tried venturing down to Westminster on a number of occasions but, because of social distancing, it, it means that presence in the House of Commons Chamber is limited. We are only allowed 50 – 60 Members of Parliament in there one, at any one time and so when we do venture down to, to, to Westminster, it means that the vast majority of the work that we do, do, doing is meetings exactly like this.

The only difficulty I have in working from my office in Westminster is that the Wi-Fi is very, very poor indeed. In fact it's been described as 'crap' by other colleagues and, and therefore I'm better off in my kitchen in Gateshead, effectively working you know, online as opposed to being in my office in London where I can intermittently, depending on the Wi-Fi, attend meetings or parts of meetings until the signal drops out and comrades will be aware that the, the palace of Westminster is undergoing a significant revamp and large parts of the building are currently shrouded in scaffolding, which provides a very efficient Faraday cage to prevent electronic signals getting through to large parts of the building, so that's why it's better, from my perspective, to be working from home and we wait and see what the government's decision is today and what the government's decision is about the continuance of MPs being able to virtually participate in all of their meet, meetings erm, for, for, for the foreseeable future. The membership of the Group continues to be active and you know, with, along with the early day motions, letters to Ministers, letters to the, the opposition Front Bench, we also involve ourselves in campaigns and solidarity action for any industrial action which is taking place and it's the sort of role that we, we share with, with other Parliamentary Groups for other Unions erm across, across the board.

Of course, since I last spoke to you, because we didn't have an AGM last year, we did of course have the devastating loss of the 2019 General Election and the, you know, that led to the, to the, to the new leadership in the Labour Party which, I'm afraid to say, some of us are finding it very, very difficult to understand exactly what the view of the current leadership is on so many things and, and, and therefore, you know, we are desperately trying to press our leadership for some clarity, because it seems as though despite having been elected on a 10 Point Pledge Programme, it seems the current leader of the Labour Party seems to want to abandon all of his previous pledges which seems to me very, very, well, unhelpful, given the fact it was those pledges which, which got him, got him elected as leader of the Labour Party in the first place by, by the membership will, willing to give him the benefit of the doubt and, you know, we were regularly being told that prior to the General Election in 2019 that, you know, under any other leadership but Jeremy Corbyn, we would have been 20 points ahead in the polls.

Well, I'm afraid to say, we've got another leader who isn't Jeremy Corbyn and we seem to be 20 points behind in the polls, so there's something gone wrong with that analysis, it seems from my perspective and here we are as, as a Party having had a very, very poor showing in the May elections, having lost the Hartlepool by-election where the Labour vote share was down by 9% and the Tories were up by 23% and, and Labour lost around 7,000 votes from the 2019 General Election with a turnout down from just under 60%, 57.9% to down to 42% so issues with the leadership issues with the imposition of a candidate by the leadership, who was the former MP for Stockton, Stockton South, Paul Williams and I've got nothing against Paul personally.

He and I are differently politically quite, quite obviously but the trouble was with Paul, in a seat like Hartlepool, was that he was known on Teeside, being a former Tees Valley MP, to be an ardent remainder when it came to Brexit and he was imposed by the leadership in a seat which voted 70% to leave and I'm afraid to say that decision in itself, I think, was crass and it very much played into the hands of the Tory campaign, which was saying that Labour doesn't listen to you, so in other words if you impose a candidate who's very much remain in a seat which is very much leave that kind of really does look like the Labour Party is taking the votes of the electorate there for granted. In, in the local elections at the same time Labour lost 327 council seats and of course importantly in, in, in my context here in the North East of England, we lost control of Durham County Council, but interestingly a coalition of Independents, who are the biggest group, the Conservatives, the Liberals and the Greens have forced Labour out of power. Labour was still the largest single Party in, in Durham County Council, but it's interesting that all of those other political parties clubbed together, including the Greens by the way, in order to basically have a council control which is inherently right wing.

In general polling it's one of the main factors of people turning away from Labour is the lack of coherent vision. The policy direction is kind of not really understood or known and people aren't sure what our principles are these days and this would seem to be impacting on the voters on both left and right who were Labour voters in the past and Labour losing a significant amount of votes, the left to parties including the Green Party in the latest YouGov polling has the vote share among 18 – 24 year olds down from, down 21 points from 2019, with the Green Party polling up 23 points, so the move to the Greens seems to be a trend across Europe in different electoral systems, but that is a concern from a Labour Party perspective and we have in, in, in, in the coming weeks, I think on the 1st of July an important election in Batley and Spen because the previous MP has become the elected Mayor of West Yorkshire and the Batley and Spen election could prove to be crucial from the perspective of the current leadership to see you know, that, it could be an acid test as it were in terms of the current leadership and of course, all of this has been happening in the face of really frankly, from my perspective and I've said this before at these Conferences some disastrous governmental decisions. I mean, this government are inept, they are frankly calamitous, but we can't seem to get ahead of them in, in the polls and it seems, seems as though they are given a, a sort of green light to do whatever they want and, and, and when the leadership of our Party tells them, you know, tells people that we're supporting the government in a national interest, I'm not really sure whose actual interest is being supported by our, our Front Bench doing that, because frankly the management of the, the whole Covid situation has been nothing short of a disaster and the only thing that they seem to have got right, which of course is vitally important, is the roll out of the vaccination programme, but prior to that, when you saw £37 billion, £37 billion being wasted on a track and trace system, which frankly just doesn't work you know, it is a calamity... calamitous and of course we're now seeing in this government that things that we in Parliament regarded as important, like the Ministerial Code of Conduct, is now seemingly worthless and several senior Ministers, including the Prime Minister, are guilty of breaches of the Code of Conduct, but almost like from the perspective of the press and media, it's nothing to see here.

Well, I mean, a breach of the Ministerial Code of Conduct used to be a resigning issue, but it would seem, because of standards in public life having fallen to such an all time low now, it's nothing to see here and it was interesting, I thought, that when, you know, the Alex Salmond/Nicola Sturgeon thing was playing out in Scotland, the right wing press and media in England were saying oh well, if Nicola Sturgeon's broken the Ministerial Code in Scotland, it's a resigning issue, but at the same time as they were kind of keeping quiet about Boris Johnson and his Ministers and some of the things that they've been up to, but that's how we go and of course you know, through the last year, we've seen the PPE scandal you know, that's now being tested in the court through the Good Law Project repeatedly showing that the government acted unlawfully with elements of bias and it's a great time to be a Tory donor because it's automatic you're taken into the House of Lords. The PM had had his flat refurbished and we understand that eventually he paid for it himself, but who paid for it initially? Well, of course, it led to be a Tory donor, which itself was a breach of the Ministerial Code and a growing trend of the Prime Minister ignoring any judgement which he doesn't agree with and Ministers repeatedly and deliberately lying in the House of Commons on why the discussion on how fit for purpose House of Commons conventions are, because it just seems to me that they get away with it repeatedly.

We then also had the evidence of the Prime Minister's former adviser, Dominic Cummings, to the House of Commons Select Committee and, and if he's got the evidence to back up his assertions at that Select Committee then the government would be in trouble. We've also seen the resignation in the last couple of weeks of the government's Education Recovery Adviser, just because simply he recommended a very, very comprehensive educational plan of, of recovery for particularly the poorest and the, the children who've fallen behind in the greatest extent and of course the government then came up with a plan, at about 10% of what he'd originally planned for investment and it, it didn't stack up so he resigned quite rightly and, and I think you have to give some credit to Sir Kevan Collins.

He was a well respected educationalist prior to taking that job and of course it's ended in tears from the government's perspective, but yes, it just shows you that despite the fact that the employer, gentleman came up with a comprehensive educational recovery plan, as soon as it was going to cost more than the government wanted to spend, it became well down in the pecking order of priorities and unfortunately with educational recovery, you know, the kids out there need that now, next year, the year after will be far too late for those children, they only get one chance at, at, at their education, so, you know, we really do need to keep on pressing the government on that issue.

Ongoing work though, despite the fact that the leave versus remain Brexit debate has now finished, the government are already trying to dismantle the deal which got them elected. You remember, you know, in 2019, I'm afraid to say their mantra of getting Brexit done did cut through and was very effective. They're taking a lot of Northern constituencies which had voted to leave and so the government must be held to account for the lies they told to millions, because despite the fact that they were elected on a manifesto of getting Brexit done, here we are 18 months on and Brexit is anything but done, particularly in places like Northern Ireland erm, in, in terms of the potential it has to [unclear] agreement, so that, that damage could have [unclear] there in Northern Ireland itself and [unclear] need to press the government [unclear] the Tories keep talking about building back better and [unclear] our local communities and workers right and [unclear] historic trickle down economics with the pockets of ordinary workers to grow the economy.

The government and various departments rely on Mary Portas to show how we can rebuild our High Streets, well the thing is, one of the big problems with high streets up and down the country isn't just the fact that, you know, because of Covid an awful lot of shops have been shut or temporarily shut, the fact is, in communities around the whole of the country, ordinary working people do not have money in their pockets and if they don't have money in their pockets, they can't spend it in shops, you know and that's a big problem. The lack of disposal income for huge swathes of our population is a real problem when it comes to rejuvenating our high streets and making, helping businesses there to grow and we also need to invest in green, green industry and in transport infrastructure to allow us to reduce our carbon footprint while generating growth, so we've got to, some huge tasks to do and, you know, despite the fact that this government were first elected in 2010 because they were saying that Labour crashed the economy and Labour had a massive deficit and Labour had increased the national debt, well, this bunch have almost tripled the national debt in the space of 11 years and, you know, nobody seems to be on to them about that from, from that perspective. You know, they are an economic disaster, but seem to get a free ride by the right wing press and media that we do have dominating our news in this country.

Now, important issues on, on the horizon beyond Covid we do have the return of a Police and Crime Bill which, which will have significant restrictions on protests and civil liberties and a wider impact beyond mass protests you know, on, on all sorts of gatherings. You know, it's almost now the fourth anniversary of the Grenfell Tower disaster and we still have huge cladding crisis for tall buildings occupied by millions, well, hundreds of thousands of people across the whole of the country. The Brexit transitional period due to end across various sectors without arrangements in place and also experience of travelling post-January 2021 has been limited so the full effects of the restrictions that, that will be brought into place as these transitional arrangements come to an end are yet to be seen. You know, the requirement for visas, entry requirements are not a full reality yet, so I don't think an awful lot of people across, across the piece will understand just how much things have changed since Brexit was finally put, put to bed. Local government funding continues to be cut and of course the government's narrative on that seems, seems to work. You know, they keep telling us how efficient Tory authorities are as opposed to Labour authorities, but the vast majority of Tory authorities have had nowhere near the financial restraint and cuts that local authorities like my own here in Gateshead have had and of course, you know, my own authority here in Gateshead is very, very typical of councils across the whole of the country and I'll, I'll just put it in, in a nutshell. Prior to 2010 when I was first elected to parliament, I was deputy leader of the council in Gateshead and in 2010 my own local authority had a net revenue account, how much we spent net per year was about £310 million per year. Now this year, in Gateshead, 11 years on, the council have £200 million to spend. So you add inflation into that and it really means that the council's budget has been halved in 11 years and that'll be very, very similar across other local authorities in the north of England, the north east, the north west, Yorkshire, Humberside, in the East Midlands and the West Midlands and the only areas which seem to have been protected have been areas particularly in the south, south east of England where they have a high council tax base and collect revenue from the people that live there, you know, in, in bigger, better houses and of course from areas where Tory MPs have been elected in the north of England, where the government's brand of pork barrel politics, handing out goodies to where they've got their own representatives, seems to be working from their perspective.

So how do we move forward, comrades? The Labour Party, from my perspective, must give the electorate an idea of what our principles are, what we actually stand for and what, what the policy direction is. At present we don't even know that, whether we agree or disagree with the current leadership on policy, because on so many things, we literally don't know what that actual policy is and it just seems to me we've become far too vague and, you know, the government have, sorry, the leadership of the Party have announced a policy review, but the trouble is, the outcome of that policy review will probably take 18 months at least and unfortunately what we saw in the past where there were sort of policy reviews happened they didn't actually listen to their membership. What they did was, they made up what they wanted to come out of it in the first place, they filtered it through a policy review process and then came out with what they first wanted in, in, in, in, in, in the in the end. So, so we must find a way to disassociate the Labour Party from the actions of the government, including the imposition of restrictions. With offering often unwavering support to the government, they've got, you know, the Labour Party and the Labour leadership look like they've become complicit in the government's action. You know, "we support the government in the national interest". Well, I'm afraid to say I find it very difficult to support this government in doing anything. I mean, you know I wouldn't employ Boris Johnson to open an envelope but, you know, from my perspective they're crooked they are incompetent and they've got no scruples whatsoever. So we, we need to urgently regain the ground lost to the Green Party with a bold and transformed strategy on green industrial on the green industrial revolution but we also need vitally to invest in our communities and our infrastructure to help the economy to grow again, to give people good jobs.

Now, in parliament, we've also got some things going on which I think are, are vitally important from the perspective of the Union. Our colleague, Lord John Hendy, who has been a friend to the Unions and a friend to workers as a QC on employment law, he's got a private members bill in the Lords on rights for economy workers, which I think we all would want to support and our colleague, Barry Gardiner MP, is starting his private members bill on fire and rehire tactics very soon, to which dozens of MPs have added their, added their names and our comrade, Ian Byrne, who is a Liverpool MP has also commenced work on a bill regarding the Right to Food.

Now, I also want to give a special shout out, comrades, to to, to the crèche workers at Queen's University in Belfast so solidarity to them and we, we, I will raise that with my parliamentary colleagues through the Parliamentary Group to get solidarity messages to them and also at JDE, who are facing up to their employer's fire and rehire tactics. So it's, it's it's support to them and solidarity to them.

We also mustn't let this government off the hook. This government, it seems to me, every time an issue is raised with them, they always have a plan, but it actually when you drill down into it, the government's response to most issues, when you look at it, what is that plan? When pressed, they almost never release any details of what their plans are and probably it's because in most reality, the plan doesn't exist and what they mean in reality is that they have a plan to develop a plan. Vague aspirations are not plans and as we've seen with so many strands of government policy, you know for instance, the government released a white paper on the skills agenda in January or February and actually that white paper wasn't a plan at all, it was a list of vague aspirations, aspirations on a plan. You know, you know, they kind of know what they want to come out of it but they never tell you how they're going to achieve it and so we really do need to press this bunch on, you know how vague and how airy-fairy all of their vague aspirations actually are, because they will let us down, they will let the country down and they will let the people of this country down time and time again and we really do, as the Labour Party, need to regroup, we need to focus and we need to be determined to fight this bunch, get them out at the earliest opportunity and to make sure that when it does come to building back the economy and building back living standards, that we do it in such a way which benefits all working people across the whole of the country.

So comrades, it continues to be a pleasure and a privilege to chair the Parliamentary Group on your behalf and I'll be very happy to take any questions and field any comments. Thank you very much indeed.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank, thank you very much, Ian and that was a very comprehensive view of, of what's been going on in parliament and I think, I mean you may have seen some of the maybe one of the articles that's appeared in, in the press this morning, you know, outlining what our, what our members currently feel about the situation with the Labour Party. I mean that was a survey that was, that was conducted across our membership, erm and we had a high, high turnout for, for, for such a survey, and they made their feelings strongly felt. In fact, this afternoon Richard Burgon will be discussing about the political situation obviously looking at the survey but also talking about why our members need to understand how politics is critical to changing their lives and the lives of the people that they work alongside, because we do need to make sure our members continue to be engaged and I think the way that you just outlined there erm, what's been going on in Westminster, the issues that we're facing, I mean those are common issues for all of us.

So, I'm now going to open it up to the floor, so if you want to raise your hands and ask, and ask Ian a question probably take questions until about 5 past 11, if we get enough questions. So, raise your hands if you want to speak, so we can come to you. So, I've got a first one, which is Terry Povey.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Ian, good morning. From what you're saying and everything else I was listening to, is the Party actually listening to the CLPs based on the fact that the Hartlepool election turned into an actual, well, farce. It just makes you wonder. I already actually list, the PLP, actually listened to the CLPs engage in what they need to be doing. I mean, we voted on many motions recently about, you know listening and, you know, the PLP listening to the CLPs. I don't know what your take on it is, my friend, so

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Well, I, I think that the thing is, you have to differentiate the PLP, which is basically all of the members of parliament and the members of the House of Lords as well, because we all meet together as the Parliamentary Labour Party from the Leaders Office and it seems to me the Leader's Office are the ones who are in control of all of this stuff. I mean, the PLP doesn't get a vote in who the candidate would be, you know, the Leaders Office seems to be, you know, they're the ones who are like sort of liaising with local constituencies, when I say liaising I use that word loosely shall we say. I mean for instance, the Local Party didn't have any chance to do anything about the imposition of the candidate in Hartlepool, I mean, the Local Party were presented with a shortlist of one and, and, and therefore if you, when you're presented with a shortlist of one, you know, you have a take it or leave it choice, and of course it was done in such a way that the deadline for nominations was looming so, you know, they had to take what they were given and I'm afraid to say that that then led to a situation where there was very few local activists on the ground actually actively campaigning in that, in that, in that by-election which is a, which is a terrible shame, but it also seems as though an awful lot of the activists base is kind of just, you know, throwing the towel in temporarily.

I mean, I do know that people felt battered and bruised following the loss of the General Election, you know, but, but, but it has to be said, people within the Parliamentary Labour Party also need to accept responsibility for what happened back then, because there were people in the Parliamentary Labour Party who were actively trying to undermine the leadership of the Party at that stage and, you know, when you confront these people now, they don't accept it, you know, you know, they think they were right to do so, they've just got this belief that they're absolutely correct despite what the views of their members are and despite what the reality of this situation is that they find themselves in. They, they blame all sorts of other factors other than their own input into the situation and of course since then we've also seen Jeremy Corbyn's suspension from the Parliamentary Party, he was, he was temporarily suspended from, from membership of the Party, reinstated by an NEC sub-committee and, and at which point the leader of the Party through the Chief Whip, decided it would be the best thing to remove the whip.

Now, Jeremy hasn't got the whip back. That, that Chief Whip, who I do believe, Nick Brown, was probably willing to accept Jeremy's readmission to the Parliamentary Party has now been sidelined and I think the likelihood of Jeremy being readmitted to the Parliamentary Party, that, that likelihood, I think, has receded rather than got any closer. So, we do need to bear all, all of that in, in mind. So, you know, there is a disconnect, I think, between a, a large part of the activist base and the leadership of the Party, but that's different from the PLP. Having said that, by the way, there's an awful lot of people within the PLP will support the current leadership, but there are also quite a number of others who don't because of what's been going on. So, so, you know, we've got to be careful, you know, we should have our disagreements but we should do it within the confines of the Party machinery rather than going public on it and far too many people in the Parliamentary Party were willing to have public disagreements, public shout, shoutings-out, you know, in right wing press outlets prior to that General Election, which completely undermined the position of our, of our leadership, but they need to take responsibility for their actions.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Ian. I'm going to take three questions, so I'm going to test your writing skills, Ian [LAUGHTER]. So I'm going bring, it's going to be in this order, it's going to be Gary Shorrock it's going to be John Fox and then it's going to be Mark Hilton.

Brother Gary Shorrock – Branch 423: Thank you, Mr President. Erm and thank you for your report, Ian. Just thinking, Ian. On your bit about the media, you know, the right wing media has been [unclear] for years ever since Jeremy got onboard, all they've done is attack the Labour Party and now they seem to be in favour of Keir for some unknown reason, but my question is mate, the BBC licence fee is a tax on every household in Britain. Is it not time that we stop paying this tax, for a media that just puts out propaganda against everything we stand for.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Gary. We're going to go to John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: I thank you Mr President. Mine is about Branch motions, Branch motions from the Labour Party Branch, which I'm in, which is the [unclear] Ward, yes, we, because we're quite an active Branch, we put motions in to the CLP. Now, the CLP then follows it on to whoever it is, yes, and I don't actually know, they, they follow, follow the motions on, yes, after it's been passed at the CLP, but we never hear anything back from them, yes, where they're going, how, how they're going to be developed, if they're going to be developed or have they been just shoved under the carpet, yes. Can you tell me what happens to them?

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Okay.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We're going to go to Mark Hilton next.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, hello comrades. Ian, thank you for everything you've said, but I just, just want to reiterate. I'm another lad like you and the Brexit issue was absolutely massive and the problem is now we're sat debating which better Labour Party was right and was Jez right? is Keir right? this that and the other. Us and the RMT and a few other people, we actually voted the other year to put Brexit from a Socialist perspective and thus gain the support of normal Labour voters and the Party chose to ignore that. I think you're reaping what you sow, mate and I'm sorry.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Ian, if you want to come back and answer those questions.

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Yes, right, I mean Gary on, on the press and media and the licence fee, look, I cannot stand the political output of the BBC. I mean, people like Laura Kuenssberg, Nick Robinson on the Today programme. Nick Robinson used to be the, the National President of the Federation of Conservative Students for goodness sake and, you know and yet he's meant to be an unbiased commentator. You know, there was a guy called James Harding who was the head of BBC News Editorial for, for quite some time. He was David Cameron's best man. You know so, you know and then Laura Kuenssberg, God, gee and, you know, I, I find it so frustrating, but the problem we've got is, is that if you do away with the licence fee and we actually then have a situation where the BBC becomes subject to you know, advertising revenue and becomes independent from that perspective, very soon it would be picked up by one of the major press barons, you know, the Rupert Murdoch's of this world, or somebody of that ilk and unfortunately the trouble is, you know, I think if that happened, you would then look back at the BBC and say, you know, the old Joni Mitchell song, you know, 'You don't know what you've got till it's gone' and so I think it is important to still have a broadcaster who are paid for by the public and, and I think also on top of that, you know, there is much that the BBC is able to do because of the licence fee, which is actually of great credit and I think you've got to take out the news and current affairs from that, because I'm afraid to say I think it's jaundiced beyond belief at the moment and I honestly think that the BBC in particular is more politically biased than I can ever remember it in my lifetime and I, I've been involved in politics, you know, as a young Socialist, I start, I joined the Labour Party at the age of 17, so I'm afraid to say that's now 47 years ago so, you know, but I think the BBC now is more jaundiced, more right wing, and more politically biased than I, than I can ever remember it. But the thing is, it's retrievable and I really do think we shouldn't be coming blithely into the idea of getting rid of it. I still believe it is possible to recover from that, so you know, let's not throw the baby out of the bath water, as bad as it is.

John, on, on Branch motions, on Branch motions. Well, first and foremost you're very fortunate if your Branch motions are forwarded on by CLP, because I do hear of so many CLPs which have just ceased to function in, in recent past, you know. Erm, you know, I was talking to comrades last week who were saying that, you know, that their their, their CLPs just stop meeting. Well, I'm glad to say that my CLP still meets, that meets on a format very much like this erm and you know, we had a, we had a meeting just on Thursday night with over 50 members present, so, you know, still relatively busy from that perspective, but if, if you have constituency meetings and your local Branch motions go through to your constituency, your constituency must then carry that motion and if it does carry the motion, it then goes to the National Executive Committee or, once a year, you get an opportunity to send a motion to Conference or, or a motion and an emergency motion to Conference. So, you know, they are meant to go to the NEC and, and quite often unfortunately just because of the weight of business, there are queues and queues and queues of unheard motions from constituencies up and down the country just waiting in a file for the NEC to consider. So, I'm, I'm afraid to say from that perspective that raises it but quite often just doesn't ever get dealt with because by the time they get round to them, quite often the, the time has, has elapsed and unfortunately that's the situation and I do know, by the way, that the, the NEC meetings last hours and hours and hours, it's not like it's a 10 minute rubber stamp job. Quite often the NEC meetings begin in, at lunchtime and are going on until 7, 8, 9 in the evening so, you know, the NEC's very important from that perspective, but you know I would say that that is a flaw in the internal Party democracy that we have in the Labour Party, because it means that these important decisions being taken by local Branches and by local constituencies just kind of get lost in the weight of business.

I think that the constitution of the Party needs to be revamped so that maybe a NEC sub-committee could be established to look at these things in terms of recommending a course of action to the full NEC in time.

Mark, on Brexit. Look, I think you're absolutely right, you know, I, believe it or not by the way, one of my other jobs in Parliament is I also chair the RMT Parliamentary Group, so I'm absolutely, I'm absolutely on board with understanding, you know, that people have differences of opinion about, about the whole Brexit issue, but I'm afraid to say that Keir Starmer has found it very, very difficult to throw off his mantle as the Labour spokesperson on Brexit, when he was quite clearly an arch-remainer and, and, and the thing is whether we liked it or not, we got our stance on Brexit totally wrong prior to the 2019 General Election, because it looked to many like we were trying to frustrate the whole Brexit process. We, many of us didn't agree with Brexit, I didn't, I was a sceptical remainer, that was my view. I think that the European Union was and still is massively imperfect, but I, I thought it was something that we should stay in in order to try and reform from within, but the thing is, we lost the referendum in 2016 and I'm afraid to say that it's quite clear to me that voters up and down the country, whether they liked it or not, came to believe that the referendum and its results should be adhered to and therefore from that perspective I'm afraid to say the line that was taken by our leadership and I think particularly by Keir Starmer as our main Brexit spokesperson before the General Election, looked like we, he was trying to frustrate the whole process. That's been very unhelpful from an electoral perspective and I'm afraid to say, added weight to the very simple mantra that Boris Johnson and his other Tory campaigners were uttering all of the time and that was get Brexit done and it cut through, it did absolutely cut through. Unfortunately though, despite the fact they won the election on getting Brexit done, here we are, 18 months later and we haven't got Brexit done and it seems to be apart from Covid, that's what we're talking about.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Ian and, and, and thank you, thank you very much. Erm, I'm not going to take any more questions because obviously I want to, I'm going to send, I'm going to send them all out for a brew for 20 minutes in a minute, which obviously I'm sure they're going to appreciate and I'm sure they'll have plenty of biscuits but I think, like I said before, you give a real clear overview of what's happening politically and, and, you know, we, we can't emphasise enough the importance of politics, and the way it can change lives. Obviously we would normally, while you were here, give you a presentation, but obviously we can't do that but that doesn't mean we're not going to do that, so we're obviously going to arrange for a box of biscuits to be shipped over to your office, Ian, and in line with what we would normally do, which is obviously because you've had the paper and so we would normally give a donation to a charity that you want us to support, so either, you know, you can message us or email it in or you can tell us now and, and then we'll and obviously you'll need to send us the address so that Sarah can send that cheque forward.

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Well, Ian, it, it continues to be a privilege to chair the Parliamentary Group on behalf of the Union and it's always a pleasure to, to, to attend your Annual Conference and if, if the Union very kindly would like to send a cheque to a charity of my choice, it would be the Gateshead Foodbank. So comrades, thank you and Solidarity and stay safe everybody. Thank you very much indeed.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Ian. Okay Conference, it's four minutes past, it's five minutes past on, on, on my, my clock now. Back for 25 past 11, please.

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Alright Ian, thanks a lot mate, cheers.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Ian, we really appreciate that.

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: Okay mate, bye bye. I'll tell you, I'll tell you what I think mate, I'll tell you what I think.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, absolutely, that's why we love it, mate. That's why we love it.

Ian Mearns, Chair of Parliamentary Group: [LAUGHTER]. Cheers, Ian, cheers, thanks a lot. Bye everybody, bye bye.

[BREAK]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference welcome back. I hope you've had enough time there to, to be able to get your brew and have some biscuits and obviously whatever else you needed to do.

Before we go back into the motions, I just want to remind Delegates that we have emailed out the ballot papers and, and as far as we know, everybody's emails we've got should have received them. If you haven't then, then obviously let us know. We are trying to contact what's-name, so we're trying to contact Mohinder [unclear] A Crawford, Gareth Brown and, I mean we need someone to interpret the name I really do apologise, my pronunciation is terrible, it's, it looks like Malbretta Trister. Apologies, I can't pronounce your name properly. Dipesh Parmin, Parvin sorry, Dipesh Parvin and David Hodgkiss. We just don't have emails for you to send the ballot so if you can contact us with, with your details to enable us to do so.

I know we've also reached out to full time Officials from those Regions to try and make contact with you too because obviously we need you to take part and I can see that Mohinder, we need to, we need to work out how to, we get your ballot to you. If it's something I said, Mohinder, you up and left [LAUGHTER], but okay.

Obviously just, just to remind Delegates too there's, there's two fringe meetings this afternoon one's entitled 'Politics' and the other one is 'Women in the Union'. I want to remind Delegates too that clearly today there's press coverage of our survey. Tonight, both myself and Sarah will be appearing on something called Socialist Tele which is going to be broadcast live on Facebook, and it will be dealing with the issue of the responses of that survey and, and I just want to make Delegates aware that it was a significant turnout of our members who took part in that, that survey, and quite clearly we, our members feel very passionate about that issue and they've made their opinions felt. It's not good reading for the Labour Party but it just goes to show that our members do feel that politics is an important issue that they have the right to have their say on. So I do think it's important that, that Delegates, if you haven't signed up do take part in that this afternoon which is going to be led by Richard Burgon, and we'll be able to air our concerns at that fringe meeting. So please if you haven't and you can please attend that this afternoon.

Also, obviously Richard Burgon is our first Bakers Union elected MP, so it would be a nice courtesy of us all to attend that meeting too to show our support and Solidarity with, with, with Richard Burgon too.

I'm now going to go back to the Agenda, yes and motion 28 and I believe it's Nick Mead.

28

Branch 253

This Conference agrees to update its website as agreed in Conference 2018.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Erm, speaking on motion 28. Chair, EC, Delegates. This Conference agrees to update its website, as agreed in Conference 2018. Erm, in Conference 2017, I apologise if there was a typo with the, the year of the Conference, but the point is, in this space and time we agreed at Conference that the website would be updated. I understood then it was being looked at in 2019. I've read through the reports today, or yesterday sorry from EC meetings where it talked about the website being updated. We've been in lockdown, people have had to rely on using websites a lot more and unfortunately the website is still outdated it's still not as user-friendly as it could do. Some of the content is out-of-date, the, the Conference books on there are missing after 2015, and worse still in places the General Secretary is the wrong person as well [LAUGHTER]. On the opening page it's got Ronnie's name. Erm, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Terry, I believe you're going to second it and then we're going to do something slightly different after you've seconded it, Terry.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Erm, Delegates, Conference. Erm, yes, I'm here to second the motion. It goes without saying, it's a little outdated now and obviously now our hierarchy has got a more youthful look at the top of it, not you Ian mind what can I say mate, what can I say? I think it's about time we got with the times, don't you my friend. Anyway, yes, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference are we going to just indulge with us because we clearly understand the feeling and we're now going to share, Sarah's going to share the screen before anybody is coming in to speak so you can see what the Executive reply would be to anybody who did want to get up and support this motion. So, I'm going to mute myself and then Sarah's going to do the rest. Sorry, the General Secretary's going to do the rest [LAUGHTER].

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks, Conference and, and just bear with me whilst I share the screen. So, it has taken us a little while to do this. We appreciate that, we appreciate that the website needs updating, and over the last 12 months, in the background, that's exactly what we've been doing. This new website, as you can see and I'll not spend hours on it, what we'll do this week is we'll email Delegates with a link to the new website and just sorting out what platform it sits on, all the techy-stuff that's far beyond our pay grades to sort out, but we've set it up, it's there, it's full of resources, it's easy to use. There's different sections, quotes from our members, there is everything's up-to-date on this one, including the, the strikes over in Belfast, including the stuff around the Right to Food. We've got sections on organising, you can go on and see where the next courses are and you can see what our campaigns are and campaigns from other organisations that we, we support. There's a section on environment that's full of resources that you can go and do environmental checks on your workplace. There's a section on mental health, as you can see, health and safety. We've even done sections for young members, for women, LGBTQ+ members.

At the bottom you can see what benefits there are there, you can access the Rule Book, there's a section purely for Conference and what we will do after Conference is, we will put the motions on and, and let people know which ones have been passed and we can update everybody what's going on. Alongside this, we've also worked with Lighthouse Financial Services to create a benefit hub. So alongside the launch of the website, we'll be launching benefit hub, which has got a vast arrangement of different discounts and vouchers and all sorts of everything. It truly is going to be much easier and much simpler and far better for our members than the current one and the reason, Nick, why Ronnie's name is still on the front page of the current website is nobody knows how to take it off and that's a problem and that is why it has become unable to update. We've even, we've even finished the online joining and got that sorted, so people will be able to join online via direct debit as well. So I think you'll see, Conference, we've been doing a lot of work in the background. It is there, and, and we appreciate that you've, you've given us the time to put that together, and thank you for putting the motion forward.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, so, Conference, obviously we just wanted to, to make you aware of that. I think the mover wants to, you want to remit that, am I hearing, Nick? Do you want to come back in?

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: On the, on the grounds that we're almost ready to launch the new website, I will remit.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, thank you very much, comrades. Okay, so motion 29, which is 580. It's Ange, Angela, then Ruth. And we need to mute Terry

29

Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to recycle the lanyards used at Conference to reduce costs to our union

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: No

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: [LAUGHTER] Especially after he said that I was ageing.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Motion 29. This Conference agrees to recycle the lanyards used in Conference and reduce cost to Union. Obviously it doesn't really come into play this year, but for future Conferences, if we do get back together, it is a waste [unclear] two years and that's all I've got to say.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. You haven't lost your voice this year either [LAUGHTER]. Just looking for you, Ruth.

Sister Ruth Stephenson – Branch 580: I think that's it, yes. Here to second this motion. They, they can't be expensive, lanyards, I'm sure, but it's an expense and it's an expense to our Union, so whether it's £5, £50 or £500, then it's still a saving. What happens to them, do they get recycled when, or do people just throw them in the bin when they get back to the hotel? All we need is a bucket on the last day, as you leave the Conference, dropped in the bucket and then use again the following year.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay have we got anybody indicating to vote on it to speak on it? No. Speakers from the floor? Terry?

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Yes, I just want to get back in there, Ian, alright [LAUGHTER]. You are getting on a bit, my friend, don't worry about that. Erm, yes, this is a no-brainer really in all honesty. We've been talking about environmental issues and saving money and everything else. Hey, it might not be a huge saving, but it's still a saving. Just throw it in a bucket at the end of Conference, perfect.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we've got Julie and then Pauline.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): I understand the sentiments of the the motion, but obviously who's going to take them all home and wash them, you know? I mean Conference, you, you're saying you believe that people might put them in the bin or leave them at the hotel. I mean I've always brought mine back and now we've got this new clock-in system at work and everything and we've gone back to clock cards, I've been handing them out to members to put through the clock card so, you know, they are being recycled, but I just wonder, you know, you said they can be collected at the end of Conference in a bucket, who's going to wash them all and then bring them back the year after? I rest my case. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pauline, I mean obviously Terry, I know you're elderly too and you forgot to take your hand down, but you've already spoken mate, in case you forgot.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I support the motion, I support the motion on the grounds that you can leave it to one side for 48 hours, so come on, if they're dirty, they're dirty, give them a wash in a washing machine. No big hardship, is it and it saves a lot of money, I bet they're a fiver each. I bet they are. So I support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, anybody else want to speak? Okay, General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Erm, Conference, we ask that you support this motion. Whilst there isn't a direct cost to the Trade Union, as lanyards are generally donated to us by Thompsons, it would reduce costs to them and would be better than throwing them away. We do know some people save their lanyards and put badges on them and use them elsewhere and that is fine, but we do support the idea of recycling them.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, there was a, I believe, an opposition, so you do have the right to reply. Did you want the right of reply?

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: No.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour and just to remind everybody, new Delegates, this is just purely simply a majority of those voting, one way or the other. Okay, has everybody finished voting? Those against? Sorry, you have to take your hands down, sorry, forgot. Okay, those, those against? Okay Conference, that's, that's carried. No. 30. Motion 30, 580. I believe it's you, Ange.

30

Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to reduce the use of single-use plastic at Conference

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Me again? God, I don't need this today [LAUGHTER]. Erm, that this Conference agrees to reduce the use of single plastic, single-use plastic at Conference. This was put in, at our last Conference me and Ruth just looking around. I mean, there's plenty of people have these, these days, you know, reusable bottles but there were bottles and plastic cups everywhere, so if we're trying to be more environmental, I think we need to do something better than have plastic bottles and plastic cups all over.

Sister Ruth Stephenson – Branch 580: Yes, just to formally second what Ange just said. You know, there were plastic from one side of the room to the other. It's ridiculous, you know. In this day and age I'm sure we can think of something better.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We've had no indications in advance of people wanting to speak. Erm, so, from the floor, Nick.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Clearly I'm supporting this motion, with a number of other environmental ones I've brought forward this Conference. It's a simple no-brainer you know. You can buy anything from reusable cutlery these days, to reusable bottles, so why, why are we not promoting this and using this in our Union?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Mr, Mr Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Yes thank you Mr President, Conference. Yes, I have to support this position and being on the Board of Manchester Environmental Education Network the less plastic knocking about or getting rid of, the better. We've got to save our seas, and the environmental and the animal, animal lives that it's affecting, yes. So, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay anybody else? No? General Secretary to respond.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: You're getting good at this now. Conference, we ask that you support this motion. Whilst we know it will be difficult to manage, we can put measures in place at the Conference Centre and hotels that we use, encourage Delegates to reuse their bottles for example. We have over the last few years changed to things like cardboard Conference folders and reduced the amount of single-use plastics that we use in documents packs, but we'll continue to improve internally and in venues that we use.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, there was no opposition, so there is no right to reply. Those in favour? Okay, everybody finished voting? Okay, if you take your hands down. Two left, come on Sean, aye [LAUGHTER]. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? That motion passed unopposed. So, I believe 32 was withdrawn, 33 was withdrawn, oh, we're on 31. Sorry, I'm just getting ahead of myself. I missed 31. Erm, motion 31, Branch 580.

31

Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to look at a more up-to-date method to get members to vote in ballots

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Erm, that this Conference agrees to look at a more up-to-date method to get members to vote in ballots. I think a lot of the problems that we've faced over the years is that people don't vote by post, they don't send them in, they don't, you know, you can spend a fortune on sending letters out and not get half of the replies back.

So I think we need to look more up-to-date. I mean, we did it at Greggs where we had an online one and we got a bigger response than we've ever had, so I think we just need to move with the times. We've got computers, let's use them.

Sister Ruth Stephenson – Branch 580: Here to second this motion. I just wanted to add just over an hour since I got an email from Choice Voting, how easy was that? I've sat here and I've voted, that was so simple. I didn't have to get off my arse, I didn't have to go to the post office, I didn't have to write anything out, easy, as easy as that. Why, we've got this technology, let's use it, let's use it.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Is it me? That looks like Pauline anyway, not me. What's gone wrong?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You, you've muted yourself again, Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: I, I didn't want to speak.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh, we, we've, we've got, we've got both you and Mark's names down to speak on that motion.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: I thought it were 32. I will speak on it, I will speak on it, ...I'll support the motion, I support the motion the only thing I would like to point out sceptically or we'd need to be careful of is, I don't know how we'd, how it would if we were on the ballot for industrial action whether it give the companies an option to call the ballot into question. That would be my only concern, but I do support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Mark, nod your head, either downwards like that or like that, right. Did you want to speak on this motion? You did. Right, okay.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Hello, sorry about that. Yes, I'm here to oppose this motion, obviously. I take in everything that everybody's said and I get the computer bit, but we've already been there. We have a lot of people that don't use computers. We have people that don't have access to computers or understand the technology. As currently we may be aiming or end up in industrial dispute shortly, as I'm sure you'll hear later on, I share Dave's concerns that the company will try and use that against us. I'm sorry, but I like the idea of having a lad sat in the canteen, taking votes, in person, on paper, 'cause we can turn round and say to the firm there, that's what the result is. No messing, no fuss, just pure in fact.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, it's going to be Kasha and then John Fox and I've missed, I've missed our sessions in the garden this year, Kasha. Obviously, my head's a lot, my head's a lot clearer because of it [LAUGHTER].

Sister Katarzyna Damek – Branch 515: [LAUGHTER] I would like to support the motion. But in the way that we can use the electronic methods. Along with [unclear] paper ballots, because that's what we're already doing in my Branch. That would be good as a guidance and sources to do it correctly, because I like that voting that we had today and [unclear] with the former that was sealed [unclear] last ballot part of my members were struggling with it. So that would be, that would be good to have one, one with the Union with all the rules around it and to keep everything in line with GDPR etc. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Kasha. John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. Branch, comrades Conference. Yes, I'm in agreement with this, and because it does say to look at more up-to-date methods, it doesn't say actually we're doing it. It's that this agrees to look at more up-to-date methods to get members to vote in ballots. Our balloting for full time Officials National President, General Secretary, has been woeful. The voting from our members has been like 20%, right. We're members, we're Socialists, we all have the vote and we've got, we need a voice to say who we will have as our our representative. So yes, let's have a look at more up-to-date methods, yes and if they will run alongside the old fashioned method, that is great, so more people can actually ballot within these within any, any ballot that we may, may have in the future, yes. I support this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Julie.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): I oppose it. Obviously I spoke earlier not everybody's got the technology. My members at Park Cake, Oldham (cough), excuse me are an ageing workforce and a lot of people haven't got computers, they've not got iPhones, tablets, iPads, you know, a lot of them haven't got a mobile 'phone full stop. So I, I just see it creating bigger issues. Maybe in years to come, with the younger generation, which are more tech, techno not like us dinosaurs, you know, maybe something to look at for the future, but for the time being I think we need to stick to the tried and trusted so I oppose this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, anybody else? Obviously the Executive would ask, would ask Conference to support the motion, but I want to clarify a few things first. Firstly, there would be no way you could have an industrial action ballot by any different form of balloting procedure, because we're not allowed to by law.

So, the reason why we have to conduct our National Officers' elections and industrial action ballots is because they are governed by legislation. So no matter what happened in those circumstances unless the law is changed, no, we, we wouldn't be able to do anything about those balloting processes. They have to be done by post, even though, you know, we recognise and we've always argued strongly, if there is a strike action happening in a workplace, then that ballot should take place in that workplace because that's where democracy is at its height, because workers who are being asked to actually put a, a ballot in a post box to send to a third party is actually, in our opinion, anti-democratic. It should be done in the workplace and that's where it should always have been. So that is our and has been our long-held position on balloting for industrial action.

We also recognise when we have national ballots internally in the Union, we would like more people to take part, we absolutely would and we would like to be able to make sure that our members are able to access a fairer balloting procedure. We might be able to do something around the internal ballots, maybe on the Executive, maybe on the full time Officials, and in recent, you know, months you will have noticed that we've been trying to engage with more of our members through the use of surveys, obviously but that is dependent on the information that we possess, because we recognise too the importance of inclusivity, so we understand and we agree that we need to make sure that what we offer is something that enables people to take part, because we want people to take part.

So, it would not impact on your wage ballots in your workplaces, that is something that couldn't happen. Those would still remain as they are and rightly so, take place in your place of work, the same as what we've always argued for the right to hold a strike ballot in the workplace too, just for clarification. So, we would ask you to support the motion, on that basis that we want to be more inclusive. We recognise the restrictions that the law places on us, so we wouldn't be able to do them, but getting our members involved is something we believe that we may be able to do by, by reviewing this, this, this motion at the Executive, and on that basis, we would ask you to support. Angela, you do have the right of reply because it was opposed.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: I mean it's, it's just saying look at up-to-date, so it's not, you know, it's not putting anything into practice, it's just we need to move with the times.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, so it's going to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, have we finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down, please. One hand left up, which is Stephen Bennetto. It's gone. Okay, those against? Okay, have we finished voting? Okay, that motion's carried. Erm, 32 was withdrawn, 33 was withdrawn motion 34. Ju, I've noticed a hand up Julie, is that, did you want to come in to something, or is that just a, a legacy hand? Oh right, okay. Region, Region 7.

This Conference agrees that the choice of hotel accommodation at Southport, The Prince of Wales Britannia Group, is not to be used. The hotel is not only a health hazard, the conditions are appalling, the rooms are not clean and it is a disgrace that we are expected to permit our members to stay in these conditions for the duration of Conference.

Furthermore, the Britannia Group should not be used in any capacity whatsoever by our union in the future, due to their treatment of workers in the early stages of the covid-19 pandemic were, widely reported in the media, one of their hotels, The Aviemore Coylumbridge, on 19th March 2020 terminated employment of staff with immediate effect and many of the employees who lived on the hotel premises discovered they were homeless as well as unemployed. As a union we cannot put money into the pockets as such companies that treat their staff an in barbaric manner.

Conference we urge you to support.

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716, EC Member: Afternoon, Conference. I'm moving this motion for Region 7. Over the last few years Conference, as you will know, there's been a few motions about accommodation in Southport. Over the last 12 months there has been a survey done about the worst hotel group in Britain and Britannia won it, to be fair and the top three hotels, No. 1 was The Grand Hotel in Scarborough, No. 2 was the Scarisbrick, Southport and No. 3 was the Prince of Wales and the survey revealed they were uninhabitable, so that speaks for that part of the concept. If it's uninhabitable for anybody, it should be uninhabitable for us to be fair. The part of it, even the Aviemore Coylumbridge Hotel, I don't know if you maybe go to it in England, but I'll give you a wee bit of history on that. On 19th March, 2020 the management on site called the workers, Aviemore is in the middle of the Scottish Highlands and there's, there's not much about, so they, all the people that worked, lived in the hotel as well, so they brought them in to the Conference Centre, told them all they were unemployed and then to leave the hotel quick smart.

As they left the Conference Room, in the car park, all of their worldly possessions were in plastic bags. While they were in the meeting, they took all, into their rooms, took all their stuff, threw them in bags and threw them in the car park. A Trade Union should not be giving money to any kind of company that would treat the workers this way, living in the hotels. So please support the motion, comrades. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Tom, Tom, Tommy Ellis seconding.

Brother Mark McNally – Branch 703: McNally.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, wrong, got the wrong name in front of us, sorry.

Brother Mark McNally – Branch 703: Sorry, Tommy couldn't make it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Ah right, okay.

Brother Mark McNally – Branch 703: Mr President, Delegates. There's no way we should be paying a hotel that is going to make their, their, their employees unemployable and throw all their belongings in black bags in the car park. I call for Delegates to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Is there anybody else? We've got, we've got Mark Hilton and Dave Suddards, haven't we. Mark Hilton, sorry, Mark Hilton. You're not down, Dave, you're alright. You didn't, you didn't say Dave. Let's go to Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, I'm afraid, to the disgrace of this Union, as you're all well aware, we have actually debated this issue before. We have called into question the ethics and everything else behind this hotel chain and unfortunately we were tied to a contract, as we were told and we decided to honour it and I get it for financial reasons, but they were a disgrace then and they are definitely a disgrace today and given the information we've been given, I'd urge everybody to support. Solidarity.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay I've got one hand, anybody else that wants to come in raise your hand but we've got Dawn, then Matthew, then John Owens.

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Good afternoon, everybody. Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can.

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: President, General Secretary, Delegates. Totally agree with this motion. The barbaric way that the Britannia Group treated their employees is nothing short of disgusting. I just can't, I just can't get over it. Please, please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So Matt, Matty Brown, John Owens, then Paul White.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Hi. I also want to support this motion, as last April during the Covid, I came across a homeless person myself who was camping no more than 500 metres from there and he had worked for this hotel himself and had been evicted personally as well as sacked from the hotel and then the government whilst they couldn't house homeless people in safe housing, because he had a dog and he had to have the option of having his dog put to sleep or take on housing from the government and he chose to sleep rough during the pandemic. So for me personally, I'm 100% supporting this. We shouldn't be providing accommodation that treat the staff this way and anybody who does oppose it needs to just consider what they would be like in that position themselves and just say look, you know, yes, we shouldn't be giving money to these guys, especially after what I, I personally witnessed this first hand with somebody who yes, I came across, so yes, again I'm just supporting this. Thank you.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB Liverpool), EC Member: Yes, here to support the motion. I think the Britannia Group has a major issue how it treats its staff, but also how it runs its hotels. In Liverpool we have a Britannia Hotel called the Adelphi Hotel. This hotel was the flagship of hotels in Liverpool many, many years ago. Any visiting European teams to Liverpool or Everton always stayed in there. Any concerts or pop stars that were on at the Empire, they used to stay there. People doing the Christmas pantomime used to stay there and it doesn't go a day in the Liverpool Echo or on social media Liverpool, people complaining about the state of the Adelphi Hotel now, which is a Britannia Hotel, about it being rotten, dirty, the food being awful, the rooms being terrible and the way staff are treated. So I think they have a major problem on two accounts, the way they treat the staff, but also the way they run their hotels.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Hello, Conference. Yes, it's just not a nice experience for new Delegates at the Prince of Wales. You know, the rooms down there are damp, they're smelly, they're full of flies, there was people getting bitten you know, it's, it's a bit of a health hazard really, you know, the whole place, you know and listening to some of the other comments on here today about the Britannia Group and what they've done and how they treat their employees, the place is just not worth going to and we, as a Union, we shouldn't be putting our money there.

So, you know, support this everybody. If you oppose it, you know, you must have your reasons, but I can't see many. But yes, support this great, great one.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That's the best way to have me, isn't it, muted. Anybody else want to speak? Just, just to remind everybody, obviously Kevin moved that on, on behalf of Region 7 of the Executive so there wasn't, there wasn't anybody who opposed it, so we're just going to go straight to the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, take your hands down. I've, I've got and ask them to those, those, those that oppose the motion first, Kevin, then I'll tell you. Just need Craig, Peter and Pauline to take down your hands, please. Thank you very much. Those, those, those against? Okay, has everybody finished voting? There were no votes against. That's passed unanimously. Okay, so we're now on erm, motion 35 has been remitted motion 36 which is, which is automation.

Conference can see that over the last 10 years automation has become more prevalent in our industry. This in turn reduces the number of jobs needed within it. Whilst we understand the need for automation we need to ensure that our members aren't left behind.

Conference therefore agrees the executive should look into the impacts of automation and the likelihood of the process speeding up on the back of the pandemic and put together a strategy to support branches going forwards who will need to deal with the changes automation brings.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, Conference, obviously this pandemic has, has, has exposed many issues facing the food sector but one of the scary things before we went into this pandemic was a, a, a motion of that was, that was spoke by, by Michael Gove at the Agricultural Conference that was held, where he, where he, where he declared the days of cheap labour over as we left the European Union and the introduction of automation into industry to replace working people. That in itself was an absolutely appalling statement for a minister to make. The idea that they were comfortable with workers being exploited as cheap labour and it was a policy that had been accepted by the government, speaks volumes about how they feel about us as working people. What Covid has done is made employers look at the automation probably now in haste and we need to be prepared to ensure that we protect employment in our industry. We need to ensure that workers are protected. We've been used to many years in our industry of a long hours culture and our wages have been dependent, in the main, by working excessive overtime and shifts. Well, that position has to change.

We have to stop fighting to improve overtime and start fighting to improve hourly pay which obviously, as a Union, we are campaigning for a minimum wage for all workers of no less than £15 an hour. We believe the time to end insecurity in workplaces through the use of insecure employment contracts and agency has to come to an end, but the fear is that the oncoming rush and we can see it, you only have to look at the food magazines, the bakery magazines that are produced, the new types of machinery that's coming into our factories. Now I always, I always remember when I first became a full time Official and I visited a plant up in Carlisle before it burnt down, which was a crumpet plant and it had 36 workers that worked on that crumpet plant and then went to visit one at Warburtons in Enfield, where they had two people on that plant because it had been automated. It's a scary time for our sector, it's a scary time for our industry and as a Union, we must start to put together how we are going to defend the interests of our members, how we are going to defend and improve the rates of pay and how we're going to put forward policies to ensure job security for the future and ensure that we are able to deal with the challenges that come alongside automation.

Now there was things floating in the General Election about moving to four day weeks and I think it's something that we should be exploring as a Trade Union, because we want people doing less hours but receiving more pay, it's always been the right position for a Trade Union to take and in fact, in recent years, at Warburtons we recognised the change that was coming in our industry and instead of protecting hours, we decided that we would protect pay and ensure that people were guaranteed a minimum income and I think it's something that we should look at in all of our workplaces. So Conference, I'm moving this motion, it's an enabling motion to start that process of really getting into the issues that could impact on our jobs and our job security and our, and our pay going forward. So, I ask you to support this motion and it's formally seconded by the Executive. Have we got anybody who's indicated to speak? So, nobody's given us any advance of wanting to speak, but obviously if you want to come in from the floor Douggie Johnson.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I'd, I'd like to, I'd like to support this motion, you know I was sitting here thinking about this and you know, people would know that I'm a massive nerd and I kind of read history and there's a phrase Karl Marx uses history repeats itself, first time as tragedy then as farce. Now, one of the, one of the things I studied in history, you know, was a thing called the Luddites, because this thing hasn't happened just before.

Now, the common phrase for Luddites is, is people who hate technology and things like that, it's not about that. What the Luddites actually campaigned for was secure work, was about the automation that happened during the industrial revolution that happened there. They campaigned constantly about this, you know, now Tony Benn famously said, every generation fights the same battle again and again and I think this is our time to fight this battle. People, you know, automation can be a matter of fact, but people should be guaranteed the right to work. People should be guaranteed the right of employment, so that they can provide for them and their loved ones. People, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else want to speak? No? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, if you can take your hands down, please. There's two people left, done. I've got my glasses on, I need to get my eyes tested. Okay, those against? Everybody finished? Nobody opposed it, that's passed unanimously and obviously from, from an Executive point of view, when we next meet as a, as an Executive, this will form a central part of our strategy going forward, alongside those other issues that obviously our General Secretary outlined this morning in her inaugural speech to our Conference, because this really is a serious issue for us and, and obviously we will be making sure we keep you updated with the progress of that. Moving onto motion 37, which is Branch 405.

37

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to force Care Providers to have holiday and sickness cover staff, so that the patient/customer are not left in limbo over these periods, and there routines are not upset by these issues.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Conference, Mr President, General Secretary. Erm, here to say this motion, yes. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to force care providers to have holiday and sickness cover staff, so that the patient or customer are not left in limbo over the, these periods and their routines are not upset by these issues. Now, in our Branch we have care, care workers and they have been telling us that they finally had to take respite from, from this because it's a very difficult job to do, yes, they, they don't get any rest, yes, they're finding it very hard to get holiday breaks and as care, care, the care companies that they work for don't take enough staff to cover these situations and when they do take a holiday, the patient is either left with no care or the very minimum of time for the basics of care. Now, this must be rectified as soon as possible, yes, or more people will be going out of the care industry because of the lack of breaks that they actually get and being able to take their annual leave, erm and not only that, you've got to think of the patient and the the client care, yes, because if my mother was alive today, she, she would have been 94 this, this month she probably would have been in care and if, if that had happened I would, I would have wanted her to have the, the most or the best care she probably could have, yes, but at this moment in time, these companies cannot deliver that care because they've not got the staff. So, I beg you all to support this motion, yes so I move. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Alan, I believe you're seconding it.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Yes, I am, Ian. Erm, I'm here to second this motion by John and I'll speak a little bit on it as well. My wife's a carer, she's currently on the sick with a really, really bad injury to her arm due to lack of staff, working short-staffed all the way through the work, she's been off sick for nine weeks now, so I fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much. Is anybody indicating to speak? Douggie Douggie, Douggie Johnson indicated to speak and then obviously I'll call speakers from the floor.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hello? I must, I'm speaking.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You're on.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Alright. Well, to be honest, this, this is just such an obvious motion and I bring a personal experience to this, you know. One of my best friends, yes her, her, his mum, her husband was dying and she was, she was caring for him and she had support of carers coming round and I got the opportunity to speak to these carers and the conditions that these carers are forced into working from, you know, they, they, they are slumped down with so much work, afraid to take any kind of sick time, afraid to take any kind of holiday and they were going from patient to patient absolutely in the most horrendous conditions that, I mentioned history before, it's like going back to the industrial revolution, you know. It, it is like a no-brainer. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm here, I'm off, I'm off mute now. Erm, I've got Mark, I've got Joe and then I've got Pauline.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, just here to support this motion. I mean, I think it goes way wider than this because we have discussed and agreed motions like this before.

When we say care providers, what we're actually talking about is the reality of private care providers. In a Health Service that has, they've attempted to dismantle, it's disgraceful, absolutely disgraceful. You've got to support this motion.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons): Yes. Conference, I'm here to support this motion. My daughter's actually a senior carer at a care home. The amount of times she's supposed to be off, and she gets called in to, to go and care for people because they, they haven't got enough staff on. She gets called all times, in the middle of the night or, you know, it's absolutely ridiculous that a, a care home can operate like this and still be, still be registered to be a care home. So please support.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I'm here to support this motion and in doing so, I'd like to tell you a few home truths about local carers and I'm sure it's across the country now. People are too frightened to have holidays because they care for the patients that well, they want to be sure that they're looked after and if they go on holiday, they don't always feel that the, the patients are going to be looked after as well as they should be. They're too scared to go home early because people don't come in to work. They're too frightened to leave them because they've no one else to care for them and I think it's a disgrace on the government and I plead, beg you all to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, any, anybody else? Anybody else? Okay, nobody opposed it, so we're going to go straight, oh no I'm not, no I'm not, sorry Sean, it's you, it's you.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419 (Warburtons), EC Member: Hello. The EC would ask you to support this motion. I mean, the private sector is all profit over care, you know. The terms and conditions of care workers need to be made better and the dignity of the people being cared for needs to be improved as well, because if we're treating our carers in this way and not giving them the support they need to be able to have their holidays with the peace of mind knowing that the people that they care for are looked after correctly, it, it just, please support the motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Nobody opposed it, so there is no right of reply. We're going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, has, has everybody finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down, please. Got two left. Okay, all those against? Everybody finished voting? There was nobody, no opposition, so that's carried unanimously. Conference I hope you are all still enjoying the experience of of this new format that, that, you know, quite clearly has meant, meant that we have been able to come together and discuss these key issues. Just to remind you about a couple of things. I'm not aware yet that delegates, to the Labour Party. We, we definitely need women Labour Party members to, to put themselves forward. What we're going to do now is, I'm going to say if there's anybody having a problem with the ballot or they've not received the ballot, right and, and, and obviously I'm going to confirm the Regions, because obviously there was no need for a ballot in Region 1, there was no need for a ballot in Region 2, there was no need for a ballot in Region 7, so the only, the only Regions that needed a ballot, so if you're in any of those Regions, you won't receive the ballot, but if you're in Regions 3, 4 or 5, you should have received a ballot. If you haven't received a ballot, we're going to ask you to stay on and make us aware. If you are one of those people that we called out before and hopefully you've been contacted now, we've had, we've had some responses back and we'd like to thank the full time Officials for doing that for us we, we would like to talk to you to sort out how we get your ballot to you but what we're going to do Alan, for you I know it's daylight but, but obviously to bring me back on time for the extra seven minutes I went over yesterday, I'm going to finish you 26 minutes early today, erm and, more than that, more than that, I think, I think another football team might be playing this evening and so I'm going to give you a bit of a lie-in and we're not going to start back until half past 9 in the morning too.

So thank you very much for joining us this morning. Thank you for the indulgence. Thank you for putting up with the technical issues that we do have and we know we're having, but thank you for being with us again, erm and if you do fancy it tonight, from about 8 o'clock, you can see me, me and Sarah, if you haven't had enough of us, you can see me and Sarah on the Socialist tele which will be streamed live on Facebook, talking about the survey. Obviously we're hoping you'll all come back this afternoon and join Richard Burgon and obviously we're hoping you'll also take part the women in our Union as well in those debates. So, for those that don't come back, there won't be many of you I'll see you in the morning. For the rest of you, I'll see you this afternoon. Thank you very much. Those that need to talk to us about the ballot, please stay on.

Tuesday 15th June 2021

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Obviously I haven't got the right filters on me, on me camera. Anyway, good morning and welcome to the Richard and Judy Show.

Obviously on the couch today we'll have Andy Birchall a bit later on, and Haroon, Haroon Rashid's going to do a spot for us as well. We'll also have, erm, we'll also have entertainment from, from Lauren and from Rachel and obviously we're inviting [unclear] to give an overview of what it's like to be an interpreter, all part of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union. , I did, I did think I was bringing, Rachel might be late, so it might be after the advert that I'm about to give before

[LAUGHTER]

but, but Conference, the first, the first thing I need to do is make an apology. I mean, people say hindsight's a wonderful thing and if I'd have listened to Julie yesterday, then hindsight would have worked, fantastically well and the mistake that we made with the ballot wouldn't have happened. Yesterday and thank you very much for trialling it for us, so obviously we had a trial run yesterday and we're going to do the real thing today

[LAUGHTER]

because, because unfortunately the, you should have been entitled to vote for two people, but the the thing that we sent out had the wrong digits on it, but like, you know, to err is human and I've always, I've always admitted I was, it's just that some people are never convinced of that argument. But please, please accept my apologies that, that we made a mistake, but now you've had a trial run, and we know the emails did come to you. We have been able to communicate with you. Today the ballot will be run on the same way it was yesterday, and obviously we'll make the announcement tomorrow morning, 'cause obviously we'll give you the same, same time period, which obviously will be, we'll send the emails out timed for 10 o'clock today, and close the ballot at 2 o'clock tomorrow. We are sorry and, obviously, hopefully, you'll understand it was new but, you know, Julie, when you come on, I'm sure you'll mention the fact tthat you told us so, , we will listen, we will listen. I think Rachel's had a brew now, so now the advertisements are over, I'd like to invite Rachel, Rachel Mullen, the Womens Executive Council Member, to give, her comments to our Conference.

Rachel Mullen's (Womens Executive Council Member) Address to Conference

Sister Rachel Mullen, Womens Executive Council Member: Right, I'm sorted, sorted out whether I'm muted, non-muted. Hello, sorry, no Ian, I wasn't getting a brew, I was getting some water. Just to update you really, I mean to be honest, there's not a great deal to update on, because obviously ongoing campaigns are still ongoing obviously, erm, but what we did yesterday is, we had a fringe event for women and it was quite productive actually. It wasn't about me talking at the meeting or Sarah talking to the meeting, it was about a discussion about what issues are affecting the women of our Union and how we can try and put a plan in place to set, to set forums up basically, and what we can, I think it's going to be easier now because obviously we're all a bit more used to Zoom, so we can hold, well pretty much meetings whenever we want but, I think it was quite good because, you know, people were mentioning things that were barriers to women becoming Shop Stewards that, you know, some women haven't even thought aboutso I think what I took from the meeting is that there is perhaps a more wider range of issues that are affecting, apart from the, you know, the ones that have got, gotten mentioned at Conference before, like menopause and periods so I think that was quite good and what I'll be doing is probably maybe send a survey out to all women to say how often, you know, we would like to run these meetings, 'cause it's not about me and what I want to do, it's about listening to the women members and making sure that, you know, what we're doing is reflective of what they want us to do.

And I think as well, somebody pointed out that it's not about segregation, it's not about men and women, it's about, you know, listening to women and what their barriers are and making everybody aware of it and perhaps educating people in some ways. I don't mean to be, you know, erm, patronising I think, but, you know, I think some men just don't realise, you know, what issues they face and how troubling they can actually be. I mean, I mean, I think some women don't realise actually how some issues can affect other women unless you've actually been through it yourself, so I think if that makes sense. So, that is, well I don't know what more I can say really, apart from that's a plan going forward you know, trying to set up, you know, more forums and eventually set up a strong network of, you know, women's voices in somewhere, you know, so we can help more women within the Union.ou know, once upon a time it did used to be a predominant, predominantly male, erm, in our industry but obviously over the years it's seen the female membership increase drastically and I think, I think it splits about 50/50 now, so sorry for rambling, that's about all, all the update I've got.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool. Sorry, Sarah didn't want me to speak

[LAUGHTER]. Thank you very much, Rachel and obviously it is such an important role, erm, the Womens Executive Council Member and moving barriers to make sure women have opportunities in our Union. It's critical, if we are going to be truly a Union that equals opportunities for all in our Trade Union which obviously, you know, should be absolutely at the core of what we do. Before we actually go onto the motions, I'm also going to invite the General Secretary to make a statement. As we pointed out due to circumstances, we are unable to make emergency motions because incidents have happened before a deadline may have started, but obviously, we did say that we would make emergency statements as we go through, erm, as we go through the Conference this week. General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thank you. Conference, we want to make a statement this morning. Some of you will have heard over the last few weeks and months that a number of our Representatives have been targeted for the role that they do and the fantastic work that they do day, day out in their Branches. We know this is something that has happened in varying degrees for years, but we wanted to be clear on our approach because, as we have said all week, we are stronger together. We are the Union and we will support any of our members and Reps that are being targeted. Any Branch that feels the Reps are being attacked need to let us know, but we also need to make sure the Branch is agitated and ready to ballot for industrial action, because an attack on the Representatives in a Branch and a workplace is an attack on the whole membership of that workplace and we will take action as a Union to support our Reps when they are being targeted. Thanks, Conference.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, we're going to start now with, I believe it's Branch, erm, 432. John Owens.

38

Branch 432

That this Conference agrees workers of Britain should never be treated like some of them have been treated during the pandemic, lack of PPE. No pay rises, lack of H&S and poor working conditions. The workers of Britain whatever job they do are all a cog that's makes the wheel turn, and all workers should stand together and support each other in the fight for better working conditions.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Yes, morning Conference. Motion 38, moving the motion. That this Conference agrees that workers of Britain should never be treated again like some of them have been treated during the pandemic. Lack of PPE or the wrong PPE, no or poor pay rises, lack of health and safety and poor working conditions. The workers of the UK, whatever job they do, all play a part in making the UK tick. All workers should stand together and support each other in their fight for better working conditions. Some workers in the UK have been treated unfairly for many years, but for me the pandemic really highlighted it. We had our frontline staff doctors and nurses at the start of the pandemic with either no PPE or the wrong PPE and some of them sadly died and the same NHS staff were then denied a decent pay rise. We've heard recently of some NHS staff that had left their jobs due to the pressures over the last 14 months and a lot who are at breaking point. We've also had those working in care homes facing similar issues. There was a total lack of health and safety in some of our workplaces, staff being furloughed on 80% wages then dismissed, staff being bullied at work and staff being paid SSP for self-isolating and it has left many workers with mental health issues.

We go to work for one reason, to earn money and to be treated in the way, the way some of them have been treated is not acceptable. It doesn't matter what job we do, whether we're a bus driver, whether we work in McDonald's or whether we're a brain surgeon. We all play a part in making the UK tick. I am proud to be a member of this Union, a Union that stands side-by-side not just with our members, but with workers right across the UK. We have stood side-by-side with the miners, the dockers, the print workers, the fire fighters, just to name a few and that's the right thing to do. We may work in the food industry, but that doesn't stop us supporting fellow workers in their struggle for better working conditions. We have to stand with them and we can, will continue to do so. Sadly this government doesn't and some of our employers don't and some of the public don't. I can't believe the amount of stick and abuse. I've seen supermarket staff, fast food outlet staff being abused by the public.

Time and time again, our own government attacks our workers and stands back and lets some companies attack its workers. Just a few weeks ago, the government were silenced when British Gas workers were on strike over fire-and-rehire and believe me, they won't be the last company to do it. I get very annoyed when workers who are on strike and because someone is inconvenienced, they will slag the strikers off instead of understanding why they're on strike and supporting them. I remember a couple of years' ago, the Rail Unions were on strike, not for more money, not for more holidays and not for more breaks, it was to keep the guards on the trains, passenger safety, but you had the government and some of the public having a go at them.

They were trying to protect passengers' safety, but we can do something about it. We can educate people and we can do what we do best, support our fellow workers. Sarah just mentioned now about people in our industry, in our workplaces, in our Union that are being bullied and attacked by management. We must stand together, otherwise divided we will fall. Strength in unity. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you and, and, and that, that's been formally seconded, because obviously John was moving it as well as his Branch and also on behalf of the Executive Council. Any speakers? Dave Suddards. Sorry, obviously, it's, it's your assumed name today, isn't it Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: [LAUGHTER] Morning, Conference. I'm here to support this motion wholeheartedly. At the start of the pandemic, a lot of companies used it to water down health and safety, to attack workers, to put fear into workers. We experienced this within Hovis, lack of information and then used it to discipline members for the information what they hadn't received. I experienced at one point, we had 37 individual investigations for supposedly Covid infringements, but the company never once acknowledged that they were getting it wrong. So yes, I absolutely agree with John and would ask you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we're going to bring Lee, then Mark, then Pauline and Alex.

Brother Lee Raine – Branch 504: Can you hear me? Morning, Conference. Mr President, General Secretary. This is pretty close to my heart, this. I'm here to support this motion without a doubt. I myself have been targeted in the workplace for carrying out duties, trying to get better conditions and just basically telling the truth and where management seem to get their backs up, they don't like the truth and that [unclear] and they'll always deny it. You know, I had to put grievance in, sat there, you know and they will always deny it and it's a horrible thing, you know and I just, you know, anybody in that position, you know, I feel heartily sorry for them and it can, it can deter a Rep from actually continuing to carry out duties. It can sort of like sway them away and say they've had enough and it takes, you know, it takes a bit of courage just to stick to your guns and when you've got the backing of the Union, you know and you've got people to support you, just as Sarah says, you know, that's what makes the difference, you know and, and I just basically, you know, I wholeheartedly support this motion. It's a no-brainer.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Morning friends, comrades. Thank you for your words of support in your statement, because if anybody's not aware, that's us, 558 Leeds. Onto this motion, obviously here to support it for every reason that's already been given. The Tory government and the companies have just used this as an excuse to reduce terms and conditions, reduce pay, fire-and-rehire, the lot. Everybody knows it, I don't need to go on about it. All I will say is, it's affected the welfare and mental health of all our members and especially Reps, Branch Secretaries. We just feel absolutely overwhelmed by it. So thank you and I urge you to support.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Morning, Conference. General Secretary, National President, Conference, Delegates. I'm here to fully support this motion. It's even increasingly more difficult to recruit new Reps and to keep Reps and if people, Reps specifically, are going to be targeted in the way some have been, it's appalling. You can't, you have to support it 100% and I back it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We've got Alex next and then Joe, and Sean Welsby.

Brother Alex Ropota – Branch 357 (Greencore, Northampton): Hello, everyone. I would like to support this motion, and I'm going to speak out of my own experience in Greenport with the lack of PPE, and I relate more specific to face masks because a face mask is PPE. They've been, our colleagues have been given an option, for example, because they couldn't provide enough face masks. The trouble with that was that if you get any medical issues because of that face mask, obviously because you have bought yourself PPE, you're going to be fully responsible for your medical condition going forward and as for example we have been advising people not to do that and force the company to provide us the PPE. With the pay rises, the pandemic has been used as an excuse that companies don't have money when actually obviously all of you know about the furlough scheme. When the company says that it loses money, it actually loses some profit, but they don't go on losses, they just don't achieve their targets while when we look at it, as long as they're not on losses, they still profit. So, we've been practising this motion that we're voting now already, but it will be very useful, erm, to support it nationally. Thank you.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons): Morning, Conference. Yes, here to support this wholeheartedly for all the right reasons people have already said. We've had umpteen times when we've had to take on the company, Warburtons, because they've been outside the government guidelines, but we've challenged them every time they've tried to do it and luckily we work for a company that do listen and I sympathise with anybody that works for a company that, that like just won't listen at all, so please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Sean, Welsby.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, Executive Council Member: Hello, I'm finally un-muted.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Aye.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, Executive Council Member: Good morning, all. The Executive would ask you to support this motion and to be honest, I can't really say any more than what has been said, but what I will say is, what we need is a party in government that works for the working class rather than the cronies that only help their crony mates. So please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, I brought Sean in, but I noticed Pat Kelly had put his hand up but I didn't notice it until the last minute and I'd already brought Sean in, so if you'll indulge me, I'm going to invite Pat to speak. I think. You should get a little box up asking you to un-mute, Pat. We, we still can't hear you, pal. There, there should be a, there should be something that comes on your screen that says the host has invited you to un-mute. Oh, you're un-muted, you're un-muted, there we go. Pat, for whatever reason, your microphone's not working. Have you got, have you got the volume up on your microphone? Can't hear you, mate. Really sorry. Can't, oh, connecting to audio. Try this one. Try speaking, Pat, again. No, no. Have you connected to the internet audio on your computer? No, no. Apologies, Pat, we're not going, I'm not going to be able to bring you in, erm, you might need to go out and come back in again and connect to the audio. I mean, obviously if you, if you leave, when you join back, make sure you press the button that says connect to the internet audio. I mean, I am, nod your head if you can hear me. Can you hear me, Pat? Give me a thumbs-up if you can hear me. No, I don't know if he can hear me now. We, we're trying to send you a message, Pat. Pat, can you hear me? Will you give me a thumbs-up if you can hear me. Can't hear him. I have, I have tried my best to try and get him on, erm, but obviously I, I've not been very successful. Erm, but I notice Peter's got his hand up now to speak as well, so I'm going to bring Peter in.

Brother Peter Algie – Branch 726: Yes, sorry, I pressed it by mistake, but while I'm on, I hope you can hear me. Morning, Conference.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Morning.

Brother Peter Algie – Branch 726: Yes, I do support what we're saying here, 'cause, you know, things have, since Covid, things have just gone, well, just the other way and we just need to support I think, as has been said by my peers. That's all I've got to say. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Pete. I'm, I'm not sure, I'm not sure if Pat's going to come back on, so, erm, obviously Conference we're going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, has everybody finished voting? Can you take your hands down. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? Okay, that was unanimous, no, no opposition. Motion 39, which I believe is 432 again.

39

Branch 432

That this Conference agrees that all companies should follow the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations (the Brown Book) and consult H&S reps on matters of Health and Safety in the workplace which sadly has been missing during the pandemic in some of our workplaces

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member for Region 4: Morning again, Conference. motion 39. Moving the motion and speaking on behalf of the EC, who ask you to support this motion. That this Conference agrees that companies should follow the Safety Reps and Safety Committee Regs in the Brown Book and consult Health & Safety Reps on matters of health and safety in the workplace, which has sadly been missing during the pandemic in some of our workplaces.

Companies should respect and work with and not against Health & Safety Reps, to understand their roles and rights in accordance with the Brown Book, to make our workplace healthier and safer places to work. It should be everyone's goal that when we go to work, we will work in a healthier and safer environment. Consulting workers is an important part of managing health and safety. The Regs give us the right to appointment and time off, for companies to provide facilities and assistance, the right of information, legal protection for Reps, Safety Committees, the right to investigate, inspections of our workplace, take up issues with employers, liaise with Health & Safety Inspectors and to consult directly with employees or their elected Reps, but time and time again managers fail to understand this or choose to ignore it. It is a proven fact that Unionised workplaces are safer places to work, but time and time again it's our Regional Councils and our National Health & Safety Meetings be there. They've cancelled Health & Safety Meetings, not letting Reps go to meetings, no time off for health and safety duties and not consulting. Well, they are wrong and the Brown Book tells us that they are wrong.

The main reason behind this motion is consultation of the workers, to speak to us, to consult. In the last 12 months or so, this has been very difficult for everyone and we have seen many things brought into our workplaces to protect our products, to protect us, some good, some bad and sometimes not enough, but how many times did they consult with us, how many times did they involve you in risk assessments, how many times did they show you the risk assessments? On our site, we have had to challenge our company on many occasions because they didn't consult with us on matters that affect our members. That's what we do, that's what the Regs give us, we challenge it. We've seen many a tax on our rights and legislation from health and safety, which companies take full advantage of, but we still have some left and it must be followed by management, but as Health & Safety Reps and the Union, we must play our part in insisting that companies follow the Brown Book. Please support.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks, John. Conference, we're in a very strange position this year where we've, we've no Vice President to take over when the National President has to run off to help Pat try and get on Conference. He's just returned, so I'll speedily hand back over to him, but I do believe that this motion has been formally seconded. We've one indicated previous Speaker, Mark Hilton and then we'll take it from the floor.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Good morning Conference, again. I'm here to wholeheartedly support this and just to point out, we have actually discussed earlier about everything going electronic and this, that and the other, but there's nothing like having a copy of the Brown Book or the Six-Pack and owt like that, 'cause every Health & Safety Meeting you go in, as a Rep, if you've a physical copy, the first thing you do is sit down and put it on desk, so they know that you're not messing about. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, so, so I'm going to take Michael, then Joe Knapper.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303: Good morning, Conference. I'd like to support this motion and would urge all fellow Delegates to do likewise. The Brown Book is a Bible for Health & Safety Reps and is laid out in a very easy way to understand. In the Brown Book you will find the relevant legislation where the employer should consult with the Accredited Union Safety Representative on any changes that could affect the health and safety of the workers he or she represents. Erm, the important word here is could. This is the word that brings us to the table and gives us the opportunity to make sure our members are working in safe conditions. It's not easy being a Safety Rep, management will always resent someone they see as sticking their nose in where it is not wanted. I've been called militant, argumentative, controversial, anti-management and many other things I couldn't really repeat here. Does it bother me? Absolutely not.

I'm proud to be a Safety Rep for this Union and my aim is that every one of my members goes home safely to their family, having earned a decent day's pay. Using the Brown Book, where necessary, enables me to work towards that goal. I was shielding throughout the pandemic, due to health issues, but I'm pleased to say management consulted with me all the way by zoom and even FaceTime going all the way around the depot, to make sure, erm, I was happy with all the measures being put in place to protect my members. Last Tuesday, almost a week before Boris decided last night to delay things, we made a decision that we would not relax Covid measures at Greggs, Birmingham, even if Boris did open everything up, because this has not gone away and we have a duty to make sure our workers are safe. These events didn't come about because management enjoyed talking to myself, the Safety Rep, they happened because the Brown Book lays down that they have a duty to do so and they also know if they didn't, I would not hesitate to grievance them for deliberately breaking the law whilst carrying out their duties and there would be consequences. Please support this motion. We have the right to be safe at work. Thank you.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons), Executive Council Member: Good morning again, Conference. Got to support this wholeheartedly. Luckily, as I've said before, we, we work for a com, I work for a company, Warburtons, that actually do have Health & Safety Committees and in the last 18 months to two years they, they've sort of stepped up and, and, and had National Health & Safety Committee Meetings, which never happened before. So it's all working in the right place but yes that, that Brown Book is, is obviously a Health & Safety Rep's Bible and, and it should be used at every opportunity if the company start stepping out of line. Please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. Dave Suddards.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning, Conference. Here to support this motion. Yes, we always follow the Brown Book. What I would say is, with our members, there seems to be, certainly in our workplace, the complacency to take the company on when they've had accidents and, and for me as a Rep, I encourage this through the Union Solicitors, to what they call it, if they've had an accident, to make a claim because this is when the company do put it right, and we, well, we start with the Brown Book, highlighting the issues where the company's gone wrong and then it helps our Solicitors going forward with these, but yes, I'm here to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pat Kelly, do you want to say something? Maybe not. I was hoping he was on, I was hoping he was on. We are trying to get him back on because he's gone through the server, that's been his difficulty. I did try and talk him through it, but obviously I'm not as technically gifted as I believe myself to be. Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay, all those against? Have you finished voting? Okay, that was carried unopposed. Motion 40, Branch 405.

40

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees, that when a person is reaching retirement age, they are given time to train an apprentice, so skills are not lost; two years prior for six months and one year prior for 3 months.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Good morning, Conference. Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates. Proposing this motion. That this Conference agrees that when a person reaches retirement age, they are given time to train an apprentice, so skills are not lost. Two years prior for six months and one year prior for three months. This, we thought, would help to use the apprenticeship levy, more on the shop floor than in the offices and management, as these short apprenticeships are between 12 to 24 months long and it also gives our friends, colleagues and workmates the chance to develop themselves within the workplace. That's what we think, yes. We do think we can help use the apprenticeship levy and help our colleagues on the, erm, shop floor who, who are not getting the chance to actually, erm, help themselves or learn themselves or develop themselves, erm, within the workforce, because they're not being given the chance by the management, yes, because the management are only using this apprenticeship levy for either office staff or the management themselves. So, please support this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right, Alan Scott.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Looks like I'm doing all John Fox's motions I think, yes? Alright, John. Yes, I, I don't want to speak on it, I'll just second it please. I've got a bit of a rough head this morning, so I'll just do all John's motions, yes? Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'll take them as formally seconded then.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Yes [LAUGHTER].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. Speakers? Kasha.

Sister Katarzyna Damek – Branch 515: Good morning, everyone. So I like this motion but my concern is about the additional pay for the trainer because I believe that the companies can use it as, as an excuse and just put more duties on the employees as trainers without, without any additional pay, so people will be, will be carrying on their duties training other, other colleagues to undertake the, their future and don't give, don't be appreciated for that properly. So that's, I did like the motion, but that's my only concern. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Alex. Sorry Alex, I think we pressed a lot of

Brother Alexandru Ropota – Branch 357: Sorry about that. Can you hear me now?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can.

Brother Alexandru Ropota – Branch 357: Yes, I'd like to support what Kasha said, because there, I've encountered a situation where, everybody knows the third generation contracts, everybody knows that the person that's about to retire might have an old contract with maybe less benefits so a raise in payment for training somebody else would be reasonable because I've seen situation where the person that's about to retire is paid £10 an hour and the new employee is paid £12 and a half an hour, so it's kind of awkward to have somebody train somebody that's actually paid more, so there should be, somewhere, repayment for what they're doing, even though they're about to retire. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I've just realised I'm on mute, you couldn't hear me, could you [LAUGHTER]. Sorry Julie, right, okay, we're going to try you again. Where have you gone?

Brother Lee Wren – Branch 504: I think I'm un-muted, am I?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You, you are, I don't, I don't, I just don't know about Julie. Okay, Lee, we're going to take you. Lee, for some reason you've got muted.

Brother Lee Wren – Branch 504: Oh right, you're back there, can you hear us?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, you get the opportunity to say what you said, now you've had the practice.

Brother Lee Wren – Branch 504: Right, hello Conference. I'm a little bit torn between, on this one, because I get the, the training side of it and for, for the skills aren't lost, but I'm just, I'm not sure if I want to oppose this because, you know, when someone's coming to retirement, do they really want to be training someone else in the workforce?

If they, they're just thinking about sitting in their garden maybe and having a nice cold pint of beer rather than training somebody. And on site, have sites not got training departments who are, you know, responsible for this sort of thing? I'm just, but I did get the point, so the skills aren't lost, but I'm just not sure about, a retiring worker being, the one to train next-in-line sort of thing, so I'm going to oppose this motion. Thanks.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Lee. Erm, we're going to bring in Richard.

Brother Richard Edgeley – Branch 388 (Allied Bakeries): Morning, Conference. Erm, yes, fully support this, this motion.

It's a great idea, erm and I think, erm, you know, our elderly, erm, workers, erm, they impart their, their information and their knowledge to the younger people, erm, voluntarily, but to put somebody, erm, coming to retirement age, giving them a little bit extra money and, erm, giving them that bit of responsibility, I think they'd take it on board, I think it's a great idea. Also you've got to look at it, if we lose skills, it impacts on health and safety and, you know, we don't want to go down that route, we want a highly skilled workforce and only experience can bring that, so I ask Conference to fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Ju, Julie, I mean you, you had your hand up before and you've took it down when, when obviously I was practising what I was going to say, and I don't know if you want to come back in and you do, your hand's up, so we're going to take you off mute.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Morning, can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can indeed Jules, can indeed.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Wonderful, we had a bit of a technical hitch. Although, although I agree with the the sentiments of what John's trying to do, I don't think it's apt for our industry. At Park Cake, if, if anybody retires from a job, they tend to be replaced by an agency worker who is then given an advanced or standard contract, which means obviously they're not waiting for a text message any more to see if they've got a day's work, they've got a contract for 35¼ hours and are paid the rate for the job, so why would we want to start bringing people in and I think it would be an insult to our people's intelligence that they need 12 month or six months to train on a job. You know, we're shown the ropes and we're expected to do that role and I just think that to start giving the companies the opportunity to employ more apprentices on less money, doing the same job, is appalling and it's not something that, you know, I believe should be happening. So although, like I said, I agree with the sentiments and it may work in other industries, I don't believe it's for the Bakers Union and what we do, so I'm actually opposing.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm going to bring in Mick, then Pauline.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: You got me, Ian?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We have indeed, mate.

Brother Mick McDonald – Standing Orders: Right. I will oppose this motion, because reading it, there's no mention of any money being paid to the trainer and well [unclear] his name on. At Manor Bakery, when I worked there, I mean I've been retired a few years and when you train someone up, you were on a training allowance, you got extra money to train people. I don't know if it still applies, but if this is just going to be a free way of getting people trained up, well I will oppose it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Pauline.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): General Secretary, National President, Delegates. I'm here to, I don't know what I want to do because it's very confusing for me, because Premier Foods, at my site, we do have money to train people and if somebody's retiring, generally what happens is they get someone that's within their capabilities to train up and do the job before the person leaves, so generally, really it happens, so it's really difficult for me to say whether I, well I will, I'll accept it, go for it, yes, alright, accept it. it's not just Premier.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Michael.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303: Good morning. General Secretary, President. I'm going to have to oppose this motion because of the word apprentice, if that automatically brings in the £4.30 pay rate, surely. That's my take on it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any, any other Speakers? No? I'm going to bring in John Fitz.

Brother John Fitzpatrick – Branch 430, EC Member: The Executive Council would ask you to support this motion, in principle. I was an apprentice myself and, at the time, apprentices were paid quite a high rate for attending college and swapping departments every six months. Different companies have different processes, but in principle the motion, it's backing it. We would ask you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, John, because it was opposed, you have the right of reply. We're going to un-mute you. You can have a practice first if you like, I've tried that.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: No, I'm fine. Yes, we put this motion in because the modern apprenticeships that the Learning Services offer, usually last about 18 month. I did one myself for to actually do the Project Worker's job, Level 3 and it, it gives you a good understanding of the, of the job, but on the shop floor, yes, when I was doing it, we could hardly get shop floor workers on these apprenticeships, because the company wouldn't allow them, they were always giving, giving the the money, the apprenticeship levy to the, either the engineers or the staff, the office staff or the management, because they were high, high-priced apprenticeships that they were actually doing, yes. So we, looked at this and we thought well, when a person's retiring, yes, to give them a bit of an easier job and just give, give a person the knowledge, they would go around with that person and, and help them, and give them their, their knowledge in, in that job. So that's, our reason that, why we've put this in, but I do understand the wording, yes and I, I think I should remit this back to the EC, because of the wording and get, bring it back like next year with better wording, wording on it. So, I'd like to remit that to the EC, if that's okay.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, thank you very, very much, John. Erm, obviously I've noticed in the "chat" there's a long list of suggestions that maybe you, you should all have the ability to mute the National President. I think obviously it's coming from, it's coming from a bloke obviously who's normally used to controlling the television in his house I would imagine, so obviously, having that ability will probably somehow make him, make him feel good, Mr Lawrence and I've just noticed as well, there's quite a lot of comments there about I never buy a round at the bar. I think that's terrible. I mean, it's not my fault if I'm last in and you are first. I thought it was a race and I've never been, I've never been very fast. So Conference, what we're going to do now is we're going to have a 15 minute break for Dave, obviously to gather his thoughts and, obviously we will come back, mine says 32, erm, but obviously come back at, at quarter to and, and obviously I might give you an extra two minutes when, when I sign from the screen.

[BREAK]

Okay, Conference. Glad to see we're back. All fully refreshed, raring to go. I just also want to make a, make some comments as well before, before I invite Lauren, our Young EC Member to make what's going to actually be Lauren's final address as our, Young Executive Council Member and that is to remind everybody that this Trade Union is affiliated to the Labour Party, we've never hid the fact that we've been affiliated to the Labour Party, in fact we've been attached to the Labour Party for years but apparently we've received some comments from some members who've said they didn't know that this Union was an affiliate of the Labour Party and they, they've actually suggested that the Conservatives have, have done a good job during this crisis. Well, you know, if 160,000 dead citizens is a good job, I'd hate to see what a bad job was. And obviously when you do go back to your Branches, I think maybe, you know, if you see people reading The Sun or, or The Mail, you need to tell them that those are just pieces of propaganda and we've got a long tradition of, of opposing The Sun in any of our workplaces because the type of information that they print in their newspaper is establishment propaganda and it's always been anti-working class and we should always remember that we do have a Conference policy that says we should never allow The Sun newspaper in any of our workplaces and we should make sure that our members understand that we are opposed to, to the establishment media and all that it stands for. I'm now going to find Lauren, I believe. So Lauren, Lauren McCourt, our Young Executive Council Member, who I'm sure we all want to thank for the role that she's been doing for the last, for the last three years, because obviously she did agree to stay on for an extra 12 months for us during Covid to give her final contribution as our Young Executive Council Member.

Sister Lauren McCourt's (EC Member for Young People) Address to Conference

Sister Lauren McCourt – Branch 433, Young Executive Council Member: Morning Conference. Am I off-mute, you can hear me? Cool. It's great to see you all again, great to be back, having a good Conference despite it being on Zoom. Thank you all for that. Yes it's my last, my last Conference as Young Members Representative. Yes, really sad to admit this, but I'm very close to no longer being classified a young member of this Union, so by the time my time's up it's been an honour to, to serve the best Union in the country. Thank you for allowing me to do that. I don't have a lot of time to speak, so I'm not going to be able to cover much but I want to talk a little bit about the pandemic and young people. The government has made mistake after mistake in this pandemic, but there seems to always be someone else to blame. Young people in particular have been blamed a lot the past for rising infection rates. Apparently none of us take this pandemic seriously and we're all out at house parties all the time and spreading Covid around. Infection rates among the young have been high, absolutely, but we need to be real about why that is, what the reality is for young people living in modern neoliberal Britain. So we are in the longest period of wage stagnation since the Napoleonic Wars in the early 1800s, rent prices are rising much faster than wages. In the past 20 years the proportion of income spent on rent in the UK has increased from 28% to 45% and in some places it's as high as 75%.

And we have no choice but to rent – none of us can get on the housing, housing ladder, erm, I can't even dream, dream of owning my own house 'cause there's no point, I'm never going to be able to. I don't know a single person around my age that can afford to buy a house, and I don't know a single person around my age that can afford to rent by themselves. So we have millions of young people across the country working minimum wage jobs, living with three, four, five other people who also work minimum wage jobs and all their co-workers are also living with three, four or five other people who are also working minimum wage jobs, etc, etc. Of course our infection rates are going to be high when we're all living on top of each other, just, just to be able to get by and not be homeless and then there was last summer when the students were getting ready to go back to university, they were all promised in person, face-to-face teaching, so in September they all, you know, made their way back to campus and once they got there, they were told that actually all their learning's going to be online. So after the inevitable Covid outbreaks at universities as a result of hundreds of thousands of people being made to move across the country into cramped flats with 5–10 other people, universities then started locking their students into their accommodation, with very little warning or proper plans made for these students to access food or mental health support.

At the University of Manchester, just up the road from me there was one day that students actually woke up to a fence around their accommodation that had not been there the day before, and none of them were told that that was going to be put up, but somehow it is the students that are to blame for the high Covid infection rates, it's not the universities who had clearly only forced students back to campus so that they could keep collecting rent money from them. But the students have been pushing back, it's been, it's been incredible to watch the students. They've been organising and, and mobilising all over the country and there's been rent strikes now at over 50 universities. This is the biggest student-run strike in our country's history and they've been winning, they've been winning their demands, they've been winning rent reductions, and it's, it's incredible and so, so inspiring to watch and I wish that kind of thing, kind of movement had existed when I was a student.

Young members at Wetherspoons have also been making us proud in the last year. Hospitality businesses were shut down and the government announced its Furlough scheme, then Tim Martin, the Chairman of Wetherspoons, sent out a video to the staff saying that we would not be paid until the government's furlough money came in, in like a month, in a month's time, bearing in mind that staff at Wetherspoons get paid weekly, so we would have had to live off a week's wages for over a month, which would have been impossible for so many of us. We don't get paid very much and most of us don't make enough money to actually like put away savings that we can fall back on. So our Bakers Union members at Wetherspoons quickly put together a campaign and they used social media to involve thousands of workers across the company and Wetherspoons u-turned after just one day, one day, which is great and they carried on paying their staff as normal and this action showed workers all over the country that when we band together and we stick up for ourselves, we get results and our employer cannot push us around and more and more people have joined us and gotten involved as a result of that campaign.

The pandemic has truly exposed the weaknesses in our society after a decade of Tory rule and decades of neoliberalism, but you know what they say, where there is crisis there is opportunity and this is a big opportunity for us as Socialists, as Trade Unionists, to mobilise people to fight back against this rotten system. It's already started, we've seen it in the incredible Black Lives Matter protests and the Kill the Bill movement, we've seen it with the Teachers Unions pushing back against the government's Covid education policies, the British Gas workers and the bus drivers fighting against fire and rehire, we've seen it with the recent action on Kenmore Street in Glasgow that successfully halted the immigration rate that was happening on their neighbours, erm and we have to keep going and make it bigger and bigger and bigger so that we're able to build a new kind of society where the poor, the elderly, the disabled would never be sacrificed en masse to save the profits of the government's party donors and actually a society where there are no poor people, a society where racism isn't used to divide the people and manufacture consent for war and imperialism and a society where everyone's needs are met, regardless of their ability or regardless of their background, because we need, we need an end to austerity, an end to low wages and exploitative employment practices, an end to the landlordism that is crippling our housing market and an end to the privatisation that is destroying our public services and our healthcare system and when we have a government that is too incompetent and too corrupt to function and we have an opposition that would rather prop up that shambles of a government than be accused of being too, too radical or too left wing.

It's clear that all we have in this world, as working class people, is ourselves and each other and some good old fashioned radicalism is exactly what we need, because progress isn't inevitable, we have to make it happen, so we need to be out in our workplaces and our communities agitating and organising and taking action. We have one in five people in the UK living in poverty, we have over four million children living in poverty in this country, we have one in nine workers in the UK in insecure work.

We have 300,000 homeless people and hundreds of thousands more people are now at risk of being put out on the street as well with the government lifting their Covid ban on evictions. We have 2.5 million people using food banks and it's already been almost three years since the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change told us that we have only 12 years to stop climate change before it's devastating effects on the planet are irreversible. So, a new society isn't just possible, it's also a necessity and it's up to us to make it happen. So I'm just going to end here with the famous quote from Assata Shakur: "It is our duty to fight for our freedom and it is our duty to win", and I believe that we will win, we just have to fight for it. The time is now, erm, comrades. Solidarity and thank you for listening. I hope you all enjoy the rest of Conference.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Absolutely superb contribution, Lauren and how absolutely relevant to what's going on in our society today and, you know, obviously, the work that you've done on our Executive and, and more importantly the work that you've been doing in workplaces, engaging with young people in the community, erm, building strength and Solidarity. Obviously the work that you're doing with ACORN making sure that people have a voice in the rented sector. I applaud and salute all of the things that you have achieved and obviously we're really grateful that you chose to become a member of the Bakers Union, chose to stand up and fight, chose to defend the rights of working people who were being exploited by companies like McDonald's and continue to fight wherever you go. So, thank you very much. It's been a real honour to have you working alongside us and obviously I look forward to you doing even more with this Trade Union, but also more for working people, erm, who will, who will benefit so much from, from your knowledge and experience. Thank you very much, Lauren.

Okay, we're going to move to, I believe it's 40, 41 and it's John Fox.

41

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to continue its funding for Adults and Children with Autism and Learning Difficulties, as in the Tory manifesto, funding is stopped in 2022 altogether.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Hello. (unclear/echo) the Agenda, if I may. Mr President (unclear/echo), EC members, yes. (unclear/echo) funding for adults and children with (unclear/echo). Now, Conference

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Has he gone?

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: (unclear/echo) autism, erm and with them on all different aspects of the spectrum. Erm, everyone that is autistic (unclear/echo) dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, the list goes on, yes. Funding must be kept for these people, to help them through life and to help to integrate into society. In the 2017 Tory manifesto, all funding will be stopped by 2022. For children, it's DLA, which is the Disability Living Allowance. For the (unclear/echo) Independence Payment. This funding is integral to the lives of families suffering with children or themselves with (unclear/echo) look after (unclear/echo)

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I think, I'm not sure if everybody had the same difficulties that, we did there unfortunately, John. I think, I think the contribution he was making there, obviously what I heard of it was fantastic and the content was incredible but I think some people may have missed some of it because we did, you did lose your internet signal part of the way through that, but I think, I think we've grasped what you was talking about and obviousl, I hope everybody picked it up because it was a really important, really important comments you were making but obviously we, I think there may have been a little bit of a, bit of a problem with people hearing your full content. And I know Alan Scott said he was formally seconding your motions, and unless I see him put his hand up saying that he wants to speak on it, I'm just going to accept it as he's formally seconding it. Okay. We don't have any Speakers from the floor that indicated, so I'm going to ask, if there is anybody that wants to contribute? So I've got Stratford and then we've got Terry Povey.

Brother Stratford McElhone – Branch 547: : Good morning, Conference, Ma'am, General Secretary and Mr, Mr President. Thank you very much, John, for bringing this. It's really unfortunate we couldn't hear much of what you had to say, because the bits I did hear sounded really good. I want to support this motion wholeheartedly. I have a 22 year old daughter with a mild learning disability and over the last 10 years we've seen nothing but cuts to services, to the point now there really is nothing out there for her. There are something in the tune of 1.9 million people in this, in the UK registered with a learning disability, that's a fairly big chunk of our population and these people, you know, they deserve the opportunity to live a full a life as possible and without the funding that John mentioned, that, that just isn't possible. Please Conference, support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. Terry Povey next, then I'm going to go Michael White and then I'm going to go Matthew Brown and your, your hand's gone down, Mark Hilton, so I don't know whether you want to come in or not. If you do, just put your hand back up, so I know.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Morning Conference. Okay, everyone hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Morning, Conference. Delegates, Chair. I have a son who's 14 and autistic, so I know exactly what's what's being stated here. The effects on myself and my partner are going to be pretty devastating in all honesty, if this actually goes through. I don't know how people, you know, can, it's difficult to understand actually what happens with autistic children and autistic people in general like, you know. The funding is essential, it is totally essential. What you don't understand is the fact that autistic kids are very fixated and there are times when you need to have the spare money, the extra money to do the things that they want to do. This helps, the funding helps for, for us to go and buy silly things and it might sound stupid, I mean, from an early age, you know, from bed wetting, you know, a toilet in the bedroom, just general mess in general like, you know, you need to keep spending a lot of money. As he's got older, it's more the fixation side of it. Without any funding at all, DLA, we would struggle to give him a decent life. I would therefore suggest, without, without any, you must support this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Michael White – Branch 202: Yes, I support this motion because, I've got, my nephew's got autism, he's got ADHD and with me, I'm dyslexic, so like when I was younger, I had all the support of school. I went, when I was in my late 20s, I went back to college to go and get my GCSEs, because I had, when I left school I had no qualifications at all because of my dyslexic and with like my nephew, he's, he's autistic and he didn't start to speak until about seven years old, but with all the support we had of the local community, the schools to take him, to learn him to speak, because he would communicate with me and the family but anybody else, he wouldn't communicate because of the autism and, you know, he would stay with us only because he was very touched, only support, only people he was with because people didn't understand autism and it's like with me with dyslexic. I can't, I can't spell to save my life, but kind of it, I've had the support like with the Union. I've had, building my confidence, when I went to Barnsley College and all that, building my confidence up, how to do the Trade Union and being a Branch Secretary, it's pushed me to kind of build my confidence up because of being dyslexic and that's why I really support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Hello. So myself, my step-son is autistic, his name's James Kincaide. I can respect to the fixation part, because I'm actually using his computer which was provided by an autistic charity, because we couldn't even afford him a computer and he's got a Thomas the Tank Engine collection, if anybody who may have collected these themselves, just want to give them a shout out, but the funding's already to the schools, it's already extremely low as it is. We had an incident in Year 11 from him, where we had a fire alarm going off. Now the government only cares for the one-to-one support he receives. During the fire alarm, there was an actual fire in his school and he had to make his own way out of school without support because the teachers just didn't have the funding to keep his one-to-one teacher with him to leave the school, because on the protocol the teacher had to leave him to make his own way out and anybody who has an autistic child in the family will know, autistic, they like tiny things, well mine does anyway. He sees a fire, I cannot guarantee he's going to walk away from it, he's going to want to see if it's real, if it's hot and if it does actually burn. So, again, it's essential we, the government don't cut the funding, 'cause they're already not funding enough as it is. So yes, very important for them. That's all I've got to say. Thank you.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: I just want to agree with all the points that everybody's made already. Myself with being a local councillor, I'm also a school governor through that and the schools are struggling at the minute to, you know, get extra funding or even, you know, make the funding stretch that they've already got to help kids with additional needs and I think it doesn't come down to just, you know, people like adults and children with extra needs, it's, it's a class issue as well because, you know, obviously if they're well off and they're wealthy, they can afford to get, to buy privately their own additional needs, additional support for, you know, anybody in their family, children, adults that do have additional special, extra needs but, you know, the work classes can't do that so it's not just about, you know, discriminating against people with a disability, it's about discriminating against working class disabled people and people with additional needs. So, we have to support it, we have to support the vulnerable in society. Thank you.

Brother Gareth Brown – Branch 558: Hello, everyone. I'd like to add on this motion that I fully support it and I will relate to a personal situation that I'm having with a friend of mine that has an autistic child. It is an illness that is only recoverable with required funding and attention, but being a single parent especially requires you to dedicate 100% of your time on that children to, on that child to recover and, and progress throughout life. So funding is very important, otherwise with unemployment and at the same time, erm, having to deal with with this illness it's going to be a massive issue for somebody having to choose between putting food on the table and helping his child to recover. So I fully support this.

Brother Kevin Flood – Branch 716: Can you hear me? Morning, Conference. I would like you to support this motion. If we have a physical Conference, you'll have seen me bring my small daughter, Amy, with us. Amy's on the spectrum, she's got not autism, she's got Asperger's, sorry.

When we're at Conference, you'll probably see her bring her wee headphones and stuff and when we sing at the end of the Conference and definitely [unclear] because she shouts. We've got to, we've got to get a wee heads up and take her out of the room so she, she can still participate but because obviously the noise was doing it and [unclear] Northern Ireland, the problem is it'll take you a wee bit longer to [unclear] the funding, but I do think it's a dreadful thing that the Tories would do to people like that. So, please support.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, just like to back everything I've said, especially my young Rep Matt, 'cause I work with him, he's a good mate of mine and I see the struggles he has. Rachel, you're absolutely right there, it's a class war. This government, the Tories, they don't care about poor people, they don't care about disabled people or anything else. Please support this motion, because it's so vital to people's futures.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Morning, Conference. I support this motion but I'd just like people to remember next time they're out at the ballot boxes. The government is, that's making these cuts, I think it's disgusting, absolutely [unclear] money from people like this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody, anybody else? Okay. John Newman, on behalf of the Executive.

Brother John Newman – Branch 247, speaking on behalf of the Executive Council: Morning, Conference. In favour of the motion, autism and learning difficulties. If I'm repeating myself or repeating what John Fox said, I do apologise, but I didn't hear any of it. Autism is a life-long developmental disability, which affects how people communicate and interact with the world. One in 100 people are on the autism spectrum and around 700,000 adults and children in the UK. The definition of autism is forever changing as we learn more over the years about how it works and what it generally conceives, but generally it is often found that autistic people and their families with different support needs share many of the same challenges, be it mental health support, education and social care services or being misunderstood by the people close to them. There is no known cause of autism and no known or possible way to actually prevent it and it can be extremely stressful for people who care and for the parents and loved ones of children and adults with autism for their family members. They all need and deserve adequate support. The support comes at a cost. Now, these are not new figures, they're old figures, in fact the best I could find were 2014. Economic costs of autism to someone with the highest needs, over a lifetime, amounts to £1.5 million per person. Autism costs the UK at least £32 billion a year. The crazy thing is, for every £180 spent on research, there's a £million spent on care, so you'd think they would try and reverse that, but hey, it's not our government. Only government has the finances and resources to support such conditions and must not be allowed to end funding. Please support the motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, there was no opposition, so there's no right of reply. We're going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, has everybody finished voting? Yes. Okay, can you take your hands down. Just our Bobby's hand up there, like. Cool. Those against? Okay, has everybody finished voting? Okay, with no opposition, that's been carried unanimously.

Conference, what we're going to do with that motion is, is put it on our Parliamentary Group for, for discussion, to see what we can do to help and obviously see what campaign we can get involved in to ensure that, you know, your voices are heard, and obviously anything we can do to stop this, this dreadful cut, this Union will do. So that's what we will do with that motion.

Okay, we're going to move onto, hopefully your internet's sorted out, Mr Fox, 'cause it's, it's you again, it's 42.

That this Conference agrees that we lobby the government to stop the postcode lottery on distance learning for adult education. Some people in various postcodes cannot access distant learning with their preferred provider as they are in a postcode that is devolved. This is unfair and discriminatory to the learner.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. On motion 42. That this Conference agrees that we lobby the government to stop the postcode lottery on distance learning for adult education. Some people in various postcodes cannot access distance learning with their preferred provider, as they are in a postcode that is devolved. This is unfair and discriminatory to the learner. What this means is the devolution is certain areas, well there's 10, 10 areas around the UK which is now, now devolved and what is said they have a sum of money in a pot for that area. Now, if you actually get a provider that you like outside of these areas, you cannot use them, because they don't have the funding or they won't get the funding to offer you the courses that you require. People can't engage in the learning, yes. The ULRs can't seek the best providers around for them, yes. So people need to be able to choose their own provider. I move this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Unless Alan indicates that he wants to come in, I'm going to take it as formally seconded. Formally seconded. Okay, have we got any, no-one, no-one, advance indication of anybody that wants to speak. Does anybody want to speak from the floor? No. Okay, oh, Douggie.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Do you know, I ask please support this motion, you know. I've got to say, I take this motion quite personally, you know. Everybody knows I am a nerd at heart, I love education. I think education is the right and I think it's so important for everybody and everybody should have the right and access to good education, no matter where they live. I really, really support this motion. Please vote for it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, anybody else? In that case, I'll hand over to the General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, we ask that you support this motion. It can't possibly be right or fair that I can access a maths course, for example, to develop myself for free, yet if I lived in Manchester or Birmingham, this would not be possible because of their devolved status. This does not allow for fair and consistent learning opportunities that should be free and accessible to all, regardless of their postcode. We ask you to support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, there was, erm, no right of reply because there was no opposition. So, to the vote. Those in favour? Everyone finished voting? Okay, you can take your hands down. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? Okay, that's carried unopposed. 43.

43

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government for increased funding for Information and Communications Technology (ICT) education to the same as English and Maths as it is only funded at 50%. With ICT now becoming commonplace within the workplace and people requiring these skills to do their jobs.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: That's me again. Conference, Mr President, erm, General Secretary, EC. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government for increased funding for information and communities technology (ICT) education, to the same as English and maths, as is only funded at 50%, with ICT now becoming commonplace within the workplace and people requiring these skills to do their job. Since we put this in, there has been a change, but this is only up to Level 2. English and maths now, you can get, actually get it up to Level 3, but people still need the training on the information technology, more so now than ever before, as most of the new technology that is coming in needs this capability. So, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Unless I see an indication, Alan, I'll take it, I've seen an indication, it's formally seconded. Anybody wish to speak? Michael.

Brother Michael Blundred – Branch 390 (Manor, Stoke): Weirdly, our Branch had put in a motion very, very similar to this one, John. Every day people are required to have more interactions with technology. Recently our company went to online payslips only, we don't get any paper any more and the number of members that we've had to help with just being able to access their payslips has been mad. This is really, really important. Please vote for the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we'll go Nick and then we'll go to Kasha.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Erm, Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. Yesterday, the day before, we were talking about going paperless and things like that and there was a lot of objections to it because people don't have the computer skills, ICT skills. Please support this motion. The only way we are going to be able to embrace it, these things more and going paperless and being more environmentally friendly is getting people trained. It's in everybody's lives, it's a daily, daily thing, you know, everything from getting your money out of the bank nowadays to shopping in a supermarket involves ICT. Please support.

Sister Katarzyna Damek – Branch 515: I would like to support this motion because, looking at what happened in my workplace right now, we have so many changes in organisation which are involving automation and using more computers and we have highly skilled operators for needs to step down or need to find a job in other places only because they have no computing skills. So they, they are highly skilled in all other areas of their job, but they just cannot keep it up because, because they are struggling to, to operating that brand new, how do you call it, organisation – well, everything is going through computers. So, I would like to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, so, we're going to go Joe, Joe Knapper, Michael White.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons), Executive Council Member: Morning, Conference. Yes, our company's done exactly the same as Michael Blundred, gone onto paperless wage slips. Nobody can get a paper copy any more, and we've had to go to what we call a SuccessFactors app, and you get it on your mobile 'phone, but a lot of people weren't capable of accessing that because of the, they, they didn't understand the technology.

Somehow I got the, named as sort of a specialist, so every time I'm in, there's somebody asking me to go through putting it on their 'phone for them, which I don't mind, it's a job that needs doing and I believe Trevor, on nights, my, Rep on nights, I believe he, he does it at well for night shift. So yes, we've got to support this, and try and help people as much as we can. Thank you. Please support.

Brother Michael White – Branch 202: I support this motion. Our company now, in the last 12 months, we've gone paperless wage slips and you got a, when you go onto your wage slips online, you've got to put a special code in what generates every 30 seconds, so you can access your wage slip and then now we've gone to what we call MyHR, it's 'cause now we've gone from Haydens Bakery to Bakkavor Desserts or Bakkavor, so their main headquarters is in London, all our HR is in London, so you've got to go onto MyHR and, you know, if you want to change your address you go to your managers and they've got to go online to access the main site and like a lot of our products now, we scan it, it's booked in and then it's scanned to the other, by distribution, so a lot of technology's come in and now like with zoom, we're doing Microsoft teams, we're doing meetings and everything like that, so everything's gone to the stage it's all computerised and a lot of the staff do not understand how the computers work and with us we've got, 90% of our generation there's a lot of foreigners in our factory and they do, it's so hard to understand to show them the English, how to get access onto the computers, because they're like they said, because it's in English, it's very hard to explain to them how do you do this, how do you do that and, you know, they find it frustrating and some people are not very computer literacy. I'm lucky, I've learnt myself, but a lot of people still don't know how to do that and it's like we need the actual help to help people like that, who don't, can't even do it themselves, 'cause everything these days is all going computerised and it's getting harder and harder for everybody. I really support this motion.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Erm, I'm also here to support the motion. We've been on paperless wage slips for way over a year. Same with the success factor, but I do think it needs maybe pushing more. If the companies want to bring all this information in, they also need to provide the training for people to access their payslips and their P60s and whatever other information they're expecting people to use, so the companies have to take some responsibility for training their staff to access the information that's there, there available for them. Please support.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, I think this goes back to earlier. Erm, I'm going to urge you to support this motion, however agreeing to lobby the government, I think it were said earlier, this government doesn't want working class people to learn, it doesn't want working class people to be educated. It's quite happy with you being thick. The only solution to this is a change of government. Thank you.

Brother [unidentified]: Hello, everyone. I would like to say a word about this motion. It, it is a good incentive and I support it but, as a bit of a background, I've been working in night security about four years ago for HBO and Warner Bros. and whatever we're experiencing now, in big companies we already have this within at least four or five years' ago, so as a heads-up, this is going to happen either way we look at it and IT skills are going to be an, a very, very big requirement for everybody. What I would suggest, I would kick it up a notch and I would put training for all Shop Stewards and all of the EC members, all of the Branch Secretaries, to have this mandatory training as, for the sole reason that if we look at companies, they have specialised PR teams which will obviously put out information twice as fast as us. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, anybody else? No? Bear with me while I hand over to the General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, obviously we would ask you to support this motion. The last 12 months, if nothing else, has taught us that there is a very clear need to be digitally literate. It is part of our everyday lives when we're at work or, you know, personal ones, as has been mentioned clearly by the Speakers before me. Yet the barriers to this happening is purely down to cost. How can it be right, you can access a maths or English course for free as long as you are in a devolved area, yet to have the skills to be able to complete those courses on line, you've got to pay for the course to do so. We ask you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, there was no opposition, so therefore there's no right of reply. So we're going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Has everybody finished? Okay, if you can take your hands down. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? Okay, that's been carried unopposed. Branch 405. Oh, 44, sorry, my apologies, I forgot to turn the page over. Sorry, I'm so used to the same 405 [LAUGHTER].

This Conference agrees to source training for Environmental Representatives

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I won't take offence, Ian, it's okay. Speaking on motion 44. This Conference agrees to source training for Environmental Representatives. Conference, we've already agreed that we need Environmental Representatives, we've already been to the Rule Book so we just now need to source training for our new Reps. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Terry.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277 (Warburtons, Bristol): I’m here. Conference, Chair. Yes, I’ve no need to really say any more than what Nick’s already said. This has already been voted on, to have Environmental Reps. We need to educate them. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we’re going to go Nicolae, Pauline, John Fox.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Good morning, everyone. To be honest, I agree with Terry, I agree with Nick, it’s make, it’s just makes sense that we need to support that motion and to be honest, I was, when I was listening the motion to our Conference, I was checking the motion that was, I was just looking online and stuff like that and I believe this should be an easy way to, you know, an easy thing to achieve because that’s makes sense, but the closest position to Environmental Reps who understand something about the environment will be, I believe, the Health & Safety Reps. This is my understanding and, and we just need to train them if we, I don’t know if you done that. If we check, I was checking online, I was going through GC and let’s be fair, the nearest course is already, is some courses there online which is starting in September, is on 9 September, 16 and 23 September, which is called Green Skills and I believe who is interested in that can start from that, but I’m agree with the guys. We need to fund that. Thank you very much.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I was just watching the birdies in the garden, I got a bit giddy then. I’m here to support this motion. I think it’s really important that Environmental Reps are trained as well as any other Reps across the country. I think the environment is a very important subject and the more we know about it, like knowledge is power. So I support.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. I’m fully supportive of this motion, not just because it says the training for it, Environmental Representatives and that is what I’m quite into on both accounts, on the training side, and the environment. There is plenty of training about, but I do think we need to source it from like Northern College and the GFTU, so that we can have everyone on the same page when it comes down to the environment, from our Union and have it, , I’ve forgotten the words, yes, sorted to our industry. Okay, I support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else? I’m just going to hand over to the General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, obviously we would ask you to support this motion. We actually moved the motion a couple of years’ ago, that was passed at, at the GFTU’s biannual Conference for them to put together Environmental or Green Reps training for affiliates, so we will chase that up and there is some great work being done in the Regional TUCs, Yorkshire and Humber and some fantastic work over the last 12 months around environmental training. Nicolae’s given us some dates and I know he’s put a comment in the “chat” and we’ll circulate that widely too, because it’s important that our Reps are trained in this area, so that they can effectively challenge employers and gain the best outcome for our members.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, erm, there was no opposition, so we’ll go to the right to reply, no right to reply. We’re going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Yes, you know what to do. No, in all honesty it’s a good job you’re here, otherwise I’d forget. Everybody finished? Okay, if you can take your hands down. Okay, anyone against? Everybody finished? Okay, that motion was carried unopposed. It’s 11.44, so we’ll be back for one minute to 12.

[BREAK]

I was going to play Blondie’s 11.59 to welcome you back into the meeting and I thought I might sing it but then obviously I changed my mind. And to make sure obviously I get this one right and I better had, we’re on motion 45, so I’m going to hand over to the General Secretary.

Conference recognises the devastating impact the loss of funding to the English Union Learning Project has on our union, members and industry. Over the last 10 years over 30,000 people have utilised the English project alone and the decision by Gavin Williamson to remove funding is no more than a political attack on the trade union movement.

Conference recognises the importance of ULRs in our branches and the union and agrees the executive should continue to fight for the reintroduction of the fund and work with the GFTU and TUC to look into how ULRs receive support in the interim.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Apologies (echo). Sorry about that. Conference, the motion really says it all. The removal of funding for Union Learn by the Tories was no more than a political attack on the Trade Union movement and as Mark pointed out earlier, attack on our class.

Our project has helped tens of thousands of people develop themselves, moving to new careers after redundancy, help members through that awful process, focussed on mental health and much, much more. We're disappointed at the lack of fight from our movement in general, to fight for the fund. At times it felt like we were a lone voice shouting up on behalf of our members, which we will always do and we will continue to raise with politicians and others the importance of Learning Services projects such as ours for people in our industry and continue to point out that government schemes never reach our members as they are not fit for purpose. In the meantime, we're working in the background to put together resources for you, create networks so you can support each other. There's lots of stuff going to be on the new website and we will keep talking to you about what you need from us to support you in your role. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: This Executive motion is formally seconded. We had no indication of Speakers beforehand, so we're going to go to the floor. I've got John Fox and then I've got Steve and then I've got Michael.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. Mr President, General Secretary, Conference Delegates, comrades, yes. I was one who was involved in the Learning Services of our Union. I worked for, I've worked for them for, well I did work for them for six years, just over six years, and it was an absolutely, an honour to actually come round and help people to develop themselves, with the learning that we were able to provide on, on different sites and also to help, we helped a lot of firms as well, get things up off the ground where they were struggling, yes and we found the suppliers for the courses. What this government has done to our, is, well, absolutely horrendous what they've actually done to us, yes in the Learning Services and the targets that the government actually set us to actually achieve, we actually smashed them, yes, not by just a few, but by 200%. We smashed them, in a term where the pandemic was rife, we couldn't go out, we couldn't visit sites. We had to do our, change our way of working, yes and we did that with, I say with ease, we, we, we thought outside the box, yes. Locally three of us have like retired, two have gone back, has got new jobs and one's gone back to the place of work because he was seconded, so we're not out of work, we're not, apart from three of us who've retired like but it was an honour to serve the Bakers Union in this position and if anybody, if it's getting back up and running again, then please let's get it up and running, yes, because the service and the benefit to our members is second to none, apart from the Credit Union, yes. So, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Steve Nevin – Branch Secretary 504: Hi, Conference. Hi, Conference. Hi, Delegates, Mr President, our brilliant General Secretary. Welcome to everybody from England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. I fully support this motion. Last year more than 200,000 learners gained new skills through the Union Learning. The funding helps people to read and write, thousands gain their first ever, ever qualifications. Mark was right before, it is political and it is a class attack. Through Unions and their Reps, they have reached out to workers to help them learn, even employers recognise the position, the positives it brings. Seven out of 10 employers saw the benefits of Union Learning. It is a political attack and it must be stopped. I mean the government funding, it's only £12 million, £12 million, it's nothing. You know, they can spend billions and waste billions on track and trace etc, £12 million, that's all they put into it. No, this must be reversed, yes, it must be our priority of the Bakers Union and the Union movement in general. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577, former ULR: Hello? Can you bring me on, Ian, or what? [LAUGHTER]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You're, you're on. As soon as we send you the message that says Just to save me having to keep coming in and telling you, so that goes for everybody

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577, former ULR: Right, I'm un-muted.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Just un-mute yourself and then you can speak.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577, former ULR: Right, I'm un-muted [LAUGHTER]. I remember Pauline McCarthy, more than 15 years ago, asking me to be a Union Learner Rep. I didn't know what it was, but I said we'll get it going and I don't like this saying but, those were the good old days and I didn't think there were any good old days, but there were. We got a Union Learning Centre going in Manor at Carlton. We got people learning to read, write. One of the best things I ever saw was when this woman came to me and she had tears in her eyes. She couldn't read and write, they used to think she were thick, used to make fun of her and she got through, she got a NVQ and that and, oh, I was proud of those, that day. This needs addressing. What it was, I think, it was too successful, because we learnt too much for them, that's why they're taking it off us, they don't want us to know anything. Please support this, this motion.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, am I, am I speaking? Am I? Oh right, please support this motion. You know what, it's a class attack on us. It is attack, it is also a racist and xenophobic attack by this government. I've seen the great work done by Union Learn in teaching people English skills. I'm so proud.

One of the things I'm so proud of, in our Union, is like our diversity. One of the things I am so proud of and the great work that Union Learn did in teaching people English skills, that has been removed. Already, I mean before that, the government cut all the ESOL classes. We all know about the racism and the xenophobia from Boris Johnson and even before with Theresa May. We know about that. We know what they want. We know what they want, we know what they feel, but if I can bring one thing that really shocked me, at one of our Regional Councils, as they were shutting down Union Learn, Karen Plasom, our great Union Learn worker in Region 3, as she was saying goodbye, she's still a member and I'm proud of her membership, she broke down in tears, she broke down in tears. I nearly broke in tears myself, just how this government, this evil, racist, xenophobic, hated government has treated this. Please vote for this motion, please. Thank you.

Brother John Newman – Branch 247: Can you hear me? Right. Speaking in support of this motion. I think we need to remember that it's not only governments that are trying to do this to us. We had a, I used to work for Allied Bakeries and we had a National Allied meeting in Birmingham, I think it was Birmingham and, John Owens was there as well, from Allied Liverpool and there was a National Head of HR then called Nigel Toone who worked for Allied Bakeries and we were on about the benefits of Union Learn and learning, you know, learning across the board and he was there with the CEOs of the company and he proudly stood up and he said, I accept what you're trying to say, notice the word "trying to say" and he said, we will teach our employees what they need to know and what they need to learn. There were a few people put their hands up and said, hang on a minute, you're taking, you're telling them or telling us all they need to know is what they need to do in work. We're saying they need to know more to better themselves and maybe get a job like you one day and his reply was, we've said what we've said and that's the way it's going to be. So it's not just governments, it's employers, but he had the audacity then to stand up and say what employers are actually thinking. Shortly afterwards his employment was terminated, I don't know the reason for that, but please support the motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other Speakers? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay, those against? Everybody finished voting? That motion was unopposed, so it was carried. Motion 46 and this time it is John Fox from Branch 405.

46

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees, that we lobby the Labour Party, that when a person is coming up to retirement age, companies must have a training package in place to aid in retirement.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. This is for the next 14 motions what are after each other as well, yes. So, Conference, Delegates, Mr President, General Secretary. That this Conference agree that we will lobby the Labour Party that when a person is coming up to retirement age, companies must have a training package in place to aid in retirement. For some people, it can be a massive shock, to go from getting up and having a purpose, to getting up and having nothing to do. People can lose their identity, as they have, as all they have ever known is work life and to lose the camaraderie of your work colleagues, as they became your family for so many years, training is required to stop isolation and mental health issues occurring in your, in their retirement. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I know Alan Scott's going to formally second it. Okay. We've got no advance Speakers, so we're going to go Dave Suddards and Pauline McCarthy.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning, Conference. Yes, whilst I support this motion, I am a little bit on the shelf with it, I mean I believe I started my training package about five year ago and intend to carry it on for a bit longer, but, while we're asking for this from companies, it's tough enough in a lot of workplaces to get training packages for new starters, for agency, I mean I work in a workplace where an agency guy gets a pack put in front of him to sign off, he gets half a day, if he's lucky and then he's put onto the job. So, while I support the motion, I think there's priorities in our workplace what supersede this. I'm not, I'm coming up to it and I understand where John's coming from, but I think new workers and when we said about apprenticeships, you know, I really think that before we go for this, I think, we have a duty to the, the up and coming workforce. So, I'm on the shelf with this.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Couldn't remember my number then, for a second. I'm here to support this motion. In Premier Foods, up until very recently, we had a retirement package for all people that worked within the company and it usually started when you were about 63 and they had you in for two 48-hour sessions, with like two 48-hour stints, where they had people to help you not just with finances but to help you with what's out there to help you when you retire and to get you used to the fact that you're not coming to work every day and there's other things that you can be doing.

I think it's really important, because not only for the person that's retiring but for a partner, just watching behind my back here in case I'm getting listened to [LAUGHTER], because it's a big struggle getting used to going into, not going to work any more and not having the camaraderie and the friendship that you had, so I think it's really important, not just financially but mentally. So, I support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: And I'm sure Mark Hilton will welcome you to his Branch at 558, Pauline.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): 582 I meant, don't worry about it [LAUGHTER].

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm going to go for Julie and then I'm going to go for, erm

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): [unclear] didn't I?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm sure he would, I'm sure he'd welcome it.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I'm sure he would an' all.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm going to go for Julie and then I'm going to go for Brother Lawrence, obviously hopefully he's not got his remote control with him [LAUGHTER].

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): I sort of agree with the sentiment, John, but again I think a lot of this is around the wording, "training package". You know, how do you train somebody to retire? I think what we've, what we've got in place at Park Cake, Oldham is a phased retirement plan, where depending on people's length of service, you get wind-down days. So for so many weeks, they'll have a day off, so they can get used to being at home one day a week, the next period it's two days off and it carries on until they come in and work one day and then they're gone. So that gives people the opportunity you know, to get used to retirement and, you know, I do think it's a good, a good thing. A training package, there used to be something in place with the GFTU, where you could go away with your spouse for the weekend to the college, Northern College, there was a course there what people what were pre-retirement could go and that was given, giving them ideas of what they could do and how they can budget and, and manage their money and unfortunately that, that course was taken away. So, you know, I suggest training package, John, I think the wording needs changing and I'd rather see a phased retirement plan where people have still got the opportunity, erm, to get used to the idea of being at home. So, I would oppose it really on the wording. Right, thank you.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Can you hear me? Thank you, National President. I've been trying to un-mute myself during the last two Speakers. I noticed you've definitely got your finger on the ball. [unclear] courses to staff, who are approaching or deciding to take early retirement. Only six months ago, I asked HR if a member I work with and who reaches state retirement this year, could be given a date for his course, only to, he was given an extra week's holiday entitlement (unclear/no speech) his life

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You might want, we've got, I was going to say you might want to turn your camera off, because obviousl, your, your signal's breaking up, Dave, or you've just come to the end of the I think you're trying now for max head room. Not only muting yourself, but freezing yourself in time too.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Can you not hear me, Ian?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can't now, you've been muted.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Any good now?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That's better, that's better.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Ah, so you didn't hear a thing?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We heard some of it, but it was very patchy, mate.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Right, I'll say it again then.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Here to support this motion. We've really, recently experienced a reduction in company-provided courses to staff who are approaching or decided to take early retirement at work. It's only six months ago I asked HR if a member I work with and who reached state retirement this year, if they could be given a date for their course, only to be told that they didn't have any planned for this year. He was given an extra week's holiday entitlement, asked what bottle of spirits he preferred and told that his financial details would be given to him nearer his date of finishing, but no further information to assist him with making some very important decisions in his life. So I ask you all, please support the motion. Any good, Ian?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Perfect the second time.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Oh right, you kept your finger off the button. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Practice makes perfect.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): That’s what they say, yes. I’m still practising.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We’re going to go, we’re going to go to Rich next.

Brother Rich Edgeley – Branch 338 (Allied, Stoke): Hi, folks. Yes, I fully support this. At Allied, Stoke, what we tend to do, we have a whip-round among ourselves or the team, we buy the retired, the retired person a bit of a trinket and the company more or less throws them on the scrap heap. I’ve heard Delegates talking about courses to go on etc, we experience none of that. I think as a National Union, we need to look after our up-and-coming retired members. We need to offer them some support for what is a massive change of life. It’s a massive event in somebody’s life. If they’ve been working for 30 40 years to end up, you know, okay they can have a lie-in bed in the morning, can’t they and have a breakfast in bed maybe, but they’re not meeting their work colleagues, they’re not getting out and socialising in that way and some of them feel worthless. So yes, we need to, we need to look after our own and I fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, any other Speakers? No? John Fitz.

Brother John Fitzpatrick – speaking on behalf of the Executive: The Executive Council would ask you to support this. There’s been a lot of good debate on it. A lot of companies don’t have packages, which has been brought up. Packages are great when they’re phased retirement. My last company had one, where you lost a day, same as Julie mentioned, but where the, John’s asking for the government that’s, there’s people that don’t have no legislation at all in the companies and I think that’s where the government’s coming in, the government to demand that companies should assist in early, early lockdown or whatever, lockdown, sorry [LAUGHTER], training and that for when people go. People can suffer severe stress and strain by retiring and that’s where the Executive are asking you to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: (unclear/echo)

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Am I, am I, yes? I’ve not been muted, right. Yes, I’d like to reply. Comrades, yes, this is more about mental health issues really in later life, and making sure that people actually have something to do and have a purpose to get up for, because I’ve known colleagues who have died soon after because they’ve just give up, yes, because they had no purpose to carry on. So this, this is why I believe, or we believe in the Branch, that a training package needs to be brought out to help people who, who are in the process of, of retirement. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, take your hands down. There’s one left, one left. Okay, anyone against? Everybody finished? Okay, that motion’s been carried. Mr Fox.

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Branch 405

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to fund further research into the menopause.

To ensure the ready availability of all medications and treatments.

The symptoms of the menopause can have a devastating effect on a person’s physical health ,mental health work and home life .

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates, colleagues and comrades. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to find further research into the menopause, to ensure the ready availability of all medications and treatments. The symptoms of the menopause can have a devastating effect on a person’s physical health, mental health, work and home life. Now, I don’t [unclear], yes, because only 50% of the workforce of the country does suffer from the menopause and they, they have great distress, yes, because, they have hot flushes, night sweats, dizziness, pains in joints, their teeth, sleepless nights, mood swings, they gain weight, bloating, headaches, they have tight muscles, irritability, allergies, irregular heartbeats, depression, panic disorder, osteoporosis, electric shock due to inappropriate firing of neurons, digestive issues, dry and itchy skin, anxiety, loss of hair and memory lapse. Now for, for the, for the partners of people, yes and our colleagues who, who do, will suffer with these, this is a great debilitating illness.

People need, well, the government needs to fund the research for one thing, into this, so that, well, I don’t want, it’s hard, hard to be, but it’s just the women and our partners, yes, who suffer from this, yes. The only thing that the men have got to do is learn, like learn how to swim when you’re asleep, because of the bed’s that wet, yes. Learn from the mood swings, yes, because it can be okay one day, yes and not be okay the next, but it’s not just day-by-day, it’s, it could be hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute, yes.

These things can happen, yes and with the panic disorders, yes and the depression, depression can lead to suicide. Now, we've got to think this, it's a mental problem as well as a physical problem for, for our wives and partners and friends, yes, so we've got to learn how to actually help them but we, we can't help them, a lot of research is needed into this, so please support this motion, yes. I move. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, John. Erm and Alan, formally seconded? Okay. No indication of Speakers in advance, right, yes? Oh sorry, no, we've got Mark Hilton who indicated, who is part of Pauline, Pauline McCarthy's Branch.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades. Hi, John. Here to totally support your motion and obviously just you made the point, it affects 50% of the people. No, it doesn't, it affects 100% of the people. It affects the lasses that suffer with it and obviously, you know, that does need researching but, and I'm not being selfish as a male, but you'll appreciate, you've just mentioned all the stuff and there's the suicide, the violence, the family breakup and all the other issues that go with it, connected to the depression and everything else. You've just got to support this motion. It needs medically investigating further and the money needs to be put in there for 100% of the population's benefit. Please, please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, we'll go Dawn Scott, Pauline McCarthy.

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Can you hear me everybody? Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can, yes.

Sister Dawn Scott – Branch 253: Yes, sorry. Good afternoon everybody. President, General Secretary, Delegates. As a woman of a certain age who's going through the menopause, it's important that all companies understand the symptoms that women go through. Like the motion says, the devastating effect on a person's physical health, also their mental health. We definitely need to fund research into the menopause. Please, please support. Thank you.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): What can I say? What a great Union I'm in, what a great Union. Men brought this forward. I'm so proud of you, lads. You've done a great job. I support this 100%, because you've got to live with this and we can't live without you, so there you go. Support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, is, is, is there anybody else? In that case then Rachel, on behalf of the Executive.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529, responding on behalf of the Executive Council: We obviously fully support this motion and we are happy that it's been brought forward. Obviously people have, you know, told facts and stories and stuff like that, but obviously we know it affects all women and the symptoms normally start in between 45 years of age and 55 years of age and most last for about four years, but one in 10 women actually suffer the effects and symptoms for up to 12 years, it's just ridiculous. I mean, if any other illness or disease lasted that long, there would be loads of money ploughed into research and developmental treatments for it, but I think because, sometimes I think, you know, people go on about the menopause and just going on about that again, blah, blah, blah, but it can actually be quite serious, obviously like John Fox listed the wide range of symptoms and the way it can affect you, it's just, it's just mind boggling how it can affect the human body and it's not just the typical ages get it like I said before, between 45 and 55 on average.

One in 100 women actually get it before they're 40 years of age, which is a bit, erm, a bit frightening that, you know, someone that you associate with being a bit older, it's actually affecting a proportion of younger women as well. I mean, I've heard stories where there's been people in, in, women in their 20's going through it, that haven't even had children or anything yet and it's absolutely devastating for them. I mean, it affects, you know, has probably more of a mental impact on them, because obviously they haven't had, haven't had the chance to go through any like, like any of the life experiences of having children and stuff if they wanted to, erm, and I think especially for working in our industry where, you know, they're dominantly in a hot environment because there's ovens with being bakers of food production, you know, some sort of food manufacturing, so I think that given that, you know, working in hot environments anyway,

I think, you know, we really need to put it forward and try and do something, I think, in our industry and, you know, through Labour, through the Parliamentary Group for women across the country. So yes, support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, there was no opposition, so no right of reply and we're going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Erm, can you take your hands down please. Okay, anyone against? Everybody finished voting? There was no opposition, so that was carried unanimously. Mr Fox.

That this Conference lobbies the government, to end the consumption of alcohol in the houses of Parliament, and the House of Lords. If we drank in our places of work, we would be sacked.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates. That this Conference lobbies the government to end the consumption of alcohol in the Houses of Parliament and the House of Lords. If we drank in our workplaces, if we drank in our places of work, we would be sacked, yes. So, I would, I would like to take this a bit further to tell you the truth and if it's good for shop workers, then random drink and drug testing to be undertaken as well, in Parliament, yes. So, support this motion.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: Sorry, un-muted through the whole thing you were just saying. I'm here to support this motion. The government have proven that they can do it already. Through the pandemic, they shut down the sale of alcohol in the bars, so if they can do it for, for the last year, why can't they do it indefinitely? Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's Lee, Lee now. I'm glad you can lip read though, erm

Brother Lee Wren – Branch 504: Hello, can you hear us?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can.

Brother Lee Wren – Branch 504: Hello, Conference, Mr President, General Secretary. Obviously have to support this motion and I've got to be honest, I wasn't even aware, unless I've been hiding under a rock somewhere, I wasn't aware that alcohol was being consumed in the Houses of Parliament. I'm not sure if there's many or if there's any employers that'll allow the worker to drink alcohol. Is this a case of the government being a law to their own? Workers would face gross misconduct for anybody drinking in a workplace. You've got issues, health and safety issues, lack of judgement when under the influence. Lack of judgement, does this mean with regard to government making decisions whilst full of gin or whisky? We've also got a lot of alcoholism problems and issues in this country. The government should lead by example. I say, fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We'll go Duggie, Nicolae, Mark.

Brother Duggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hiya. I ask you to support this motion, you know. I think it would improve the Houses of Parliament no end. I think it would improve the government no end, because I listen to this government's statement and their policies and I think that they must be drunk or on drugs to come out with the stuff they do. I think please support this motion, it would improve our governance no end. Thank you.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: Hello, do you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, we can hear you, Nick.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357: I never was thinking that I will speak on any motion from the political side, because before I joined the Union, I was totally anti-political person, I mean, I was getting involved in everything except political, but here we are and in joining the Union, I believe that something which you don't really have a choice. In my understanding, I can be wrong. Reading this motion, I mean, with a single word what I will give that, that's kind of ridiculous, because if, I mean, if, from my point of view we do two things, one we are applying equal opportunities and everybody can drunk, be drunk and drink in his workplace, which will be right, because we, I mean, we are equal or we're taking off because that don't make any sense, because then my question will be if the MP can drink in his workplace, why I cannot? I mean, I mean, why we cannot all do that, because that's not right, then it's makes sense and to be honest, I never knew that it's cool to be MP then or in House of the Lords because, you know, you have a lot of opportunities which nobody else have, I believe in any country to be honest, but, I mean, I'm totally agree with all, all my colleagues and comrades. I mean, please support the motion. Thank you.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades. Here to actually oppose this motion and it's quite simple. Do you honestly think that these evil bastards only behave the way they do 'cause they've had a beer? No, they don't. They behave this way, think this way, act this way, vote this way, because they're evil Capitalist bastards. I don't care whether they drink or not, they need overthrowing. Simple as. Normally report to Standing Orders at this point.

Brother Lee Burns – Branch 504: Hello, everyone. Can everybody hear us?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Lee Burns – Branch 504: I'll agree with what Lee said before. Didn't know this was happening. It kind of explains a lot of things, maybe how Theresa May was dancing like a tit on stage at one point, maybe Boris Johnson's haircut, this, this explains a lot of things. Now, I've been in some situations at work with employees who have, there's a fine line between being drunk at work and coming in a bit ropey the next day.

Now, I've watched employees get sacked for this, which I don't believe's fair. If I had have knew that Parliament were getting drunk while making decisions for this country, to be quite fair I don't even have a follow on to that, I didn't realise this was happening. It's an absolute joke. That's like me just having a pint and then jumping on a forklift at work, that, that's, that's not the way you should run a company or a country. That's all, thanks.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: Have you got me, Ian?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We have.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: Right. I support this motion and I also support them having to pay the full price for the drinks, they're subsidised bars. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's you, Dave.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Yes, I'm here to support this motion, but just for a fact. I believe the bar's called either The Sneaker Bar or The Smuggler's Bar, it's something like that. It was a well known fact that Ken Livingstone bought a flat opposite this bar and it has a landing opposite and he used to pull up, the jobless total up, so that all the, Margaret Thatcher and all her cronies could see each day how many people she was throwing on the unemployment list, and yes, they do drink and yes, there's no money exchanges in this bar, I don't know how they settle up later, but yes, I agree with everybody else, it should be stopped.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I'm going to take Mark's opposition as actually a point of information, rather than the point of opposition, so I don't think there's a, a need for a right to reply, because you wasn't opposing it, Mark, you, you was just stating a fact [LAUGHTER]. So I'm going to go to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, finished voting? Those against, oh, sorry, take your hands down, take your hands down, I'm speeding along. One, two, you know what to do. Okay, erm, those against? Everybody finished? That motion was passed unopposed.

Right, okay, Conference. There's, there's two things. So first off, while we're looking for Regatta, I want to read out a statement to, obviously we've, we've finished the motions for today. I want to read out a statement that we've been sent this morning. I have sent back a message of thanks, we've received this this morning.

It says, "Dear all, I hope you are all well, apologise for the slight delay, but please find my message of support and Solidarity to all BFAWU members who are participating in your Conference. On the proud occasion of the 102nd Annual Conference of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union, I want to extend my best wishes and Solidarity to every member of the BFAWU. The BFAWU is, the BFAWU is a strong fighting Union, whose commitment to its members is second to none. The BFAWU is one of the most exciting and vital Trade Unions operating in the UK. You are on the front line combatting some of the most pressing issues facing workers in the food industry today, from toxic casualisation to poverty wages. It is an honour to work in Solidarity with the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union members in Leicester and across the UK. I look forward to many more years of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with your members, because workers, when workers stand together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish. Thank you. Kind regards, Claudia Webbe, MP".

Obviously I've sent, I've sent her a message of thanks for her support and Solidarity.

Now, now Conference, I'm going to bring in Regatta, who's an interpreter in our newest Branch in Scotland, who's going to explain about the role that she performs and obviously a little bit of why they've organised into the Union.

Sister Agata Marczak (interpreter Branch 520) Address to Conference

Sister Agata Marczak – Branch 520: Good afternoon, Delegates. Good afternoon, National President. Good afternoon, the General Secretary. Can you hear me properly?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can indeed.

Sister Agata Marczak – Branch 520: I'm from Branch 520, erm, which consists of public service interpreters in Scotland. Our Branch is coming from different circumstances, however we have some things in common, poor working conditions. You've probably seen an interpreter at least once in your life either on a hospital ward or maybe in a workplace. We have migrants whose first language is not English, deal with many important life saving and life changing situations. Just like [unclear], we play a crucial part in, in society, yet we are treated as secondary workers by our employers, agencies and public organisations, especially the NHS. We are betrayed by the organisation that should protect us all. You may think that public service interpreters earn a lot of money, but it is far from truth. The [unclear] are erased and working conditions mean that public service interpreters very often struggle to feed their families. How anyone has a stable employment contract when fixed number of hours. Most of us employed on precarious zero hour contracts and self-employment, sit and wait for a call from an agency, praying to get only a couple of hours a week. I've heard so many times that an interpreter has actually lost more money on a ticket than they've earned.

I'm heartbroken to hear that several are dismissed without pay or only with an hourly pay when they had been booked for a full day. What enrages me most is when an agency demands from the interpreter to pay for a cancelled job or when he is paid £16 for a two or three hour assignment. Not so long ago, one of the agencies has made a [unclear] and sent every interpreter in a database schedule, showing how much they charge the clients. I was not even shocked to see that I get up to 75% of the total fee, although it was a bitter pill for us to swallow. Some of us may offer tears and expect the agency for such informative knowledge.

We do not have basic employment benefits or rights, such as pension or holiday relief, which probably some of you take for granted. The outbreak of the pandemic showed how little we are being valued. Despite being called key workers, interpreters have been jeopardising their health and safety without even a word of thank you. Social distancing barely exists for interpreters in courts or police stations. Agencies like [unclear] have ripped us even more further by [unclear] interpreting which was yet another excuse to cut our rates and reduce our payments every minute or even second. Because most of us have a combined income of employment and self-employment, we have been excluded from any government help. Some of you can even imagine how stressful our job is and how atrocious stories we hear every day, which [unclear]. Such an emotion package combined with a constant fight for underpaid wages and [unclear] terms and conditions are reason for our depression and secondary PTSD. You might ask why we're standing such injustices in silence. We are simply scared and resigned. We are scared to put on, to be put on black list and lose our only income. We are resigned because we've tried to say no to agencies. Our case have been dismissed by the government so many times.

Many of talented interpreters have already left [unclear] and there are already gaps which are being filled up by the so-called linguists, who barely speak any English, they treat the work as a way of earning some pocket money. We are all under cliff edge of a disaster, where criminals can walk freely on the streets and people lose their health and life because of mistranslation. You may ask why aren't we organising and fighting for our rights. It's not that simple. We don't have a fixed workplace, so that's why we don't know each other. Standard Union practice is ineffective with agencies. We need your help to spread the word around about these practices and support interpreters by hiring them directly. We need your help to lobby the government to pass legislation on how improve our working conditions and protect the public. We need to establish a protection of title and a statutory [unclear] so that all may hire a qualified and experienced individuals and call themselves interpreters. It's essential not only for us but mainly for the safety of the public. Thank you for attention.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much, Regatta, for, for outlining the hardships that, that you're suffering but more, more than that, I mean obviously we welcome you into this Trade Union, we welcome the fact that you've chosen to join, to join with us, you know and, and, and hopefully you've, you've been listening this week and you've seen the Solidarity, erm, that this Union, erm, will always give to workers in struggle and, and obviously the people that you work with, you can take a message back to them that your fight is our fight and together we will win a massive victory for you, because you people deserve it just as much as every other working people does. So, thank you for coming along. Thank you for joining the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union. I know you're working very closely with Mark McHugh and obviously every bit of support that we can give, we will be doing and hopefully next year, we can all actually sit down, discuss over coffee or whatever, erm, whatever we partake and share stories about how struggles have been won in the workplace that will obviously benefit you and your colleagues. So, thank you very much for giving us that presentation.

Sister Agata Marczak – Branch 520: Thank you very much, Mr President, as well.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. Erm, obviously that's it for today.

We've got, we've got some fringe meetings I believe that starts at 2 o'clock with, with the organising one, with Andrew Birchall, that's going to be an amazing one. If anybody's been, been on his courses before, they will know the content of those courses are absolutely incredibly, you know, educational. So hopefully if you haven't signed up for it, please do, because you will learn a lot from it. Following that we're pleased to be welcoming one of our full time Officials, who has put together a BME Network, and we want as many people as we can to make sure that this Network gets spread right across our Trade Union and obviously we want, we want to give, you know, great credit, erm, for, for, for putting, for putting this Network together and obviously we hope that you are able to join that fringe this afternoon. We're going to start at 9.15 in the morning because obviously we'll have, we'll have some greetings and messages that, that we need to get through at the end of Conference and obviously I don't want to keep you longer than I need to for tomorrow morning. Thank you for your indulgence. Sorry and don't forget to vote. Don't forget to vote, it's open until 2 o'clock, erm, but thank you for your indulgence this morning. Sorry about the few technical problems, erm, but listen, you know, it's all been a massive learning curve, but thank you very much. See you's all later on.

Wednesday 16th June 2021

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We're going to mute everybody now, so... Good morning, Conference. Unfortunately I've got some sad news to give you as we open the final day of Conference, about one of our members, Mrs Rowan Forestier-Walker, who got married just a month ago, at the age, she was 42 years old and unfortunately two days' ago died of pancreatic cancer. I'm sure Conference sends obviously our deepest condolences to her family, her friends and obviously her colleagues at Suma Foods. It's really, I know it's really sad news to start the day, but I thought it was important to pass that information on and to show our respects, I think we'll have a minute's silence.

[MINUTE'S SILENCE]

Thank you, Conference.

We're also going to announce the results of the ballot, so that's the Executive, yes? Right, okay. So, the Executive elections: Pat Kelly unopposed Region 1, Nick Mead unopposed Region 2, Region 3 elected Dimitru Manola and Nicolae Macari, Region 4 elected John Owens, Sean Welsby, Region 5 Pauline McCarthy and Joe Knapper, Region 7 Kevin Flood unopposed.

Young Persons: Lee Burns elected unopposed.

Women's Executive Member: Rachel Mullen elected opposed.

So, Standing Orders Committee: we never had a nomination in Region 1, but Region 2 it's Terry Povey, Region 3 Mohinder Badhan, Region 4 John Fox, Region 5 Michael McDonnell, Region 7 Ross Grant.

Elected to go to the TUC was Terry Povey, Adrianna Kara and George Attwell.

We're going to have to resolve the issue at the Executive about the Labour Party, because unfortunately we didn't receive any female nominations, so we'll have to discuss that at the EC following Conference.

On election, on our awards, the Thompson's Trophy for Organising went to John Martin of Branch 529 in 2020. For 2021, we awarded it to successful, in total the whole Branch at 357, Greencore in Northampton.

Last year, the Health & Safety Award went to Nicolae Macari at Branch 357. This year, because of the work that all of our Safety Reps have done, we were unable to select a winner, so we wanted to recognise all of our Safety Reps for the fantastic work they've done in defending our members in the workplace and making sure, you know, that you were all kept safe and well and we send our congratulations and thanks for the hard work of all of our Safety Representatives.

And the Olive Molloy Youth Award, in 2020 it was awarded to Curtis Smith at Branch 334. In 2021, to Anadeep Singh Dhillon of Branch 104.

Thank you, Conference. Obviously we will be sending

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: All the award winners have received a letter this week, informing them of the type that they've won and then we'll make arrangements (unclear/muffled) to present them.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So I'm assuming, I'm hoping people heard that. The award winners have been made aware and then as soon as when we're able to, we will be presenting their award to them. So, thank you, Conference.

Also, I mean normally in Conference we would probably get you all singing, but obviously you'll all be out of tune and you'll all be out of sync, but I'm sure we want to wish Laura Graham a very Happy Birthday. I believe it's her 21st.

Okay, back to your Agendas, Conference and it's motion, it's John Fox anyway isn't it, it's motion 405. 49, yes [LAUGHTER], motion 405.

That this Conference lobbies, the government to ban Fracking. Their phony moratorium is mere smoke and mirrors and a stunt. Fracking can and must be banned for good.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Good morning, Conference. Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates. That this Conference lobbies the government to ban fracking altogether. The [unclear] moratorium [unclear]. Fracking can and must be banned for good. We believe, in Branch 405, that this, the fracking where they've actually stopped it is just a stunt.

We believe that they're going to bring it back shortly and get it up and running, or try to get it up and running again. We must stop this, because it can cost us our job, right, because if that methane gets into the water supply, that's our jobs gone, right. So please, please support this and ban it. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I know Alan Scott is, is Alan Scott there? Let me know if you want to come in and speak, if not, I'll take it as formally seconded. He's here. Okay, formally seconded. We've got nobody who informed us they wanted to speak in advance, but we have got Steve from Branch 504.

Brother Steve Nevin – Branch 504: Morning, Conference. Morning Delegates, Mr President, General Secretary. I fully support this motion. The UK Energy Minister, Kwasi Kwarteng, claimed fracking is over. Do you believe him?, because I don't. You can always tell when a Conservative MP lies, because he opens his mouth and speaks, or she does. We can't afford to dig up yet more polluting fuels and it's not only bad for climate, it's causing air, water and sound pollution. It uses toxic chemicals and the impact on the British countryside would be enormous. They must never, ever be allowed to start up again. And I've just remembered, remember when we had Arthur Scargill at Conference a few years' ago, he gave a speech on fracking and since then I've kept a close eye on it and done a lot of research on it. It's absolutely disgusting, the whole thing, earthquakes, contamination of water, everything like that. It must never be allowed to come back. So fully support this, please. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, Steve. Is there anybody else? Okay, as nobody's opposed it, no right of reply. We're going to go to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, finished voting? Put your hands down for me, please. Okay, those against? All finished? Okay, there's no opposition. That motion's carried unanimously. Motion 50.

50

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees, to lobby the government to properly fund our NHS. Our national treasure is under threat from further privatisation and this must be fought tooth and nail.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to properly fund our NHS. Our national treasure is under threat from further privatisation and must for fought for, tooth and nail. To properly fund our NHS, would be to get rid of all these private companies who are actually in it and get it back into public hands, because the private companies are taking most of the money out of it in shareholders' payments and the bureaucrats who take more money than the doctors and nurses. We must fight to keep this. Please support this. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. Alan, formally seconded? Cool. Any Speakers? Nobody indicating. Oh, yes, Michael. Michael and Douggie.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303: I fully support this motion. It's ridiculous that the National Health Service is now being perverted into a profit-making vehicle for private companies. It's supposed to be a service for our country. End of story. Please support the motion.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hiya. I'm here to support the motion and do you know what? The trouble is and, the trouble is is that the government's, the bill that they had in 2013, if you want to hear something scary, even the World Health Organisation turned round and said, we've actually lost our NHS and we really need to re-nationalise. We really, really need to re-nationalise, you know, because even the World Health Organisation said when they heard, when they saw the bill that came out in 2013, under the coalition and I think it's a damn hypocrisy that during the pandemic, those Tories were out there clapping the NHS when, to be honest, they've wanted to destroy it since Day 1. They have wanted to destroy it and indeed, I had the communication when I did a talk once like, you know, for my, for some people when I used to do this radio show with a really great academic called Dr Lucy Reynolds, who's a Health Economist and she told me about that the Tories had planned this since 1968. There was a [unclear] plan, we wrote a book called "After the NHS", a step-by-step plan into bringing the NHS from a publicly-funded system, free at the point of use, to an actual private health insurance system like the United States and we have come to the end of the [unclear] plan and everything is in it. Please support this motion. Please bring back our NHS. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I know you had your hand up, Pauline. Do you still want to come in? No, yes. Okay, no, are you coming on, Pauline? Mark, Mark Hilton as well, apparently I've just been told as well, so I do, I do apologise, indicated he wanted to speak. Pauline's, Pauline's obviously showing us her best side. Some picture that, Pauline

[LAUGHTER]. I don't know whether you can hear me. Did Mark, Mark Hilton want to come in? Okay, well I'm going to bring in Joe Knapper then to respond on behalf of the EC.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons), here on behalf of the Executive Council: Morning, Conference. On a personal note, I'd like to thank everyone who voted for me for the Executive Council. Obviously, the last 18 months has been an unprecedented amount of strain for the NHS. This Tory government were promising to protect the NHS and invest properly. Well, we saw what they think of the doctors, nurses, porters, domestic staff etc with their 1% pay offer. I say this is not good enough and we should not, and we should tell the Tories so. Please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. There's no right of reply, because there was no opposition. So, we're going to go straight to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, finished voting? Take your hands down. Okay, those against? [unclear], I'm not sure if you realise you've just put your hand up twice. Cheers, I didn't think you'd be opposing it, mate [LAUGHTER]. There was no opposition, that vote was carried unanimously. 51.

51

Branch 405

That this Conference lobbies the government to end the barbarity that is Universal Credit, and restore the original legacy benefits. Under Universal Credit work does not pay. It merely slowly starves people to death.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates, Conference. That this Conference lobbies the government to end the barbarity that is Universal Credit and restore the original legacy benefits. On the Universal Credit, work does not pay, it merely slowly starves people to death. This is diabolical. Now the people who tried to understand this, don't understand it and how it works. The people who receive it, don't understand it and how it works. The government calls it a benefit. What is a benefit? No-one on Social Security has a benefit, as nothing benefits anyone. We need to go back to the Social Security payments to help people when they come out of work for no fault of their own, whether it be for a disability or redundancy. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded by Alan. Duggie had indicated he wanted to speak.

Brother Duggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Thank you, Ian. Everybody knows that I am a lay member and I'm on benefits and it's something personal to my heart, you know. I am not, I've not been hit by Universal Credit yet, but I can, know people who have. I know people that, Universal Credit, it cuts down the amount of money you get. You just, not only what I've heard on the streets, but what I, if you look into the facts and figures. When the government ran it out, it cuts the amount of money that people get, so people, the areas where it was coming out, they started to look at like, people are looking whether they were eating, having something to eat or whether they were paying the rent. So landlords stopped saying, I'm not going to have anybody on benefits. People were starting to get in debt with their landlords. There were massive evictions and where Universal Credit is all over, you see the increase in homelessness. You see the increase in suicides and because it's a lumping together of loads of benefits, you're finding over like a five year period, over, people who were terminally ill, instead of spending their last few months in like, surrounded by their family and just worrying about what happens. 1700 people averaged in a month were dying without any benefits, they were dead before they even got any benefits.

You just have to look at the special report, the Special Rapporteur that came here from the UN a couple of years, read that report, the condemnation of the government's flagship thing on benefits. It's utterly, utterly disgraceful. Please support this motion, because people are dying out there because of this way this criminal government is just treating the poor, because I'll tell you what, because of this government, they think that poverty is a choice, unemployment is something that's, it isn't caused by economic conditions, it's because you have some kind of moral failing and Ian Duncan Smith gets a bloody, not sorry, knighthood for that. He deserves charges. The police were trying to investigate him at one stage. He gets a knighthood and poor people die. Support this motion, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you for that, Duggie, very passionate. Anybody else? Okay, Sean, on behalf of the EC.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, speaking on behalf of the EC: Morning, Conference. The EC would ask you to support this motion. You know, we need a fairer system in place and to get that fairer system, we need to overturn this shambolic government that's in, the Tories, we need to get them out. What's happening is, is they're trying to force people back into work, allowing the fat cat employers to keep terms and conditions down and reduce wages to as minimal as possible, so either way we're screwed. We're screwed if we need to, you know, claim Universal Credit and we're screwed by the employers, fat cat employers, paying minimal wages. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: As there was no opposition, no right of reply. To the vote. All those in favour? Okay, everybody finished voting? Take your hands down. Okay, anyone against? Finished voting? Okay, no opposition, that's carried unanimously. 52.

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to recognise the rights and freedoms of the people of Palestine, and ends the Israeli apartheid occupation.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference, Delegates. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to recognise the rights and freedoms of the people of Palestine and end the Israeli apartheid occupation. Back in 1947, Jewish people were given the land that had previously been occupied by the UK and that land became the nation of Israel. This nation was a small piece of land in the south of Palestine, so it actually belongs to Palestine. We believe that we are letting the Palestine nation down, as the Balfour Declaration states in a letter to Lord Rothschild, it states that, “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”. We feel that this has been broken and we need to reinstate the rights and freedoms of the people of Palestine and give them their land back. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Anybody indicated to speak? Douggie.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I’m here to support this motion. I, as I, I don’t know if anybody heard it yesterday when I spoke to Ian, so you might have heard the news coming out of Israel. Bibi Netanyahu has gone. He’s no longer the Prime Minister of Israel. The trouble is, is the new guy, Naftali Bennett, in the words of many, Bibi Netanyahu looked like a boy scout. The new Prime Minister of Israel and this captures it all, the new Prime Minister has bragged about how many Palestinians he’s killed. He’s turned round and he said, he’s said, I have no problem with killing Palestinians. During the Great March of Return he turned round and he said, supposing children break through the barrier and he turned and said, and you shot them and he said they aren’t children, they are terrorists. He doesn’t actually believe in the two-state solution, although I must say the two-state, I was talking to a very distinguished Palestinian and even they admit that the two-state solution is dead. It’s come to the attention that, if anybody reads Human Rights Watch reports, a small [unclear] human rights organisation, a thing called A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid. They found out that Israel had broken the 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. They committed the crime of apartheid as defined on the 2002 [unclear] of the International Court. They [unclear] out Israel operates the two-states solution, two-tiered system that discriminates against Palestinians. In the West Bank alone, if a Jewish settler, you know, can drive his car to Jerusalem, a Palestinian cannot, if they even get a permit. If they are arrested and they get a fair trial, an Israeli would be granted a fair trial and a Palestinian would not, they are tried in an Israeli military court with nearly a 100% conviction rate. They’re probably even held in detention without trial or on a charge based on secret evidence. They even arrest children, put them in military courts. They tried to, Israeli border police this year, arrested a three year old for stone throwing, a three year old. If you see the footage, the poor child was clinging to his father’s leg, crying. If you try and protest, an Israeli is guaranteed protest, a Palestinian might violate their orders and be given 10 years in prison. I could go on and on and on about this. This is a crime, this is a crime of magnitude. We are dealing with the longest, modern occupation of, military occupation of somebody else’s land. Just think about that three year old child being arrested, being arrested for stone throwing, terrified as Israeli guards are there strapped with M16’s. What do you do? Let’s vote for this motion and let’s send two fingers to Naftali Bennett, the new Prime Minister of Israel. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thanks, Doug. Well done.

Brother [unidentified]: Good morning, Conference. I’ll just touch on this. I want you to support this. I coach a girl who’s actually from Israel, she’s a Catholic Israeli. Her cousin, in the last troubles, a few weeks ago, was filming. The Israeli police stormed his accommodation, he’s 18 years of age, he was dragged out, beaten, taken to a police station, kept for a week, in that time he was beaten again, he was then released back to, under house arrest, all because he was taking a video. I never knew it was like this, you only ever see what you see on the news. To hear the fact that they actually took him from his house, all he was doing was videoing. He was reported by someone for videoing. To me, I didn’t know it was a crime to video it. If you’ve got TV reporters from all over the world there, what is wrong with a citizen doing it? The fact that he was beaten, kept for five days, is beyond me, with no charge. I’d like Conference to support this. It needs to end. I watched a documentary the other day where they just literally moved in and were moving people out of houses. It didn’t matter whether they’d lived there for 30, 40 years, they would just move in, this is now an Israeli house, you’re moving out. End of. We can’t live like that in society, we can’t live like that in the world, because all it does is add trouble after trouble after trouble. It has to end. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much for your first, first-time Speaker at Conference and there’s been quite a few this time, so many of you, fantastic to see so many wanting to take part. Is there anybody else that wants to speak before I bring in John Fitz?

Okay, Fitzy.

Brother John Fitzpatrick – Branch 430, speaking on behalf of the Executive: There's a lot of things that don't go recorded on television or anything else. Palestinians don't have names any more, they've all had their names taken and they've all got numbers on their passes. They've got to display their number wherever they go. There's blockades everywhere. There's thousands go to work everyday, they queue up, if they haven't got the right pass or whatever, they're turned away, mainly women are turned away, the majority. When the houses are that close together, you can only build upwards, you can't build sideways, back or front, it's got to be upwards. You've got to ask permission, permission is never granted, very rarely granted. I think the idea of the Israelis is, the people get that overcrowded they have to move out and once they've moved out, as is mentioned, the houses are pulled down then so they can't come back. If they don't pull the extension down, they have 24 hours to take the extension down. Thousands of homes, hospitals, schools are pulled down every year. It's terrible for the nation that was persecuted during the war, is persecuting another country now, during the exact same way it was persecuted to them, which is totally wrong. We live in a [unclear] society. It's very sad talking about this, even reading it. I sit on the TUAC Committee, we talk about Israel regularly, what's going on. Just ask you to support this, it's upsetting just even talking about it. So I'd like you to support this, on behalf of the EC.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, John. To the vote. Those in favour? Everybody finished? Take your hands down. Okay. Adrianna, can you take your (un)tick off for me, please. Ang, you've just put your hand up. I know I've not to count that green tick, Adrianna, thank you very much. Those against? Okay. That motion is carried. Motion 53, yes, 53.

53

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees that we lobby the education minister to put environmental issues onto the school curriculum, so that the young people who get this education can put the mess that this generation has made right.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. That this Conference agrees that we lobby the Education Minister to put environmental issues onto the school curriculum, so that young people who get this education can put the mess that this generation has made, right. More schools now have the Green Flag as an Eco-School, but the environment is not on the curriculum. These classes are usually done at after-school activities by conscientious staff or by charities like Manchester Environmental Education Network, MEEN for short, or similar organisations. The people should know about air pollution and about soils, as this is a risk to our lives. Let's get them a better and cleaner place for them to live in, in the future. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Any Speakers? Did we have any indicate? Speakers from the floor? Okay, Nick.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I think it was a foregone conclusion that I was going to speak on this one. I'm here to support this motion. If you look at all the other motions I brought forward this Conference, the majority have been around environmental issues. If we try to do it at the older generation, I'm classing us all in the older generation unfortunately, why are we not trying to get the younger generation more educated and making sure that it starts in primary school. It's on the curriculum, everyone is educated about it, so they're coming into it as they're growing up and they're coming up with their ideas for their career paths and things like that, they're using all those things to try and help shape our planet for the better. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else? Okay. General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, we ask you to support this motion. The only way to enact change thoroughly is through education, teaching people why areas such as climate change and the environment matter. The best place to start this, as Nick has just mentioned, is at school, so that children grow up understanding the relevance and importance of such matters.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: No opposition, so to the vote. All those in favour? Okay. Take your hands down, please. Take down your hands, please. Take your hand down for me, Adriana (? spelling). Okay, those against? Everybody finished? There's no votes against, that motion's carried unanimously. 54.

54

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees, that this union works with the TUC, Labour Party and Parliament and other interested parties to ensure that no more backdated changes to immigration rules, accidentally cause another Windrush Scandal.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Hello, Conference. I've only got six more of my dulcet tones, yes, so Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. That this Conference agrees that this Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and Parliament and other interested parties to ensure that no more backhanded changes, backdated changes to immigration rules accidentally cause another Windrush scandal. This motion just says everything, so please support it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Any Speakers? Oh, Douggie, sorry.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Thank you, Ian. This is a no-brainer, to be honest. This is a no-brainer and if I mention a personal anecdote, a case that I know about, about how these heartless immigration conditions are. We supported a campaign by Trek and Stand Up To Racism in Leicester, where a Zimbabwean woman lived, was living in the UK for many, many years and she had, she was in an abusive relationship, her children were all British, she worked all her life and when she left her partner, abusive partner, they wanted to throw her straight out the country. They forced her into leaving her job, she spent months and months and months of heartache, just trying to get the right to remain. Forced into leaving her job, she worked really nicely, really well in Social Services and a point, a point of interest, there was, Ian, you know Jackie Lewis from Leicester, don't you? You know Jackie? Jackie Lewis, she went to a Labour Party thing and there were two MPs that took up her cause and the reasons why she was allowed to remain and that was Diane Abbott and Jeremy Corbyn. They had the heart to take up that cause, because they are thoroughly decent MPs that do their job, no matter what our silly media says. I don't want to see anybody go through that heartache. Besides, we should consider, migrants are our brothers and our sisters and add so much to our country and they should be looked upon as our brothers and sisters and we should care for them, as part of our community. They add so much to them. Let's defend their rights. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Michael.

Brother Michael Blundred – Branch 390 (Premier Foods, Stoke): I wholeheartedly agree with this motion. The nasty ruling classes, all they want to do is split the workers. We're together, we should be together. Those are our brothers and sisters. Don't listen to the horrible propaganda that this nasty government puts out. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Any other Speakers? No. Responding on behalf of the EC. Conference, we would ask you to support this motion and I think what's really, really important about the issue around immigration and migrants, is the one-sidedness of that discussion. The lies and the hatred that's spread with misinformation. I mean, first off, we need to clarify for people who fall for the lies and the smears about migrants taking their jobs. Migrants don't take anybody's jobs. Migrants get invited to take roles in this country because employers want to engage them. For many reasons, people come to our country and not all of them are coming to our country because they are economic migrants and when people talk about refugees, a refugee is completely different to an economic migrant. A refugee is normally fleeing from the bombs that we make in this country, sell to those countries to drop on their country and force them out of their homes. We are responsible for making refugees. It's our country that makes the arms that enables refugees to be created.

If you don't want refugees, stop the government from creating the weapons of destruction that bombs them out of their countries, then you won't get refugees and let's be clear also, when people talk about asylum seekers. There is no such thing as an asylum seeker, that's a human being seeking sanctuary because they're being persecuted either because of their religion or because of their sexuality or for some other political reason. Those people are wanting to go to somewhere safe because if they don't, they will be murdered just because they could be gay, just because they could not have the same religion of the government in charge of that country and we, as a country, should be reaching out in support of those individuals and we should condemn the government for Windrush and condemn the government for what's now going to happen with the economic, the recent decision by the government on settled status and we should make sure, like in Glasgow when they went out to support those people who had their doors smashed in, we should make sure that we gather a ring of steel around every European worker that came here to work, that works in our factories, that lives in our community, to make sure they're not deported, they're as welcome here and they've contributed more than all of the people that own our media or the people, you know, that in many cases own the companies that live in foreign countries, but take all their profit, while exploiting us. Every single migrant that's in this country, that works in our industry, we should defend every single migrant that's in our country wherever they work, whatever they do, we have a duty to make sure that we protect their rights and their human rights to be here and not face any discrimination. So never mind no backdated changes to migration, no deportations of any human being of this country. Please support the motion.

To the vote. Those in favour? Finished voting? Take your hands down, please. I've got one, two, three, four, five people still with their hands up. Just you, Bobby. Take it down, will you? Cool. Anybody against? Okay. Finished voting? Nobody opposing, so that's carried unanimously.

Okay Conference, just before we go, for a brew and obviously I think Matthew will be probably having a piece of birthday cake, so Happy Birthday Matthew and I hope you enjoy your first experience of being here at a Conference. Obviously, we thank you as well for the contributions that you've made and obviously wish you a very Happy Birthday and obviously later on have a great evening, pal. I believe Mark's going to be forming a puppet show for those that want to stay and watch. Myself, I'm going to go and have a peppermint tea, so we'll see you back here at half past.

[BREAK]

Okay, Conference. Back to your Agendas. It's John Fox, right? You know what motion. One, two, you know what to do [LAUGHTER].

That this Conference agrees that this union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament to create a law, where it is proven by the outcome of tribunal etc., that management has been lying during a disciplinary process etc. That disciplinary action must be taken against those who lied, those who knew it was a lie and those directing the lying.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Delegates, Conference. That this Conference agrees that this Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament to create a law where it is proven by the outcome of tribunal etc, that management has been lying during a disciplinary process etc, that disciplinary action must be taken against those who lied. Those who knew it was a lie and those directing the lying. A law is needed for this because a lot of management do lie when it's coming to a disciplinary or they don't like somebody and they want them out the door, yes. We just, something's got to be done, because it's like blacklisting, yes. It needs to be stopped, okay. I move this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Dave Suddards indicated he wanted to come in.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Morning, Conference. Yes, when I indicated on this, I was on the shelf with it, I indicated I was on the shelf, but as Conference has gone on, although I agree with the sentiment, I'm here now to oppose it and the reasons I'm going to oppose it is, we all know now or the majority of Branch Secretaries, Stewards who've been in the game for a while, yes, John's right, they do lie, we know the lie, we know it's a part of the disciplinary process that managers will bend it, twist it and try to get people out, but when you say some form of disciplinary action, well, when you've gone to tribunal, the only action you could take is back to tribunal or in the Courts of Law and I just think it would be folly when we're struggling with money to defend members, to bring, to chase some form of retribution through the Courts of Law, through some form of action. I would rather see the money going into actually defending the member and getting justice. When we've got justice, that's a big enough smack in the face for the management, whether they've lied through the process, that, it's just the norm and my experience at tribunal is that even the judges will never actually say that a manager or anybody has lied, they don't. I once went to a tribunal where they said the person wasn't lying, he was stretching the truth, so yes, I just think it would be complete folly. So, I'm opposing this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, I'm going to take Mark Hilton, Pauline McCarthy and then Michael Jackson.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Morning, Conference. Dave, that was, I get your point and you half swayed me, but I'm going to urge you to support this motion, not because I actually think we're going to get anywhere with it, but because I want to send a message out that this lying business is not alright. We've got personal experience of this at the minute at 558, with Union Reps, Health & Safety Reps, Branch Secretaries being investigated, harassed, lied about. They've even had the gall to accuse FTOs, General Secretary, the lot. They're lying through their teeth and I want to send a message to them that it's not alright. Please support.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Speaking on behalf of myself, because I'm a bit, I want to tell you a story. I'll tell you a story that happened a few years ago. I went to a tribunal by an accident that happened at work and we won the case but what actually happened was, the manager did lie and I had, the best reward of all was winning the case, because everybody knew he was lying. So, although I agree with the sentiment and I do support the motion, I think the best thing you can do is beat them.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You're already un-muted, Michael.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303 (Greggs): Conference. Yes, I do support the motion and very much lies get told I think, as we all know, on both sides.

However, what I find is by keeping records of everything, if anybody has a near miss, if there's any defect on a vehicle, most of us have got mobile 'phones now, take a picture and send it to the Cloud. The amount of times where members have a claim and Kirsty from Thompsons will ring me and say they're denying this, what have you got, the amount of times I've pulled down evidence which shows that they are lying, in almost every case. So yes, everybody does tell lies unfortunately, but if we keep our records, make sure we've got a record of everything, more things by email, so we have the electronic record, is the only way to beat them is by getting our house in order and getting our record keeping absolutely as tight as we can, but I do urge you to support the motion. Thank you.

Brother Michael Blundred – Branch 390 (Premier Foods, Stoke): Hello. Reading through the motion, my sentiment is to back it, but what I would have said instead though, maybe we could introduce something like a case of perverting the course of justice for people who lie in these tribunal processes, because when it's all said and done, it's a Court of Law essentially and if anybody's found guilty of it, how about a massive fine. We all know companies, they're all after the bottom line. If you fine them for doing it, they're going to be well peeved. That's it for me. Please support.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: Hi. I too would like to support this motion. I do respect everything Mr Suddards had said and the very valid points he had made, but myself, the story I have got is my very first ever case, I had represented somebody, which was last year, we had somebody who was accused of being AWOL and he said he texted the 'phone, the mobile 'phone, because nobody was answering it. When he returned back to work, they sent him home for not following correct company procedures and then during the investigation it turned out somebody in his department had actually deleted the text message he had sent on the exact same day he was sent home, but luckily the investigating manager also realised this and he said no further action. Me, myself, obviously being eager, I wanted to take it one step further and obviously hold the manager accountable for deleting the message, but the person I was representing had asked me not to drag his name in the mud in the process and wanted to drop it, so unfortunately I dropped it out of respect to him, but yes, the lying from the management doesn't start at the top, it starts at the bottom and that's my one year's experience, it starts from the bottom and I do feel that management needs to be held accountable and responsible so yes, I do support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Should be alright to come in, Wasili.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561: Morning, Conference, Delegates, General Secretary and National President. I'm here to oppose the motion. [unclear] of the Speakers, those supporting, but I'm with Mr Suddards. The word lying is all about deception. It is and would be very difficult to prove that somebody has lied and to pursue that, because I was reading the motion, the wording of the motion, let me just repeat the wording of the motion, that this action must be taken against those who lied, those who knew it was a lie and those directing the lie. That's a tall order for anyone to go through. If somebody used the word obstruction or [unclear], I think there are loads out there. If people believe that somebody has lied then what you could do, you could either take them maybe to the Small Claims Court, but the Union will be asked, we are struggling with the funds, would have to be throwing money or lobbying or asking for the change in laws when there are already laws out there maybe to cater for this kind of situation. It will be a tall order and the other issue is [unclear] we've always been told you do not need to know because the company, when dealing with management, [unclear] how are we going to go around that? So I'd like to oppose the motion based on that [unclear]. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You should be okay to come in, Julie.

Sister Julie Summersgill – Branch 452 (Park Cake, Oldham): Yes. I'm here to oppose this. Like we said, the most important part of tribunal is whether we win or not and obviously I spoke on Day 1, on Sunday, about the legal costs that had jumped from £10,000 to £72,000 and it was indicated at that time that some cases are settled outside of court, so it's not always crystal clear who has been telling untruths or, you know, stretching the truth, so I'm the same as David Suddards, I oppose this motion because I think we'd be chasing and creating more cost and we don't need that. No, at the end of the day, if our case goes to court and we win it, that's enough for me. So, I'm opposing this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Any other Speakers? Okay. Okay, Sean Welsby on behalf of the EC.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, speaking on behalf of the Executive Council: We would ask you to support this motion. Firstly, I think what we need to do is fight for it to be brought into legislation that if a manager is found lying, then a tribunal court could ask the company or force the company to take the relevant manager to task. I mean, let's be honest. We, many times, if any of our members lie and they're found to be lying, even if it's not 100% they're found guilty, they will then use the lie reasonable belief to discipline them and potentially sack them and we also know, many companies use lies just to reduce headcount. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. John, you have the right of reply because it was opposed.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. Mr President, Conference. With the right to reply. What I'm going to do is break it down, yes. In the first part, we're asking to create a law, yes, so therefore we're going to have to take it to our Parliamentary Group to get it on, to create a law so that the tribunals can act on it, yes and the second part is, where it's proven by the outcome of tribunal, so therefore we've won the tribunal and if that tribunal, it is found that the manager is lying, yes, during or going up to that tribunal, yes, then disciplinary action must be taken, that disciplinary action must be taken against those who have lied, yes. That means that it's back in the courts, yes and it's down to the tribunal, yes, to actually give that disciplinary action whether it be in a fine or a, something against the company, yes. So that's how we've worded it like this, yes, so that it breaks it down into sections, so that we've got a process to follow, yes. So, I move and please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. All those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Can you take your hands down, please. Okay, those against? Everybody finished? That's carried.

56

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees that this union works with the TUC, Labour Party and Parliament to ensure that workers get a voice at all levels within a company. From ongoing experiences we are being shown that many management decisions are poor and they are totally ignoring their own procedures and rules – causing unending disputes and stress. If the workers had greater input, the poor decisions may have been stopped and better decisions made, disputes avoided and stress reduced.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference, Delegates. That this Conference agrees that when this, that this Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament to ensure that workers get a voice at all levels within a company. From ongoing experiences, we are shown that many management decisions are poor and they are totally ignoring their own procedures and rules, causing unending disputes and stress. If the workers had greater input, the poor decisions may have been stopped and better decisions made, disputes avoided and stress reduced. Now, we heard the other day from, I can't remember which firm it was now, but it was our co-operative firm and that they're having the trouble at the top, yes and they were going to go in and help them, yes, to resolve some issues. Now, if we have this in all firms, yes, this would be great. We could resolve them soon as and get better decisions made straight away. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded? Cheers, Alan. We've got Douggie and then Dave Suddards.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hiya. I'm here to support this motion. One of those things, I suppose it proves my nerd credentials, is that I like to read economics, you know, it's one of my pleasures in the world and there's been some quite very good academic research on this, that shows that more successful companies allow their workers to have participation in how the company's run. It just stands out, you know, it really does stand out. When you see the actual research that goes into it, you can see that it produces a greater, greater kind of, greater kind of innovation in the company and if I, if I take the example, there was an Australian software company who decided one day they would have like a kind of free-for-all self-participation way like and they all came in and they said, they told them you work on what you had, it was like autonomy and then they found out that this was great, so they started doing it one day a month, then it became one day a week and now it runs like it, because it was so successful, because workers had input and some of the groundbreaking programming stuff, software that came out of running a company like that, made that company vastly successful. It is really, really, really good, even the psychological data and I advise anybody, there's a great book out by a guy called Daniel Pink on what drives us and it talks about the economics and everything. There's even research done by those famous Socialists, the Federal Reserve, who carried it out with MIT and they found out that more participation by workers in the company meant that it was more economically viable. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Morning, Conference. Becoming the bad boy of Conference, I'm here to oppose this motion. Not on, the sentiment is right and listening to Douggie, I agree with some of what he said and the points, you know, economically it was right and Suma's been successful, but given experience, what I find is the companies and management are very clever. We actually, the motion above it, they lie and they will manipulate this. If we have voices and it goes wrong, then they're always looking for somebody to blame and oh well, it was Union's idea and this is, this is why I think we have a voice within companies, we have bargaining rights and if we make sure we've got, we stick and make sure the company follow them bargaining rights, we can protect our colleagues and workers with pay, holiday pay, sick pay and other bargaining rights in there.

Most companies have JNCs or JCCs where they will come to the Trade Union and they'll listen to us, but for us to have a point and a voice within that, then my fear with it is they always want to look to blame somebody when it goes wrong and we would be leaving ourselves open. We can always oppose the ideas, we've got that right to oppose ideas if it affects members, but to have a voice, management are very, very good at twisting it and then attributing the blame back. This is my opinion on what I, so I'm sorry, but just on that I will have to oppose the motion.

Sister Katarzyna Damek – Branch 515: Good morning. I would like to oppose this motion. I agree with Mr Suddards and as well I would like to say that about managers breaking their own rules and policies, I believe that if we raise it up with HR, they will, the higher stages of management, they will just say that okay, but everyone who knows policies and rules can just refuse to follow the instruction which is against that rules. They will say that everyone has tried to challenge and probably a decision made and that's unclear how we are going to achieve that the workers have the greater input, because most of companies have got employees' forums where they encourage people to put their opinion, not necessarily listen to them, but at least they are pretending that they are listen, so we can, we can see that they can say that they have already that in place, so I cannot see the way that we could enforce that rule. Thank you.

Brother [unidentified]: Yes, hi. I can't remember my Branch number, I should look into that, but yes, I'd like to encourage everyone to support this motion. I'm a little bit surprised, respectfully, by what the comrades before me have said, with the scope for management to use this to kind of turn on the workers and blame us. I think all of us have been in the Labour movement long enough to understand that this is something that management does with Trade Unions too. They say, you know, we've negotiated with your Union's Reps, we've talked to them, they already attempt to co-opt the little representation we have and what this motion says to me is it's a commitment to trying democratic participation within the workplace, which historically has always gone hand-in-hand with the Labour movement, in particular through like the support traditionally for the co-operative movement. Corbyn's policy platform was very much grounded in that understanding. I think as much as we can talk about the fact that this, these kind of mechanisms could be open for co-optation, as someone who mainly like represents workers in small hospitality sites, there are no forums for employees to have a say, when there are Trade Unions, it's hard to get any representation. I think what we do need and what the radical policy platform of the Labour Party in recent years has been claiming, is that democratic participation at all levels of management is a way to build worker power and I would urge, on that basis, everyone to support this motion.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, whilst my heart does indeed want to support the motion, I have to oppose it and I have to cite Dave and Kasha for exactly what they've said and I would also say to John, it's just the wording on this. Nowhere in there does it mention the Union. As Kasha rightly said and we are going through this place, at 558, at the minute, it asks for participation at all levels and yes, at the minute we're seeing consultation groups, breakfast groups, chat groups, they're away, the company is again, as Kasha said, pretending to dialogue with us. In fact, they're using it as a way to go round the Union, yes. So, it doesn't mention the Union anywhere in that motion. So, have a think about it for that reason. I'm going to oppose it.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: Right. I'd love this to work, but it won't, because it'll be used against us. I can remember we having some things at Manor Bakery and it was a close [unclear] and such and what did they come back and say? Well, your Union's agreed to it and I think they'd use it against us. So, I'm opposed to this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody else want to contribute? No? Okay, responding on behalf of the Executive. Conference, I hope I'm going to change your minds, because this is real Socialism, that's what this is about. This is about workers taking control and ownership of the businesses that they, they are the fundamental part of. Making sure when decisions are made, they're made in the interests of the workforce rather than the interests of the CEO and the shareholders. That's what this motion is about and what's been really interesting recently is you have seen the likes of Boris Johnson calling for Socialism in football clubs, by saying that fans should have a voice and a right to sit on the boards. Well, if it's good enough for football fans, then it's good enough for you as the workers in your factories and in your employer's businesses, because if it's good enough for them to make decisions that serve their interest, it's right for us to make decisions in our interest too and that's why I would urge every single one of you that may have a reservation to re-think that position and say, we are entitled to a full say in the way that they exploit our labour, because I'll tell you this as well. When you sit on the board of directors, because that's what they're talking about, you are covered by legislation and if they fail to provide you with the information, they break the law and that puts their business at risk, so they can't lie to you.

When you're in those boardrooms, they have to provide you with the truth because there is no other place for them to make a decision other than that boardroom and if they agree to allow workers to participate on those boards, it will empower Trade Unions to be able to influence who gets elected to those boards, because it would be workers who make the decision, who goes and sits on those boards. We don't want tokenism, we want 50% of the board too, because if we're going to be playing a full part in those businesses that uses our labour, then we have an entitlement and a right to play a full 50% part in all of the decisions that are made too. So I hear those people who may have been, you know, worried about what it means, because obviously their understanding of what happens in their workplace currently, but those lies that you are told on a daily basis will not happen if you are sitting across from the directors of the company as directors of your company, that's what you would be. Equal rights, equal rights to a voice, equal rights to the decision-making process and making sure that we're not exploiting workers in any factory or any business in this country. Your rights as workers, real, real Socialism.

Conference, obviously John you have the right of reply.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Yes. I just want to reply to Mark really, that the sentence actually says, that this Conference agrees that this Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament, so the Union is there in the motion. Okay, thank you. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, those against? Sorry, take your hands down first, take your hands down. Getting ahead of myself. Those against? Okay, hands down. That's been carried. I've got some work to do on convincing you. We're on

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Motion 57.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much.

57

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees that this union works with the TUC, Labour Party and Parliament, so that the Department of Work and Pensions, its contractors and their employees, should be held legally responsible for their negligent assessment that have overruled professional medical opinion in the same way and standard as doctors are held.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. That this Conference agrees that this Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament so that the Department of Work & Pensions, its contractors and their employees should be held legally responsible for the neglect assessment that have overruled professional medical opinion, in the same way and standards as doctors are held. Conference, this motion speaks for itself, I don't really need to say anything more than that, but the way that these assessments have been going within the DWP and people have been sanctioned from them, yes, or had the money taken off them, is absolutely disgraceful and the people that have died shortly after that, they've had this money taken off, through the stress and stuff like that, is just outrageous. So, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, formally seconded. Nobody indicated before, no? No. Michael Jackson.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303: Good morning, Conference. I'd also like to support this motion. On quite a few occasions, I've represented people at hearings all the way through to tribunal. A lot of the time they are denying people the right to this benefit, yet when you get to tribunal and you sit in front of the panel, I've done about seven now and I've won all of them. It is just a way for them not to pay until you go all the way and they have to pay. Please support. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Douggie.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: I'd ask you really to support this motion, you know. A couple of years' ago I went through the case, because I'm a member on benefits, I lost my benefits. It was only because of the kindness of people in this Trade Union that I wasn't, that I didn't lose my electric, I didn't lose everything. I had no food, so it was only through your kindness. I know the heartache that goes through that, the mental stress that it brings. I used to walk in my house, I used to nearly feel like breaking in tears. It is emotionally draining. I recently, one of my closest friends has recently lost some of his benefits, you know, through this draconian system. I'll tell you about my friend. He's a paranoid schizophrenic. He'd turn up at my house, he was a guy, he was a young guy who was sexually abused by a school teacher. He goes often on, when he's put through these stressful things and he goes off and he self-medicates through drugs, crack and heroin. He's often turned up at my house, he's told me things like he's the last human being on earth and there will be no more babies born and everybody's eaten human flesh but him. He's turned up speaking about how he's been told to, that voices are telling him to kill somebody.

I'm not a trained worker, what do I say to that?, and they do put this stress on this guy who needs help all the time and all they've done is take away his benefits. It's a disgrace. He's back, luckily he's back again in the psychiatric wards. You don't have to watch Daniel Blake, although it does help to show you the things that happen. Indeed, from what I've seen, Daniel Blake even underplays it. Please show some humanity and support this motion, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thanks, Douggie. Anybody else? Okay, Sean.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, speaking on behalf of the Executive Council: The Executive Council would ask you to support this motion. This is just another barbaric way that the government uses one of its organisations to control and suppress the lower class. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, there was no opposition. To the vote. Those in favour? Okay, if you can take your hands down. That looks unanimous to me. Anyone against? I thought it was unanimous. That's carried unanimously. Thank you very much. 58.

58

Branch 405

That this Conference agrees that this union works with the TUC, Labour Party and Parliament, to change the law around criminal action and corruption by the police against protesters and strikers. Where the case collapses – the police involved should suffer the same sentence that those originally charged, were to receive.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Nearly there. Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. That this Conference agrees that the Union works with the TUC, Labour Party and parliament to change the law around criminal action and corruption by the police against protesters and strikers. Where the case collapses, the police involved should suffer the same sentence that those originally charged were to receive. Now, I've known a lot of cases that have been dropped at court because of the police behaviour and how they have actually gone about doing their own job. Now this is unacceptable. If we're on strike and we're doing a peaceful strike now and we're there on the picket line, they can actually arrest you there and then, yes. Once it gets to court, then it'll get thrown out because there's no case to answer, because you're doing it peacefully, yes. So, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. We're going to Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, I'm going to ask you to support this motion. I do have a slight bit about it which is just the end, John, where it says when the case collapses, the police involved should suffer the same sentence that those originally charged were to receive. I get your sentiment, but in legal terms that's a bit depending what the charge was, what the sentence is. What we actually need and I think what you're suggesting is that we enforce and improve the current rules on corruption and focus on actually getting them followed through with, but still support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Terry.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277 (Warburtons, Bristol): Chair, Delegates. Yes, I'm here to support this motion. I'm not sure if a lot of you have seen, but I'm in the news recently in Bristol. There was a protest about the right to protest and it was very peaceful, it went off okay. I know a few people that were there and, as always, the police used rough tactics and were dragging people out. Now, it beggars belief that, you know, nothing was done by the police, to the police, considering this was a peaceful strike, a peaceful protest, beg your pardon. It is, it's just unbelievable. I was told that there was a police van that was left there as an entrapment tool. Now this police van was a lot older than the other vans that were all there, which were ferrying the police in and with all the guards taken off it and there was even graffiti on it. Of course, a few of our little militant brothers in Bristol decided to set fire to the bugger. Now again like, you know, it was left there, the police did that on purpose so they could actually grab people and charge them, okay. Now, it's so frustrating that the police can get away with this tactic. It just beggars belief. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other Speakers? I mean, obviously we've had no opposition to it. Conference, the Executive would ask you to support this motion. I was going to give you a bit of a long rant, but I think people have witnessed recently, in recent weeks, you know, the power that's been given to the police. I mean, how they police, you know, a far right racist demonstration with kid gloves, then arrest women for holding candles and going to a vigil, demonstrates that the powers the police have were already too strong anyway and when we saw in Bristol, as Terry referred to, police officers coming on looking for sympathy from the public by lying, saying that police officers had been seriously injured and had broken bones and then had to send a media person out to say actually that wasn't true, but it gave them the justification that they needed to beat up protesters, beat up students. All they were saying is it's our human right to protest. So I would expect us all on here, I mean, you know, we nearly had our Officers arrested over in Northern Ireland who are members wanting to fight to improve their pay.

So I think we have to, no matter what, on here unanimously agree that this is an approach that we have to try and enforce by saying it's wrong when police deliberately set out to prosecute people for standing up for their rights. So Conference, please support this motion.

Finished voting? Finished? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay, those against? Finished? That's passed unanimously. Thank you very much, Conference. Are you ready?

59

Branch 405

That this Conference supports the aims and objectives of JENGBA (Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association), a grass roots organization that campaigns to end the injustices that are largely carried out against BAME and working-class families. The campaign is run by volunteers, many of whom are connected to trade union and Labour movements. Can this Conference agree to help JENGBA lobby cross party MPs through its parliamentary group in support of JENGBA's Private Members Bill on Substantial Injustice due to be launched this year.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Yes, 59. Yes, last one. Mr President, General Secretary, Conference, Delegates. That this Conference supports the aims and objectives of JENGBA, which is Joint Enterprise Not Guilty by Association, a grass roots organisation that campaigns to end the injustices that are carried out against working class families. The campaign is run by volunteers, many of whom are connected to Trade Union and Labour movements. Can this Conference agree to help JENGBA lobby cross-party MPs through its Parliamentary Group in support of JENGBA's Private Members Bill or sustain substantial injustice due to be launched this year. I'll give you a bit of a, hopefully a bit of a background on this, yes. Joint Enterprise is a common law for common people and makes no common sense. Until the JENGBA campaign launched in 2010, Joint Enterprise was a little-known law that confused both legal and professionals and judges to the extent that it was wrongly applied by the courts for over 30 years, the judges got it wrong. JENGBA campaigners are mainly women fighting for their loved ones, who have been convicted of murder and sentenced to life prison, life in prison, even though they didn't kill anyone. A landmark case supported by JENGBA, recent Supreme Court in 2016, were five of the UK's most senior judges acknowledged the law had taken a wrong turn as far back as 1984. Vindication for JENGBA campaigners, however this was a bittersweet victory. Rather than the judiciary take responsibility for their own mistakes, allowing all those men, women and children convicted under the wrong law the right to appeal, they brought in a new and impossible test called the Substantial Injustice Test. Only those that can prove to the courts that they have suffered a substantial injustice have the right to appeal. JENGBA says all injustice is substantial. When people are convicted of the most serious offence of murder and found guilty, using the weakest of evidence such as the possibility of foresight, they deserve all our support. The youngest person JENGBA supports was just 12 years old when given a life sentence. As the judge sentenced him, he turned to his mum and said, mum, what does life mean? He didn't even know that. J

JENGBA are about to launch a Private Members Bill, that will abolish this draconian test and give justice to those convicted under the wrong law. Now, Jimmy McGovern has done a BBC drama called Common and you can gain a really good understanding of how utterly unfair this law is and take note, that since 2016, very little has changed. The courts are still using foresight as evidence often coupled with a racist narrative to convict children, mothers, brothers and sisters of crimes they were proven innocent of by the evidence brought before the court, yet found guilty due to the legal technicality. Only the prosecution has that legal technicality of Joint Enterprise and it needs to end. That will only happen when the common people, like you and me, say no to the common law that makes no common sense being used to send us to prison for crimes committed by someone else, yes and if you want to know any more about this, the website is www.jointenterprise.com I will put it in the "chat", yes, so people can see it later. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Any Speakers? Okay, oh, Michael.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 365: Come off. I've done it. Right. The first time I heard about this guilty, Joint Enterprise, it was Joint Enterprise Guilty, not Not Guilty and it was at one of our Conferences, maybe 2010, as I say and I'd never heard of it before and a lady addressed our Conference about her son being, he'd got life because he, I don't know, he knew somebody or something, anyway, he got dragged in and that's been going on for years and it's about time something did happen. We knew about it at that Conference, I don't know what we did about it, because I don't think it was a motion, but it's been around a long time. Please vote for this movement, please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. Anybody else? Conference, the Executive would ask you to support and just in response to Michael, the Union actually helped organise, in Westminster, a debate on JENGBA and assisted the campaign.

I know in particular in Wigan, where a number of these campaigners are based, most of them are our members. A lot of the people in JENGBA have joined our Trade Union because of the support we've given to them. As a point of information, Joint Enterprise used to be a justification in the Victorian era to sweep up children so they could send them to the workhouse. It was done away with in the early 1900's and then it was reintroduced in 1984 and the reason for introducing it in 1984 was to enable the police to be able to arrest minors for taking part in industrial action. Since then, it's been put into practice to arrest working class kids who they say act in gangs on the streets. Whether they do or whether they don't is, there's no relevance. A young person, you know, particularly a black young person who may report an incident, I've met somebody who did this, reported an incident that led to somebody's death, he told them who it was and he got arrested and did 15 years in prison because he wouldn't admit his guilt and they didn't let him out because he wouldn't admit he was guilty, but they offered him, if he agreed to accept that he was guilty, that they would release him and he wasn't guilty and he refused to do it and lost, you know, from 12 years old, another 12 year old, from 12 year old until 27 year old, you know, so I encourage everybody to support this motion.

To the vote. Conference, I can ask you to, take your hands down, I can ask you to put up your hands for those that oppose it, but I know there isn't any because I've just seen the numbers, so that's carried unanimously. Motion 60, 561.

60

Branch 561

Council care workers. That this Conference put pressure on this Tory government to stop the cuts in council and NHS care both in council run homes Hospitals and care at homes and give back some dignity to our pensioners.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561: Morning Conference, National President, General Secretary. I'll go to the motion. That this Conference put pressure on this Tory government to stop the cuts in council and NHS care, in both council-run homes, hospitals and care homes and give back some dignity to our pensioners. Now, I've brought this motion for a number of years. My wife worked for the council for a number of years and has now gone working for the NHS and I can tell you things are not getting better, things are getting worse and it goes without saying, you can watch the news daily, read about it, just listen to the nurses, the care workers, yes. I would ask you to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Wasili?.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Good morning Conference, Delegates, General Secretary, National President and comrades. Here to second and support the motion. Unfortunately I wasn't ready because we thought this motion had been removed, so I'm just here to support what David just said. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any Speakers? No Speakers. John Owens, on behalf of the Executive.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Yes, okay, thanks. Before I start, can I just say, thank my fellow Delegates in Region 4 for re-electing me back onto the EC, much appreciated, thank you. Motion 60, speaking on behalf of the EC, who ask you to support this motion. Cuts in social care budgets right across the board is disgraceful and immoral. While the need for social care grows every day, this government should hang its head in shame, because it's responsible for these savage budget cuts. In the last five to six years, more than 400 care homes have closed due to funding, debt and rising costs, which then leaves the patients in those care homes with nowhere else to go but to hospital, thus blocking up the NHS. The cost of social care is rising all the time. The amount of money local authorities pay for care is not keeping up pace with it and this is because of cuts by the government in social care to the authorities.

These cuts and lack of support lead to the sick, the needy and the most vulnerable, very vulnerable and alone, they are being betrayed. In the pandemic, around 40,000 care home residents died to Covid. Some care homes were threatened with withheld funding if they didn't allow the transfer of Covid positive or untested patients. This is disgraceful and inhumane. This was later changed, but the damage was already done. In my city, Liverpool, between 2010 and 2020, the council lost £444 million, 64% of the council's overall budget, due to underfunding by the government. So who suffers? Yes, you're right, those who need it most, especially those in social care. I happened to speak to somebody in the council regarding these cuts and he gave me a lot of facts and figures, but the words he used to me was, it's frightening and it's not going to get any better. It doesn't matter what social care we need in society, people should get the support, the care and the respect that they deserve. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, John. There wasn't anybody against, so therefore to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, Conference, put your hands down. I can tell you now, that was passed unanimously. I don't think I need to ask if anybody wants to oppose it. I saw the numbers, unless somebody snuck in whilst I wasn't looking. So, next motion.

That this Conference agrees that there should be a full inquiry into the government's spending of taxpayers money during the Covid pandemic. Especially involving track and trace and the contracts given out.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Okay, motion 61, yes. I think I've taken over from John Fox now, because I'm doing about the next five or six, so Motion 61. Moving the motion and speaking on behalf of the EC, who ask you to support this motion. That this Conference agrees that there should be a full inquiry into the government's spending of taxpayers' money during the Covid pandemic, especially involving Track and Trace and the contracts given out. An inquiry investigating the circumstances under which contracts were awarded without a full predicament process and whether the contracts were value for money. In September, the Chancellor said that the government had provided over £12 billion to Track and Trace and I now believe that stands at £37 billion. That's even more than Manchester City spent on players, trying to win the Champions League. Sorry, Sean, I'm only joking. This is a huge amount of public money that is being spent and taxpayers have the right to know what due diligence was performed and whether the spending was value for money. The National Audit Office said that the government had failed to provide adequate transparency and documentation showing how some key decisions were reached. Contracts totalling £10.5 billion have been awarded without a competitive tender process, many of them awarded to Tory donors. We do need this inquiry, but I think we already know that this government are liars, cheats and a corrupt bunch of scumbags. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, John. I believe it's formally seconded, is that right, John?

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Yes, yes, yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: So, I'm going to go Duggie, Lee and then Neil.

Brother Duggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I would ask you to support this motion. Like John has just said, there was no competitive tendering business in half of these contracts. It was just a nod and a wink, you know, here you are, I'll give you a contract, you know. It just so happens that Dido Harding, who was the person in charge of Track and Trace, who's got a very sketchy history, Tory donor, that the person who was in charge of overseeing government contracts, you know, that they were put out alright, just so happened to be a Tory MP, who's Dido Harding's husband. Nothing is said, nothing is said about the £151 million that they spent on supposed PPE for the NHS. It turned out that it was not actually, did not actually, was fit for purpose and they couldn't use it. It just so happens on the board of this company, two government advisors were done. It was also a company that was registered in Mauritius, tax haven, you know. So we know where they, they're not spending their taxes and yet they're given a contract to the NHS, you know. You really don't need Monty Python to reform these days, you've just got to look at how the government hands out the contracts. Please support the motion.

Brother Lee Burns – Branch 504: I agree with what everything Duggie and the previous Speaker said. I think it needs looking at, so I urge you to support the motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Obviously, anybody else wish to speak? Obviously when John moved it, he moved it obviously on behalf of his own Branch but also on behalf of the Executive. So, to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, I know you've all finished voting, 'cause I can see the numbers. All take your hands down, please. I know there's no opposition to it, because I can see the numbers. So, that's been carried unanimously. Mr O.

That this Conference agrees there should be a law which prohibits private health care providers charging the NHS double the price for treatments and beds especially in a national crisis like a pandemic.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Okay. Motion 62. I'm moving this motion on behalf of a colleague at work. Moving the motion and speaking on behalf of the EC, who ask you to support this. That this Conference agrees that there should be a law which prohibits private healthcare providers charging the NHS double for the price of treatment and beds, especially in a national crisis like a pandemic. I move this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded. Any Speakers? No Speakers? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, I can tell you that's been passed unanimously as well. Go ahead, John.

That this Conference agrees that we should lobby the government that there should a flexible retirement age for manual workers

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Okay. Motion 63. Moving the motion and speaking on behalf of the EC, who ask you to support this motion. That this Conference agrees that we should lobby the government that there should be a flexible retirement age for manual workers. Twelve hour shifts, heavy lifting, repetitive movements, long standing, takes a toll on your body. I work in a factory as a manual worker and have done for over 30 years and I have aches and pains in my arms, shoulders, feet, back and legs, with all the things that I have said before and I work with people in the same boat, who have worked as manual workers for many years, now in their late 50's, early 60's, wondering how much longer they can carry on. My fear is that I can see many employees being taken down the incapacity route because they can't do their jobs any more.

A few years' ago, on behalf of the National Health & Safety Committee, Ian Hodson wrote to some of the big game players in our industry because it was coming up on a regular basis at our Regional Councils and Branch meetings. The ones that did bother to reply, we got a negative response off them. The UK needs to have a flexible retirement age which would cater for manual workers, who should be able to retire early if they want to. Although the political consensus is that retirement age should be increased, living longer doesn't mean that everyone is able to work longer. We need a flexible retirement pension age that allows people to work for as long as they want, whilst also recognising that for many people the nature of their work, their health or disability may not allow that and if that last statement sounds familiar, that was a quote from Jeremy Corbyn speaking on this matter in 2015. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay and it's formally seconded. Now, in front of me, I'm assuming that all the hands that are still up want to come and talk on this. If you've just left them up as a legacy hand, obviously just take them down for us. In front of me now, I've got Dave Suddards, John Newman, Paul Dunn, Michael Jackson, Kasha. So we'll go for Dave first.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Morning, Conference. Here to fully support this motion. In fact, can we get it through quickly 'cause I'm knackered [LAUGHTER]. I'll go to Standing Orders. No, seriously, we spend an awful lot of time at our Branch representing members, just like John said, now going through the incapacity or capability and at the ages of, from 58 up to 65/66, they're getting paid off by the company for a few thousand pounds and thrown on a scrap heap. They've given their best years to the company. By this bit going through, would allow them to retire with dignity and with some money, because half of these guys have worked all their lives and don't know what to claim and don't know how to claim and literally are thrown on a scrap heap. I know of a guy currently who's doing a 12 hour shift, won, the contract is for, he won, 'cause he's in so much pain, but he cannot afford to not work that one shift. So, I would urge Conference to support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You should be able to un-mute, John.

Brother John Newman – Branch 247: Yes, I would have thought, with the government spending £37 billion on this Track and Trace which has failed over two years, we would have the funds to be able to do something along the lines of helping people like this and having a flexible approach to manual workers. As far as I'm concerned, the government will turn round and tell you, they have got a flexible approach. Currently it's 65, then it goes to 66, then to 67 and forwards, but they won't reduce it the other way. That's my only point on it, but we've got the money to do it, as well as many other things, as well as Trident, get rid of that, spend that on autism and the NHS and the world will be a much more pleasant place. Please support the motion. Thank you.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Premier Foods, I keep saying Manor. Premier Foods, Carlton. I'm on the Executive and I too would like to thank people who voted for me to stay on the Executive. Going forward, I believe this motion's really important. I work at Premier Foods, like I say and I've got people that have been there all their working life. Mixer men, goods-in people, people that work on palletising, people that work in despatch, they're just all wrecked, wrecked. I see them coming to work with their knees shattered, they have time off for knee replacements, time off for backs and they have to keep coming to work because they just can't afford not to and it's a crying shame because they are in agony. So, I support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Michael Jackson – Branch 303 (Greggs): Morning, Conference. I absolutely support this motion as well. As someone that isn't getting any younger myself, the retirement age seems to be getting further and further away. We all wonder will I make it, or will I end up on benefits. Very good question myself. I'm considering going back on four day, onto four days after the summer. We really need to look at this now. Yes, as has been said, we are living longer, but we cannot keep working at the rate that the employers want us to work to. Workloads are not decreasing, workloads are increasing. They want us to work more hours, you know, what do they think we are, machines that never break down? We really need to look at this. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Sister Katarzyna Damek – Branch 515: I would like to support this motion and to be honest, for my country, from Poland, I can tell that we, that people which are doing certain jobs like miners, each year of their job was counted as two years' of normal job, so they could retire earlier. So I believe that in UK, that could be exactly the same. Certain jobs, basing on the statistics and knowing all the damage that they are causing to people's body, every single year which would be working in their jobs could decrease their retirement age by one year and that's just isn't like that. We just need to push and get it done. I support the motion. Thank you.

Brother [unidentified]: Hiya, Conference. I support this motion. I'll give you a bit of an insight where I work at Webber's Bakery. We had a fan fall from the ceiling, so they've had to take out all the fans basically and this heat wave, the machines break down because it's too hot. We've got a very ageing workforce. We have a gentleman who works with myself who's, who had the same thing as what Eriksen had. He was off, he's had to repeatedly have his heart re-stopped, he's now back at work. We're lifting 25 kilo bags. He's said to me that he would love to be able to know that he could retire early, but he's told he won't be able to, they'll keep him going. How he is, does he have a heart attack while he's working with us? We've asked the company numerous times, we've got no air conditioning in the company. They're now shutting one of the plant down to re-do the roof, because they have to. It's alright for the machines to break down, but the staff can't. We have a very ageing staff and I watch, I've only been doing this five years and I look at the staff and I think how can you expect someone of 62, 63, 64 be lifting mixing bowls above their head to put into mixers, we don't even have anything automated. I think this is a cracking thing. We need to push for this. We're in an industry which is physically demanding and there should be something as well. I want you to please endorse this. Thank you very much.

Brother Joe Knapper – Branch 566 (Warburtons), Executive Council Member: Morning, Conference. Yes, I've worked at Warburtons now 34 years, 34½ years, coming up to 35 and you can imagine the people that were there when I started. We're all coming towards 65, 64, 65. There's a few people around the 60 mark, but more and more people are approaching me now asking how can they get onto sort of a job share or part-time working and it's a worry because, I mean, obviously a bakery can't run with a load of part-time workers, but we are going to try and combat that as much as we can by, hopefully, getting people to be able to do job sharing, instead of doing four 12 hour shifts, they do two, but that's not the ideal answer. The ideal answer would be if we could get an early retirement and people could afford to go before they get to 66. I mean, when I left school, they told me 65, but then I got told it'd be 66, so I'm still working, but that's how it is and then like, as you've said, 67 and when it's going to end? We really need to get this through and get some kind of a law in place or some kind of a thing to say that we can retire early, with a bit of dignity and while we can still move around a bit. Thank you. Please support.

Brother Richard Edgely – Branch 388 (Allied, Stoke): Secretary, President, Conference. Yes, we fully support this motion and I think it's part of the Tory Party sweatshop attitude, that they want to squeeze every ounce of sweat out of our workforce and also they don't, they want to reduce the pension payments. The less pensioners they've got, the less they've got to pay out and also, I think, we're going to see a lot more of our elderly workers coming up to pension age or to retirement age that are going to be going through the absentee or the draconian absentee procedures that are in our industry. We have to defend these people but we're going to see people thrown out of work because of their inability to work, because our workforce, our elderly workforce, are knackered and we need to protect these people. So yes, I fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Go ahead, Michael.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: Okay. Get these teeth fixed. I'd like to support this motion and further towards what Joe said, this country's going backwards on retirement. In 1909, they introduced the old age pension. You had to be 70. So we'll get to 1990, 20-what? 2025, you'll have to be 70 again. It's going backwards. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. There was no opposition, so to the vote. All those in favour? Okay Conference, that was passed unanimously. 64. It's you, John.

64

Branch 432

That this Conference agrees that we should lobby government, that when in the likes of the pandemic we are in and people have to self-isolate then 100% sick pay must be paid, people should not have to decide whether to go to work and pay your bills or stay off and not be paid.

Brother John Owens – Branch 432 (AB, Liverpool), EC Member: Okay, thanks for that. Motion 64. Moving the motion. That this Conference agrees that we should lobby government that when the likes of the pandemic we are in and people have to self-isolate, then 100% sick pay must be paid. People should not have to decide whether to go to work and pay your bills or stay off and not be paid.

At the start of all this, the government stated that as a minimum, companies must pay SSP for those who had to self-isolate. For me, this was the wrong message to send out, because then some companies then used that against those self-isolating. I heard it said with my own ears that we are only paying SSP because that's what the government says is the minimum and that's all we need to do. Those who have to self-isolate because they or a family member had symptoms and had to stay at home, not 'cause they wanted to, but did so because they were told by the government and their companies, so why should they suffer financial hardship? Let's face it, if you had a headache or felt a bit achy or a bit of a cough any other time, 99% of the time you would still go to work and because we were told we couldn't and we must stay at home and I fully understand that under the circumstances that we had to do that, but they should have been paid full pay and people knew this. Stay off, I might not get paid, go in and I will get paid. What a terrible predicament to put people in and I'm sure, in fact I know Delegates will follow me after I have finished and tell their stories from their workplaces, how this panned out and the consequences of it.

If you had to shield due to being a high risk, you got paid and I don't have an issue with that. If you got furloughed, you got 80% wages, I don't have an issue with that. Well, I do really, because they shouldn't have been on 80%. But if you worked through the pandemic, going to work, risking your life and your family's life, travelling on public transport, going into work, mixing with other staff and if you happen to go off, you might get only SSP, this is despicable. What the government should have done is raise the SSP to your weekly wage. The SSP is just £96 a week and that is around 1/5th of the average weekly earnings. No-one should face financial hardship due to having to self-isolate. We are in a pandemic and thousands are dying and we need to stop the spread, so if you have to self-isolate, then this should be paid. On my site, we had staff that were, the first time in self-isolation they were paid, if they were off a second or a third time, then they weren't paid. Those ones that were brought to my attention, I recorded them to grievance, which we did do. I even involved Sarah in it, because Sarah represents the Union on my side of the company I work for and she spoke to the head of HR and the members that did sort of put a grievance in, they were fully paid and the company did change their attitude on this. They didn't publicly call them out, because they didn't want people abusing it and we always know people will abuse things, but the company changed their attitude on it and did start paying people that had to self-isolate. So, you know, it's good work done by our Branch and by Sarah getting involved and putting pressure on the company, but as I say, no-one should be financially worse off by having to self-isolate. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's formally seconded and moved on behalf of the Executive too. Mark, we've got you down as a Speaker and then we'll bring in Paul and then we'll bring in Ang and then Pauline and then Nicolae.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, obviously I'm here to support this. I'd just like to pay tribute to our Reps and particularly our Branch Secs that went in from Day 1 on this and we fought like mad and got Morrisons to pay. We have had difficulties with them and those Reps banged in and had to appeal stuff and it's been a busy and really, really stressful time. You can only support this motion. That's all.

Brother Paul [unidentified]: Hiya, Conference. I support this motion. I, myself, had lost 20 days' pay through having to isolate. The Statutory Sick Pay is actually only paid to you if you're actually ill, so I received no money and when I was told I could claim it from the local council, but it was that wrapped up with do you claim this, because we don't claim any benefits, again I couldn't claim anything, so basically we lost 20 days' pay, 10 days before Christmas and 10 days again just after Christmas. Both times I got my notice from work, on both occasions was from work, where people had it. Yes, I had Covid in May, I got full pay in May and I was off for four weeks when I was hospitalised with it, but I got two notifications. We've got it again going through the workplace. I can't afford to take 10 days off work suddenly, with no pay. I support this and I think it's a disgrace that he set something up like this and yet you can't even just furlough the staff who have got the Track and Trace which says you must isolate, it's all there, why can't you incorporate it into having at least 80% of your wages to cover you for the 10 days you have or the seven days. That's it. Thank you very much.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: I'm also here to support the motion, but I would go a step further also, to make sure that companies are not using this as a disciplinary tool, which I know that at least in one of my workplaces it has happened, where somebody has been [unclear] for having Coronavirus. So being told to isolate, they got the payment for having, for actually having the virus and being poorly, it was used against them in a disciplinary. I think it's absolutely diabolical that companies are being able to do this and it shouldn't be allowed, so it needs to be supported.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I'm here to support this motion. Just on, the whole motion is 100% correct I think. Everybody shouldn't be losing money, anyone shouldn't be losing money for being poorly, or being in touch with somebody that was poorly, or living with kids that have come home from school and have brought it home. Nobody should be out of pocket because of this pandemic.

It's not our fault. We didn't bring it into the country. We weren't still flying aeroplanes at 800 a day while everybody else was locked down. It's a f'ing disgrace and that's me being posh, 'cause I can be sometimes. All my site, anyone that was off poorly, not poorly, isolating the many times you've been off, the company have paid everyone. People that have got illnesses that can't work were fully paid. No 80%, 0%, 100%. That's the way it should be, because if we don't stick together, nobody's going to look after us, so we've got to look after ourselves. So I support this motion 155%, if you can have it. Support. Thank you.

Brother Nicolae Macari – Branch 357, Branch Secretary: I'm here to support the motion. I mean, we all know and our comrades and our colleagues that the [unclear] and we were having a few, if you can call it that way, challenging things [unclear] and one thing which was making me all the time mad, that most of these people, I mean all of us basically, was called that we were key workers and all this stuff, which was happening the same thing with the nurses, with the doctors, let's clap for these people, you're the key workers, you're the best, but when was going to the pay, if you get the Coronavirus you get SSP, which is don't make any sense in normal word. You cannot be the super-doooper worker who build the country, who serve the people with the food or care about them in, you know, in hospitals and stuff like that and afterwards we are saying that you are cool, but because you get the Coronavirus here is your £95 and trying to survive with your problem, with your childrens, with your, you know, personal life, which I believe is wrong and I'm more than sure that almost all the company understand that word, it's wrong, but let's be honest with each other. Most of the company which we work are greedy guys, because they don't think about us, they think about them, which is, you know, unfortunate for, because we and our colleagues building the business, not the companies who sit in the office and look at their computer. I'm here to support that and I really hope you'll be agree with me and with our colleagues who spoke in front. Thank you very much.

Brother [unidentified]: I really support this motion, because in our company we had a lot of people who came up and asked me, you know, if I self-isolate how do I pay my rent, how do I pay this? I know, they were going like, how do I pay my bills? and in July last year, we had an outbreak of Covid and we had like 36 people out of 500 had Covid on site and we had a, on the night shift, on blue shift, we had a strike because people were worried, going into work and with me and a load of others, a couple of staff, we had a word with our company and we did sort it out and they went back to work and sorted that out, but what we've had is, once we had a talk with the company, we then, they did pay full sick pay, at the time when we had the outbreak.

What they have done now is, we got people from Swindon coming to Devizes to say we don't car share, we took on two/three Stagecoach buses, so that way we can help people, kind of, a lot of people they were saying when they had a text off, you know, Track and Trace, they said they wouldn't say anything and go to work because they were scared they'd lose their pay. You know, they couldn't afford to go to work, you know and not have pay, so they were lying to say they'd go to work. What they should be doing is self-isolate, but that's why they should pay 100%, at least then it makes people safe to stay at home. That's why really I agree with this. It should 100% the government should pay the wages or even the company make sure they pay, because at the end of the day, we've got to self-isolate, you know, at the end of the day, you know, we've got to support everybody in the country. That's why we support this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Good morning. I'm here to support the motion and I want to add something that my colleague, Nicolae had. During the outbreak last year in August, we had over 300 cases and company didn't want to, the company basically shut down the factory for two weeks and sent everybody home and they didn't want to pay us basically nothing, just SSP, so well, because of that, we have to launch, we have to launch a campaign to social media in which we basically condemned the company that they didn't want to support the workers. We managed to win the campaign and the company give up and gave us 80% pay on the sick. So, I'm here to support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any more? Sean, on behalf of the EC.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, speaking on behalf of the EC: The EC urge you to support this motion. I'll tell you a few things about our place and I had to go down the grievance route because of threatening and disciplinaries and things like that, it got sorted, but one of the things that worried me was basically people that had to go off because they were vulnerable, on long term and we and especially Ian, turned round to the company and said well, why don't you furlough them? and they said well, as a cash-rich company, we don't feel it would be right, especially in the media, to say that we're furloughing people, but what we'll do, we'll take 20% off them and pay them 80, 20% off the members and pay 80% wage and it's just the, it just shows the two-tier society once again, you know, us that in low paid jobs and ones fighting for better terms and conditions having to put ourselves at risk to go to work, to get our full pay, other than if we end up ill and we're must vulnerable, we end up ill we get 80%.

Not many people can afford to live with 1/5th of their wage missing, but you get management who, the high earners in the business, were all allowed to work from home, gaining 100% of their wages. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. There was no opposition, so to the vote. Okay, that's been passed unanimously. 65, right?

65

Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to stop the BBC from scrapping free TV licences for the over 75's and scrap the cost for everyone.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Moving motion 65. That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to stop the BBC from scrapping free TV licencing for over 75s and to scrap the cost for everybody. The BBC made £4.94 billion last year, 71% of that came from licence holders, 29% of that, £1.42 billion came from other sources, a part of that being the BBC, that's meant to be unbiased. As we all know, they are not. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Formally seconded or are you speaking, Ruth?

Sister Ruth Stephenson – Branch 580: Just a short one, it's just that it's a bit too late to stop the BBC for the 75s but yes, let's scrap it for everybody. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Michael, Mick, sorry. Calling you Mick and then Douggie.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 365: Good. I agree with this motion and will support it, but they've already stopped it, because they've stopped mine. Thank you.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: The first part of the motion I agree with, you know, we should stop it being scrapped, but the scrapping of the licence fee for everyone, yes, I think will mean and I'm going to oppose it just for that part, because I know the BBC and its current affairs and news output is biased and is awful, it is a damned disgrace. I read media reports because I've always said, I'll say it again, I'm a nerd by heart, you know and I have no social life, so I read these kind of things. The trouble is with the BBC, yes, you end up privatising the BBC, which what it effectively means is that you will end up with a kind of system like America, yes and you'll end up, it will be even more worse than ever and there are other things that the BBC does, but one of the reasons we have a very, very effective decent film industry in this country is because the BBC puts money into training, education, it puts money into developing technology that is used in the film industry, it develops, it educates people being cameramen, sound men, special effects. It does all these kind of things.

I admit the current affairs and news output is a damned disgrace and somebody should look at it, but if we go down the route where it becomes privatised, we end up with a system like America and I don't think we'd want that, you know. I think it's a disgrace what happens at the BBC, but it can be saved and I'm against scrapping the licence fee. The first part, over 75s should not have to pay it, should not, that is given, but the second part, scrapping the entire, the entire licence fee, we'll end up just with a privatised system just like America. We can save the BBC, it will take a lot of heart, but we can actually save it. I oppose this motion.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Morning Conference, or good afternoon as it is. Yes, I oppose this motion for exactly the same thing as Douggie. He said it all, he actually said everything that I thought. I listened to the Speaker, I think yesterday, who really echoed this and said once, once we scrap the BBC, then it will go to privatisation and we'll have absolutely no say in it. So I would say to the proposer to remit it and take off the last bit. I fully agree with the first bit and would support that, but I can't support the last bit.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody else? John Fitz, EC. John. John Fitzpatrick

Brother John Fitzpatrick, speaking on behalf of the EC: Yes.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Aye.

Brother John Fitzpatrick, speaking on behalf of the EC: Aye. The Executive Council would ask you to support this motion. It's been spoken there about going like America. All the other channels are self-supported with adverts and whatever, same as American channels. The BBC claim the money because they were independent, 'cause they'd have to scrap News at Ten, they can scrap News at Ten. You get news 24 hours a day now on your mobile. I believe that all TV licences should be scrapped. You shouldn't have to pay a TV licence, you're paying for everything now, everything we have practically you've got to pay for. The BBC's getting money under false pretenses. I say you should support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Ange, obviously there's been some opposition, so you have the right to reply.

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: Yes, I just wanted to read something I found earlier on, so the TV licence fee in the UK is the sixth highest compared to other countries in Europe. Other countries in Europe have managed to scrap it and still maintain, you know, they can still hold their own, why can't England? There's no reason why. It's just so the rich get rich and the poor get poorer, as per usual. We pay for Sky, we pay for Virgin, we pay for anything you want to watch on tele. You've got Amazon, you've got Netflix, yes, so why should you have a TV licence as well? Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Finished voting? I'll take that as a yes. Put your hands down, please. Those against? Finished voting? That's carried. 66, 66, I think that's you, Ang.

66

Branch 580

That this Conference agrees to lobby the government to re-introduce road safety lessons in our primary schools

Sister Angela Robinson – Branch 580: That's me. That this Conference agrees to lobby government to reintroduce road safety lessons in our primary schools. Just a fact of child casualties reported by the Department of Health. Children under the age of 16 are the most vulnerable road users, in particular children pedestrians, would account for the majority of child casualties across all road user types. In contrast, the older pedestrians, in contrast to older pedestrians. Child pedestrians are not experienced and not well educated enough to use the roads. We don't have lollipop ladies any more, there's nobody to help teach these children, there's nothing in schools any more, so I think we do need something brought back. So, please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, seconder?

Sister [unidentified]: Formally second.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much. Speakers? Mark. Mark, Michael and then Nick and then Matthew.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, I'm here to wholeheartedly support this. As a man of a certain age, or a woman of a certain age, I remember doing road safety at school, I remember doing my cycling proficiency, this, that and the other and being taught at a very early age about road safety. There's no excuse for it not to be taught today, so support please.

Brother Michael [unidentified]: I really support this motion. Late last year I had a 'phone call off my friend. Two doors up from his house, a seven year old walked out of his house and walked onto the road and got hit by a van and the van stayed there, but the kid was pronounced dead at the scene. Like my friend said, if the school helped, you know, made them aware about traffic, what they should have done, the kid might have stood back. Because he was only seven, he was out there playing with his friends, he just run straight out in the road. The van driver was saying he couldn't do anything, because he just walked straight out in the road. Like a bit of education for that young lad, it might have saved his life and he could have still been here and what effect that's done to his family, even that driver as well, I bet he's blaming himself, you know, a kid's walked out in front of him, you know, he's not driving his van no more, it's affected that, you know, it affects everybody's life, you know, it affects the driver's life, the family and everything.

Just a bit of education would help, you know, in the schools or even anybody, you know, even when I'm driving you see young kids just jumping off the pavement and nearly hitting, like I've had to slam on my brakes 'cause the child's bike's just gone in front of my car, you know. Just that bit of education would help, you know, them young kids and not have what that other kid what got killed and it's not just where I live, you know, it's all around the UK. When kids are not educated properly then you know, accidents happen and they've been killed and it is, it's a nasty thing to think about, if your young kids get killed by, you know, walking out in the road or on a bike or anything. I really support this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I'm here to support this motion. Back in the day when I learnt road safety, I did it with the Tufty Club. I say bring back Tufty, you can't beat the old red squirrel. Please support.

Brother Matthew Brown – Branch 558: So yesterday we were speaking about autism, a motion on autism. So again to bring up my 17 year old son. He's had no obviously road training at school or anything. He still doesn't know how to cross the road on his own. We can't let him out of the house on his own because he can't cross the road, even after he's been to mainstream schools all the way through his life. We've tried to teach him, we can't, but it's very important for schools to start training roads, especially my six year old has a better sense of road danger than my 17 year old. I would go one step further on this.

Even though it's not in the motion, so I apologise if I'm speaking out of turn here, but in Year 10 my son was also promised travel training by the Wakefield City Council, which is an extra part of the government to teach people with autism to cross the road. That was when he was in Year 10, he's now in his first year in college and he still hasn't received this travel training, which has been promised by the government. So again, this is the importance of road safety and remember that people with autism still do attend mainstream schools, they've still got some chance of being able to have a normal life, normal as in my version of normal, which isn't that normal to be honest, but and yes, like I say, he still can't cross the road. There's been no training whatsoever, so yes, I fully support this. Bring back travel training for kids in schools. Thank you.

Brother Neil Shackleton – Branch 518: Here to support the motion. I think this is a good motion, especially with the Youth [unclear] Schools now coming into play and a lot more kids using these schools on our roads. So as a governing body at my school, we actually supported bring road, back in road safety training. So, I fully support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Tony Mansell – Branch 258: Morning. Yes, I totally agree with this motion, especially now we've got increased traffic, more cars on the road now as ever was in the past. Kids, most kids these days are fearless and they go round on their bikes and their scooters, whatever, but I agree with Nick, I say bring Tufty out of retirement.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. John, John Fitzpatrick, on behalf of the EC.

Brother John Fitzpatrick – speaking on behalf of the EC: Yes. The EC would ask you to support this motion. There's been a lot of good Speakers on this subject. The health and welfare of our children are our future and we should do everything for them. My grandson learnt road safety at primary school, he's 12 now and the excitement on him taking his Nan and Pa across the road safely was an amazing sight to see, when he was at primary school. He learnt all the things, look left and right and he held our hands crossing the road. This should carry on for everyone. As has been said, there's that much heavy traffic on the roads, people jumping the lights and everything else, road safety is primarily important. So, we would ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, I can tell you that's unanimous. Take your hands down, please. 67.

67

No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference believes that being an anti-Zionist does not necessarily mean that you are an anti-Semite, and that condemning Israel for its treatment of the Palestinian people is a legitimate political position.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Hello, that's me, sorry. Sorry. Okay. That this Conference believes that being an Anti-Zionist does not necessarily mean you are Anti-Semite and that condemning Israel for its treatment of the Palestinian people is a legitimate political position. Let's just put it in terms. Anti-Semitism is wrong, just totally wrong. Everybody agrees on that, you know. Zionism is a movement, political movement that came out of, that came out originally of Christianity, who wanted, by a lot of Anti-Semites, who wanted rid of Jewish people. It then was adopted by certain Jewish people and became a strong force within Judaism, a fine and ancient religion, until the later, until after the Holocaust. Indeed, if you want to understand Zionism, Theodor Herzl was one of the founders of Jewish Zionism and he said, we must appropriate gently the property on the state assigned to us, both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discretely and circumspectly. It is quite clear and obvious what Theodor Herzl meant there. He's talking about the expropriation of the land of the Palestinians. It is quite clear and obvious that Zionism, from the beginning, was to be a settler colonial project. It's also clear that after the Second Intifada, word came out from Israel that anybody was, who was to be a critic of the Israeli state, was to be labelled an Anti-Semite, but we are all familiar with the tricks and machinations of the Israeli state and their advocates. I would advise anybody to watch the Al Jazeera documentary The Lobby and look at how this works behind the scenes. We should notice that there are many brave Anti-Zionists in Judaism such as the Orthodox Jews, who criticise Zionism on theological grounds. They criticise the Israeli state for its treatment of the Palestinians. Noam Chomsky, Jewish academic and activist, Mary Naomi Kline, Jewish-Canadian academic, journalist, climate change activist, Norman Finkelstein, Jewish academic and activist, who studied the Israeli-Palestine conflict, Ilan Pappé, Israeli academic, historian and activist, who served in the IDF and has studied the history of the Palestinian conflict. The last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Marek Edelman, one of those brave men and women who fought the Nazis with little hope, little or no hope of success. He was an outspoken Anti-Zionist all of his life, a man who condemned the treatment of the Palestinians. Are they really trying to say that Noam Chomsky, Naomi Kline, Norman Finkelstein, Ilan Pappé and Marek Edelman, the last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, are Anti-Semites?

I might have been born at night, but it certainly wasn't last night. We must not allow our criticism of Zionism, a political ideology born of the 19th century, to be conflated with Anti-Semitism. We must know this. We must say that we stand with, in a legitimate political criticism of the treatment of the Palestinians and against racism of the adherence of one of the world's oldest and greatest religions. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, who's seconding it? Are you seconding it, Dimitru? Regional Council, formally seconded by someone, Region 3. Formally seconded, thank you very much. Okay, I've got Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, I'm here to support this, because I do agree that being an Anti-Zionist does not necessarily mean you are an Anti-Semite, however I'm asking you, Brothers and Sisters and it may make me unpopular, but we've got to accept that whilst not all Anti-Zionists are Anti-Semites, most Anti-Semites are Anti-Zionists and whilst I suggest no-one here's in the category, I have been to some meetings with some comrades here, I have heard disturbing views, whether they're just uneducated views or whatever, but they can't be allowed, you know. It's alright being an Anti-Zionist, that's fine, but when you hear talk about wiping Israel off the map and you talk about killing Jews, to me that's Anti-Semitism. All I'm saying comrades, is when you're on a demo, when you're supporting, look at who you're talking, the groups they're representing. You can Google it now, you've all got search engines, just be careful who you're giving your support to, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, anybody else? Okay, Dimitru on behalf of the EC.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357, speaking on behalf of the EC: Good morning, Conference. Comrades, General Secretary, President. For a start, we must say that Anti-Semitism is disgusting, repellent and obscene to all good moral and sensible people, but this has nothing to do with Anti-Zionism. Zionism is a 19th century political movement, formed by the likes of Theodor Herzl. Indeed, modern Zionists declared that it was to be a settled colonial project. Our history of being a Union is one that has always stood against Imperialism and Colonialism. We have always stood up for the oppressed against the oppressor. If you are tolerating a situation of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. Indeed, calling someone an Anti-Semite, who is a critic of the state of Israel, does disservice to those in the past who have been victims of Anti-Semitism. This was many Holocaust survivors like Hajo Mayer, a survivor of Auschwitz, who was an outspoken Anti-Zionist. Mayer, a survivor of Auschwitz, was an outspoken critic of the state of Israel treatment of the Palestinian people. Is Mayer, the Holocaust survivor, an Anti-Semite? I think not.

Indeed, the conflation of Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism has become a political strategy to shut out any criticism of Israel, yet Ben Netanyahu is friends with some of the worst Anti-Semites in public life. Viktor Orban, the Prime Minister of Hungary and Donald Trump, both of whom are strong supporters of Israel and Zionism. This conflation of Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism is extremely dangerous. You do not have to take my word for this, listen to what the 35 leading academics of Israel, including scores of the Holocaust, who in an open letter wrote and I quote, many victims of the Holocaust opposed Zionism, on the other hand, many Anti-Semites support Zionism. It is nonsensical and inappropriate to identify Anti-Zionism and Anti-Semitism. Let us not be neutral in the face of oppression. Yes, we condemn all Anti-Semitism, but we also condemn the attempts by anyone to shut down our legitimate criticism on the treatment of the Palestinian people by Israel. We stand not as Anti-Semites, but as proud Anti-Zionists. We stand in Solidarity with the oppressed Palestinian people. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Unfortunately Tahir (?), because obviously I brought Dimitru in from the Executive, because you hadn't said that you wanted to speak, I can't bring you in now because he closes the debate unless there's a right of reply, so I do apologise and the same with you, Steve, I can't unfortunately, but can I, I'm going to go to the vote. There was no opposition to it, so all those in favour? Okay, finished voting? Can you take your hands down. Okay, those against? That's carried unanimously. 68.

That this Conference condemns the imprisonment of Kurdish journalists who have revealed crimes of the Turkish government against the Kurds, is not only egregious but should be condemned in the strongest terms. Furthermore, we believe that the world should finally push for the creation of a Kurdish state.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: That's me again. Thank you, Ian. That this Conference condemns the imprisonment of Kurdish journalists who have revealed the crimes of the Turkish government against the Kurds. This is not only [unclear], but should be condemned in the strongest terms. Furthermore, we believe that the world should finally push for the creation of a Kurdish state. There's much talk about imprisonment of, there's been criticism in the international press about how Vladimir Putin has treated journalists in Russia and I think that is correct criticism, but let's put it this way. There are more, the person who has imprisoned more journalists than Vladimir Putin ever could do is Erdoğan, the President of Turkey.

There are areas in, Kurdish areas in Turkey that looks like Iraq or Afghanistan or Syria. The treatment of the Kurds in this country is an absolute disgrace. Kurdish journalists are being locked up under anti-terrorist laws in Turkey, merely for photograph, making photographs of a Turkish, or a Kurdish New Year. Once journalist this year, one female journalist has been locked up and is expecting to receive a sentence of only, of 7½ years. Her crime was that she took a photograph of the Kurdish New Year celebrations. In the background there were a couple of the banned PKK flags. This is again, I know we've had Kurds at our Conference last time we had it. There are 40 million Kurds in the world, there are 40 million. They are the largest ethnicity without their own country. Indeed, Winston Churchill and I am not a fan of Winston Churchill, yes, said that one of his worse mistakes he ever made was not allowing a Kurdish state. It's time, the Kurds have been begging for it, they've been doing so much. It's time that we supported them, it's time that we supported the creation of a Kurdish state. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Secunder? Secunder, give me somebody. Okay, formally seconded. Steve.

Brother Steve Nevin – Branch 504: Yes, I'd like to support this motion. Hiya, Conference. The Kurds are the largest ethnic group in the world without a state. I mean, they should have had their own country granted to them after World War I. Their soldiers fought against ISIS with coalition forces, you know and then only to be left alone when Mr Trump pulled his troops out of the Syrian-Turkish border disgracefully, fight alone. In the national community, always have their allegiance and assistance. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other Speakers? No? Okay, Dimitru for the EC.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357, speaking on behalf of the EC: Good morning, again. Senol Buran was arrested in a cafe in Nusaybin, Turkey on 22nd July, 2016. She was given a prison sentence of two years, nine months and 22 days. Her crime, according to the Turkish government, was support for a Kurdish organisation, Article 7/2 of the Anti-Terror Law. What she actually did was create a painting of destroyed buildings with the Turkish flag on them, buildings destroyed by the Turkish state. Articles posted on social media criticised the Turkish state and their oppression of the Kurds. She said, I was given two years and 10 months only because I painted Turkish flags on destroyed buildings, however they caused this, I only painted it. Nedim Türfent, another Turkish-Kurdish journalist, has spent over five years in a Turkish prison. Türfent is a journalist who dealt mainly on Kurdish affairs. His crime was to report and film on Turkey Special Forces, special police forces, ill treatment of around 40 Turkish and Kurdish workers in the south eastern city of Hakkari. The workers were forced to lie on the ground with their hands cuffed behind their backs while having a police officer shouting, you will see the power of the Turks and this and what this state do to you, apparently accusing the workers of belonging to the band PKK. Türfent was charged with membership of a terrorist organisation. At his trial, 20 witnesses called, 19 of this said that their initial statements against Türfent had been obtained using torture. He was sentenced to eight years, nine months. He still languishes in a Turkish jail five years on. There are just two, these are just two of the countless victims of Erdoğan's oppression of Turkey, Turkey's Kurdish people and their attempts to speak out and yet the west stays silent. Just remember that Turkey is a member of NATO. We are all allies of Turkey, yet our politicians say nothing about Erdoğan's crimes. When Turkey invaded Syria, a sovereign nation, nothing is said. They did this to attack the Kurdish city of Afrin and yet nothing is said. It did not matter that the people who did much to defeat ISIS, that they saved the refugees who had been kept in sex slavery by the Islamists, yet Turkey gets away with attacking them. Nothing is said, nothing gets done. If we live in [unclear] for the indigenous people of the world, then we should support the creation of a Kurdish state. If we believe that the Palestinians deserve autonomy and a state of their own, then surely the Kurds deserve the same rights and comrades, may I remind you there is another fact that we should remember. In the First World War, the Ottoman Empire killed one million and a half people. I don't know if everybody remembers the genocide that took place in the First World War and Turkey is, they should be accounted for. Please support the motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, to the vote. Those in favour and while you're voting, just to make you aware, obviously we are running out of time. We always did worry that we might not get everything in, so the Executive's going to withdraw its motions and what we're going to try and do is get through the motions that have come in from the Regions and obviously we may slightly go over, I hope you understand that. We would also ask people taking part who want to contribute, just to remember that obviously it was always difficult to make sure we got these timings right and, you know, your contributions have been immense, but obviously we need to restrict time now to try and get the rest of those motions through.

Okay. Take your hands down, please. Okay. Motion 69.

That the treatment of Julian Assange during his imprisonment is a stain on this country's claim that we believe in decent human rights for all. That Julian Assange's crime is that he exposed war crimes that embarrassed the United States, and his extradition is nothing more than a political stunt that could be used to silence journalists in the future who expose the maleficence of the powerful. Also, Assange should be given refugee status in this country that stops the United States from extraditing him to persecute him for performing legitimate journalism.

Brother Dougie Johnstone – Branch 356: That's me again, so, I'm playing John Fox now. So, the treatment of Julian Assange, during his imprisonment, is a stain on this country's claim that we believe in decent human rights for all. That Julian Assange's crime is that he exposed war crimes that embarrassed the United States and his extradition is nothing more than a political stunt that could be used to silence journalists in the future who expose the maleficence of the powerful. Also, Assange should be given refugee status in this country, that stops the United States from extraditing him to persecute him for performing legitimate journalism. I think it says it all. Assange is kept now in horrendous conditions in Belmarsh. People who know him who have visited him, like John Pilger, are really, really scared for Assange's mental health. He can't see, he can hardly speak to his lawyers, he can hardly speak to his family, to hold his children. He's kept in isolation from everyone.

We know why, it doesn't take much to know why. He did what anybody, any journalist is supposed to do, a proper journalist. He exposed the crimes of the powerful. He became a voice for the powerless and they hate him for this, they absolutely hate him. The only reason he wasn't extradited to the United States, where he could find himself looking at life imprisonment, is because the judge was scared that he could receive ill treatment in the United States, it would be detrimental to his health to be put into a US prison. It does say a little bit about the US prison system, which I could go on about. We must support Julian Assange. We must support whistleblowers. We can't see, because if we let them get away with it, you know, they'll do it again and again and we will never learn the truth of what the powerful are up to. We will never learn the truth about these illegal wars and just as a point, I'm glad Donald Trump's gone, you know and he can go off to the pits of hell where he belongs, as far as I'm concerned, but the guy who broke the record on prosecuting whistleblowers, the guy who used the most, the Espionage Act in the United States, the most of the times, was the Nobel Peace Prize winning Constitutional Lawyer Barack Hussein Obama. They don't want us telling the truth, they don't want anybody telling the truth. Let's send a message, that we will support whistleblowers. We will support the truth. So, please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, formally seconded and just to clarify, the last motion, I think I forgot to mention it was carried unanimously, carried unopposed. Are you formally seconding it, Bobby? Anybody coming in? No? I mean the Executive will formally second it if nobody else does. Does anybody want to speak on it? Michael.

Brother Michael [unidentified]: I'll formally second that one, Ian. The way journalists are being treated is, it's way out of order. They're using massive legislative tactics, it's like using a sledge hammer to crack a nut. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much. Any Speakers? No? Okay, the Executive would ask Conference to support the motion. All those in favour? Can you take your hands down, please. And those against? That's carried unanimously. 70. Can I just remind you as well, if you can keep your speeches shorter, it would be great and I do apologise, I do apologise, but obviously this was why we needed people to tell us in advance about if you wanted to speak on the motions so we could time it properly.

We believe that after the whistle blowers from the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons have come forward claiming that their findings in Syria were deliberately tampered with on their investigation means that a fully independent inquiry should be carried out on how the organisation operates, and whether it has become an arm of western policy. It should be a completely apolitical organisation and not influenced by western governments policy whims.

Brother Dougie Johnstone – Branch 356: That's me again, Ian. I'll try and keep this short, oh God. Yes. We believe that after the whistleblowers from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons have come forward, claiming that their findings in Syria were deliberately tampered with on the investigation, means that a fully independent inquiry should be carried out on how the Organisation operates and whether it has become an arm of western policy. It should be a completely apolitical Organisation and not influenced by western policy means. This is a motion not in support of [unclear] who is a dictator and should be in The Hague under trial.

This is a motion about the impartiality of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and how it has become an arm of western foreign propaganda. One does not need to go into detail about the most expensive CIA operation in history, an operation enacted to overthrow the Syrian government, although this is tied in the reason why Britain, the United States and the French governments and their wishes to [unclear] a false narrative of their bidding definitive proof of the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian government in Douma. It deals with the impartiality of the Organisation. The Organisation claims that the OPCW's mission is to implement the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons prevention to achieve a vision of a world free of chemical weapons and the threat they use and in which chemistry is used for peace, progress and prosperity. We do this with integrity in an efficient, competent and cost-effective manner, in a healthy working environment, our work is guided by the internal vision of the Organisation. It has become obvious, by its own standards, the Organisation has failed.

The facts speak for themselves and an alleged chemical weapons attack happened in Douma during April of 2018. Footage is seen showing alleged dead bodies. Britain, France and the US used this as an excuse to bomb Syrian positions. The OPCW sent in a fact-finding mission, the first time in Syria. In March, 2019 a final report is released saying that [unclear] to suggest that a chlorine gas attack occurred. This report infers that the Syrian government had used this, used chemical weapons, however through a series of leaks, it is revealed that what the OPCW's inspectors found on the ground is something that turns the original narrative on its head. Inspectors on the ground found that they could find no credible evidence of a chemical weapons attack in Douma and a report that was ready to be published, the lead author, identified as Inspector B ? had found out that someone higher up had took his report and tried to write another report. This report had removed their scientific findings of the team on the report. It falsely claimed that there were high concentrations of chlorine and added some unsubstantiated conclusions. Inspector B ? fought the report. This led to the publication of an interim report which removed the inaccurate claims of the report, unfortunately it also removed some of the reports, the team's original report's conclusions. A delegation then visited the Douma team and tried to, a US delegation then tried to lobby them into concluding there was a chlorine gas attack. At least one can say that there had been a failure at the OPCW in the duty of [unclear] to its employees.

These scientists are meant to be protected from all, influenced by any state actors. Indeed, the Organisation's original director, José Bustani, told the [unclear] that he would never have allowed such a meeting. Bustani was the man who created the protocols upon which the OPCW operates. Soon after the team is removed by the OPCW on the Douma investigations. They are replaced by a core team, a core team has never set foot in Syria, but were authors of the final report. The OPCW has refused to meet with the scientists, they refuse to investigate the doctoring of the evidence contained within the team's original report. When José Bustani tried to speak at the UN, he was blocked by member states. Britain, US and France has chosen to attack anybody who speaks up, as a Russian pawn or [unclear] Assad. They have chosen to ignore an open letter of concern of what has happened at the OPCW. This has been signed by such luminaries as Noam Chomsky, [unclear] academic, Daniel Ellsberg of the Pentagon Papers, Denis Halliday, UN, former UN Assistant General Secretary, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, US professor and former Chief of Staff to the United States, Secretary of State, Ray McGovern, ex-CIA, Tulsi Gabbard, John Pilger and others. Please support this motion. This calls for an investigation, what happened at the OPCW. We need international organisations that are completely impartial, that marches to the beat of their own drum. If we can't rely on these organisations, the whole system of international governance is called into disrepute and will collapse. One can only guess where this will lead. Please vote for the motion. I tried to keep that fast, because I was going like hell. I tried to keep a lot of information in there.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: There was loads of good information there, Dougie, but if you could have cut it down it would have been better for us, I think, because obviously we want to get through all your motions because they're all important. If nobody else is putting up, the Executive would second this motion as well and obviously if there's anybody that wants to speak, please show. Okay, did you want to come in, Terry? Oh right, okay, you're just pre-empting me. So, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, put your hands down. Last two, Steve and Dougie, can you put your hands down. Anyone against? Okay, that's carried unanimously.

We've just had a request about whether we can do an hour tomorrow, so we don't pull the motions. I mean obviously we weren't planning on doing tomorrow and I'm not sure everybody has got release for tomorrow, I know some may have, but I'm not sure everybody has.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Hi, Ian. Just a point of order. I thought most of us had gained release for, because the Conference dates are 13th – 17th. I'm fine, it's my day off tomorrow, I can make plenty [unclear]. I wouldn't want anybody falling foul with their employers, 'cause Thursday was traditionally the travelling home day, we don't have to travel home. So, you know, we have had it in the past where we've finished Thursday morning and travelled home. It's just a concern with me, as I say for me personally, I'm off from tomorrow anyway, but a lot of people may have requested release from Sunday to Thursday and I don't, they will probably have to inform their employers. I wouldn't want anybody falling foul.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. I don't really want to get into a debate, because I want to make sure we finish off the motions. I mean, but there is questions in the "chat", we should vote on it, we should vote on it, put it to the vote. I'm happy to put it to the vote. All those in favour of us, the motions certainly the Executive were proposing, being debated tomorrow morning? Can you put your hands down. Obviously those, I'm going to go to those against, I'm assuming that they probably won't be here? Can you put your hands down for me, please, as quick as you can. Those against? Conference, there's only five people that's voted against. So, I mean, quite clearly the majority of you would be happy to come back. I mean, we're happy to put those motions on and obviously we've gone over now, so we're happy to close Conference tomorrow, tomorrow morning, so if we come back at 10 o'clock in the morning, if you're happy to do that and be finished for 12 o'clock, at the latest.

So and obviously, because we were going to pull final speeches as well, we just wanted to make sure that we wish those people who'd served on the Executive well, but if you're happy for us, to do that for us, come back tomorrow, then what we will do now is because we are seven minutes past one, we want you to come back at quarter past two for the Right to Food Campaign, so we're going to ask that, we understand those people that can't come back, but we will complete the Agenda tomorrow morning and thank you very much for bearing with us today and for staying the extra eight minutes and we look forward to seeing you at 10 o'clock in the morning. Thank you very much. Hopefully, you'll all join us with Ian Byrne, the Right to Food Campaign, as the General Secretary outlined on Monday, you know, that's going to form the vision for our Trade Union about how we're going to change lives and obviously improve the terms and conditions as part of that Campaign. So, if you can make it, please come back this afternoon and take part in that debate as well. Thank you very much. Go and enjoy your dinner and hopefully I'll see you at quarter past two.

Can I also say, the new EC members, we're actually going to meet tomorrow, tomorrow morning after Conference, because we can't do it until after Conference anyway. So, obviously we won't be doing it today, but we will be doing it following Conference tomorrow. Okay, thank you very much.

Thursday 17th June 2021

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Good morning, Conference. I'll take it you can hear me? Yes. Okay, obviously we're going to get on with the motions. It's so nice to see so many of you here and obviously thank you for agreeing to extend Conference for an extra day. We've got a couple more, or is that all? So, motion 71, Region 3, Regional Council.

71

No 3 Regional Council

We believe that the seizure by the British government of the gold held by the bank of England belonging the Venezuelan government is wrong and an attempt at regime change in that country. Also, we condemn the economic blockade that has been enacted on Venezuela by the United States, Britain and other countries in order to enact regime change, and we stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the government of Nicolas Maduro.

Brother Dougie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes. Thank you, Ian and just let me yes. We believe that the seizure by the British government of gold held by the Bank of England belonging to the Venezuelan government is wrong and an attempt at regime change in that country. We also, also we condemn the economic blockade that has been enacted on Venezuela by the United States, Britain and other countries in order to enact regime change and we stand in Solidarity with the Venezuelan people and the government of Nicolás Maduro. It is quite simple here. The Venezuelan people own \$1.4 billion-worth of gold that is in the Bank of England. This has been seized by the British government. We know what the British government is trying to do. They, the Venezuelan government, you know, has been placed on a terrible economic blockade that is stopping medicines getting through in a time of pandemic, it's stopping food getting through, it is stopping medical equipment getting through in a time of pandemic and yet they continue.

If you want to know any results of what the Venezuelan people really think, yes, I'd advise everybody to look on the broadcast, the reports by Abby Martin, on Inside Venezuela, what the Venezuelan people think, not the stuff, the rubbish that is put there by Channel 4 and the BBC, which they go and get, the oligarchs, who say that the Venezuelan government is supported. Their candidate, who is not the President, a guy called Juan Guaidó, if you saw a brilliant piece by Democracy Now!, when they went into, Juan Guaidó actually went into a working class [unclear]. The working class people of Venezuela wanted to kill him, that's how they feel about the Washington, the Washington candidate. They wanted to kill him. The police had to hold them off. This is regime change. It is because the Venezuelan government does not accept the Washington consensus. They are going for Socialism, that's why they are hated by the Capitalist powers. Please vote for this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Dougie. Have we got a seconder, or is it formally seconded? Anybody indicating from Region 3? Dave Clarkson, you're from Region 3, you'll do [LAUGHTER].

Brother [unidentified]: Yes, formally second off me.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Ray. Cheers, mate. Okay. If you're also speaking on it, Dave, go ahead.

Brother Dave Clarkson – Branch 388: Yes. I mean I'm obviously supporting the motion because we discussed it in the Region. I haven't really got anything to add. I trust in, I trust in Dougie's knowledge on it, which seems to be far greater than most people's. It's certainly far greater than mine. So, yes, I just urge people to support the motion. Cheers.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool. Terry.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277: Morning, Conference. Chair, Delegates. Yes, just to add to what Dougie said really. I mean, it's not like Venezuela is a poor country and, you know, mid-America. They are pretty cash-rich because of the oil they have there. This is an absolute farce that, you know, the American government can get involved and basically starve them, drop them a price of oil, basically so that Venezuela can't sell it to anybody. It is, it's an aberration, it truly is. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. Any other Speakers? If not, I want to call in John Fitz, on behalf of the EC.

Brother John Fitzpatrick, speaking on behalf of the EC: Dougie's done very well there on what he said, on where Britain's withholding the gold. It comes from America, a directive from America that they penalise any other country that doesn't support America's decision to do a blockade on a country, which is wrong. If the country doesn't bow to America's wishes, they're penalised, same as Cuba, the blockade around Cuba's been there for years. We'd like you to support this and condemn them and we should condemn the British government as well for withholding the gold. They've got no right to. We ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Sarah, you're going to have to tell me what the numbers are, on the bottom of your screen [LAUGHTER]. So, so obviously all those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Are we okay Sarah, yes?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: message.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, cool. Okay, hands down. That's everybody's hand down, isn't it. Okay. Those against? Yes, I think you can see on your screens that there's no opposition to that, so that's been carried unanimously. Thank you, Conference. Motion 72 and we need to find Mohinder, Sarah. Who's moving motion 72?

72 **No 3 Regional Council**

That this Conference stands in solidarity with the Indian farmers, and decrees their treatment by the Modi government.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Well, I think it was supposed to be Mohinder for this one.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh, he's moving it.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: I think he is.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh well, I've only been told he wants to speak on it. I haven't been told he was moving it.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Oh right, I'll speak on it.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Oh no, if Mohinder's supposed to be moving it, then let him move it.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Chair, if we can, Mohinder's not on yet. Is there any way that we can come back to that motion?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yeah, we can do, yeah. I know he feels very passionate about that motion and he wanted to, so we'll move onto 73.

73 **No 3 Regional Council**

This Conference believes that furlough should be increased to 100 percent of pay, it is indecent to for low paid workers to try and live on 80 percent of poverty pay.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes. This Conference believes the furlough should be increased to 100% of pay. It is indecent for low paid workers to try and live on 80% of poverty pay. I think it says it all, you know. Other countries produce, do 100% of pay, you know. Germany are quite, you know, the Scandinavian countries do 100% of pay and yet they haven't been so hit economically. It makes economic sense, it makes sense as a human being, you know. Please support this motion and I think it says it all, you know. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, do we have a seconder? Dimitru.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Yes, I'll second the motion. I just want to add something to my comrade, that actually the government now is not paying 80% of furlough, it's even lower now, so it's 60%, which the government is paying as a furlough. So, support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you. I haven't got any other Speakers down, so from the floor? Anybody wish to speak on it? No? I believe then it's Sean that we're bringing in from the Executive.

Brother Sean Welsby – Branch 419, speaking on behalf of the EC: Good morning, all. I think I said it in a motion yesterday, which was similar to this. The problem is, the government once again is creating a two-tier society, while the fat cats who own companies and the senior management can sit at home and get 100% of their pay, putting ourself on the front line or we're being furloughed on 80%. Now 80% of the minimum wage is not enough for any family to live on. It's an absolute disgrace. So, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. All those in favour? And I'll remember to look in my messages, Sarah. Everybody finished voting? Okay, take your hands down, please. I think I know the answer to this one. Okay, those against? I pretty much know that nobody was going to oppose. Oh, it wasn't carried unanimously, sorry. So, that motion's carried. Motion 74. I believe this is you, isn't it, Sarah?

We are seeing a crisis of food poverty born out of the political choices and systemic failings created over the past four decades, which have now reached a tipping point for so many in our communities. The figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the inequality of the UK in 2020.

The Trussell Trust reports a soaring 81% increase in emergency food parcels from food banks in its network during the last two weeks of March 2020 compared with the same period in 2019, including a 122% rise in parcels given to children as the coronavirus pandemic continued to unfold.

This Conference notes the consistent high rates of poverty across our nation. We recognise the growing concern amongst our health and care professionals of the current situation and the likely exacerbation of poverty figures through the impact of the Covid19 pandemic and economic uncertainty as we continue through 2021.

The National Food Strategy is the first independent review of England's entire food system for 75 years. Its purpose is to set out a vision for the kind of food system we should be building for the future, and a plan for how to achieve that vision. It is headed by Henry Dimbleby and next reports to Government in summer 2021.

The Right To Food campaign is arguing that the 11 million people in food poverty should be central to this strategy. Enshrining the 'Right To Food' into law would clarify Government obligations on food poverty and would introduce legal avenues to hold Government bodies accountable for violations.

This Conference calls for the 'Right To Food' to be incorporated into the 'National Food Strategy'. And direct the executive council to write to Henry Dimbleby to further this request.

Conference also pledges our full support to the 'Right to Food' campaign led by Fans Supporting Foodbanks and Ian Byrne MP for Liverpool West Derby, which aims to make access to food a legal right in the UK and build on the campaign to ensure no one in our industry is unable to feed themselves or their family.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: It is, Conference, as you know over the last few months, we've surveyed our membership and created a report from the results and some of the findings are shocking. 40% of respondents have eaten less than they thought they should have during the pandemic due to a lack of money. 19% told us that there'd been a time during the pandemic where their household had run out of food due to a lack of money. Over 35% said they'd gone without enough food to make sure others in the household could be fed properly and one in five relied on food from a family friend or relative to provide meals and even more reported they were concerned about running out of food and these are the people, these are you who have worked throughout the pandemic, feeding the nation, yet our survey suggests that food insecurity is a significant issue for workers in our industry.

Worrying about being able to feed yourself and your family should not be something anyone has to go through, let alone through a global pandemic where there's been more than enough to worry about, including the Covid risks to individuals and their families, when having to work throughout the uncertainty of work and wages because of the impact of the pandemic, the wider impact of lockdown measures and also mental health concerns and this pandemic has shone a light on the real key workers, as I said on Monday, in this country. Not the bosses, the shareholders or the millionaires. You. The people on the front line, those struggling to make ends meet whilst propping our country up through the toughest year any of us have experienced and we can't sit back whilst people are struggling to survive. The time is right for the Right to Food to be enshrined in law. We need it now. The decent, nutritious food to be truly accessible, affordable, healthy, safe to eat, fairly produced by well paid Unionised-protected staff throughout the food industry. So Conference, we ask you to support this motion. We will work with Ian Byrne, who spoke at our fringe meeting yesterday, our Parliamentary Group, our contacts up in Scotland and other like-minded groups, academics and individuals to raise our industry up, ensuring that we aren't relying on food banks and we have the investment our industry deserves, being the biggest manufacturing sector in the UK.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you very much and it's formally seconded. I believe, I believe, I believe, no, I don't believe, I thought we had somebody who wanted to come in on 74. Anybody wish to speak on 74? John Fox.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Thank you, Mr President. General Secretary, Conference Delegates. I totally support this motion, but I do think we need to get more Solidarity within these Branches so that they can fight to get a better wage structure and better pay for themselves, yes and help them as much as we can, collectively. So, I support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Right, Alan?

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Yes. Hello?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, we can hear you now.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Can you all hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well they won't be able to answer you, mate [LAUGHTER].

Brother Alan Scott – Branch 415: Alright, okay. Listen, listen. I agree with what she's saying, Sarah, but I just want to go back to a motion we had at the beginning of the week, yes, where Delegates don't get paid the £5 Delegate's fee if the Union provide food. We've been on this Conference for five days, the Union haven't provided us with any food and we've not had our Delegates fee, so that's all of us going hungry, because the Union has not provided us with our Delegate's fee. On average, it'd be 98 this week, that's a saving of £2,400. If you don't want to give it us, donate it to any organisation. Are we all agreed? That's all I'm going to say. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That was probably a point of order and nothing to do with the Right to Food. I'll give you a response on the reason why there is no Delegate's fee, it's because we haven't actually travelled anywhere. We haven't asked you to travel anywhere, we haven't asked you to move from your home, so therefore we assumed that you would just do what you would normally do, make sure you'd got paid release from work and we didn't think it would be necessary to pay you a Delegate's fee 'cause you're not physically here. I mean, if somebody wants to write to the EC to consider that then, you know, of course we'll discuss it at the EC, but currently, I mean, we wouldn't be able to make a decision here today anyway, but that was the reasons for it. I mean Alan, I'm not going to bring you back in because obviously that's, this is a motion about the Right to Food Campaign. So, I mean, as long as you're speaking on the motion for the Right to Food Campaign, then please come in. If not, you can write to the Executive following Conference, if you want to make a complaint about and, you know, request that we pay you a Delegate's fee. Okay? Thank you. So, I've got three Speakers. I do hope that they are on the motion. So we've got Mark, we've got Paul and we've got Mick.

Brother Paul White – Branch 459, Region 4: Hi. Good morning, Conference. Back to the motion, yes. It's a very good motion, it's an important motion. I think, I'm not going to speak much on it, I'll just say kids and people in this country, they have a right to eat, right to eat and let's not forget that. If they don't eat, we're killing them. Please support the motion.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Morning, Conference.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Morning, Mark.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Yes, I'm here to support this motion obviously. I attended the fringe meeting yesterday on this subject and I was very, very impressed and also heartbroken by some of the stories that we heard about food poverty and I said something yesterday. I want everybody to think that I draw parallels of this going back to the 80's strike years when a lot of us turned to crime literally as I did when I was a teenager, I went out robbing to feed my family and that started a downward spiral that we see today, with no-go areas, drugs, criminality, violence, everything else that goes with it, broken families, broken areas and a broken system with broken people. You've got to support this motion, it's as simple as that.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 577: I spoke on this yesterday at the fringe meeting, as Mark said and I totally agree with this motion. Please support it, because it's 75 years, I know, because I was involved in that 75 years ago and was it Paul?, I'm sure the Union, if you have incurred expenses, will reimburse you, if you write to them. Thank you.

Brother Dougie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes. What a sensible and decent motion that needed to be said, needed to be put in, you know and do you know what, it didn't surprise me about what was said at the fringe meeting. Whoever asked, by the way, was the government in breach of international law? The UN Special Rapporteur who came to Britain the other year, says yes, he says yes. We've seen the largest drop in living standards since the Emperor Napoleon was on the throne, since 2010. That's over 100, oh God, I think it's over 150, 170 years, something like that, that's 1815, you know. The largest drop in wages since the 1880's. It is a disgrace. They're collaring everything and we can't afford to eat. Look at the amount of food banks, look at teachers talking about children going into school with not enough to eat. It's a disgrace that this, the 5th richest country in the world cannot even be bothered to feed its thing, while the 100th richest, their wealth goes up and up and up and up, you know. Jeff Bezos is the richest man in the world, what for, what for? Let's support this motion.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: Hiya. I just want to speak a little bit about what the Reps in Greggs managed to get for our, well not just our members but the employees on the whole. Obviously in the shops at the end of the day, there's left over food and what used to happen is, it all used to go in the bin but then they started donating to charities, but since, you know, the pandemic has highlighted a lot of, you know, struggles that people have and I know that a Shop Rep up from our Branch had highlighted it in a national meeting that, you know, a lot of the workers are struggling to make ends meet and that, you know, it's, you know, absolutely heartbreaking for them sometimes, you know, to see people from external charities and food go in the bin when they themselves can't actually afford to eat or feed their children and stuff like that. So what Greggs done is, you know, there are Shop Reps on the front line highlighting this, that have put together, 'cause we get staff discount anyways of 50%, but what they done is they slashed that even more and if people are working 'til the end of their shift, they can get two sort of like, I was going to say goody-bags, but that's a totally wrong word, two bags made up of like a sandwich, a pasty and a cake I think, but I think it might be £4, don't quote us on that but I think that's just one of the things that fits into this of what us, as Shop Reps, as Shop Stewards can be doing, trying to, you know, get our companies to try and help our staff a bit more and stuff like that and the local community. Sorry, I just wanted to support the motion, I just wanted to make people aware of what we had been doing in our Branch. Thank you.

Brother [unidentified]: I really support this motion. When I was looking online, the Trussell Trust had the highest in food banks, this is from the last 12 months, you know, going to the Trussell Trust to get, you know, food banks and all that and if you look at, what is it, in about December, LadBaby when he went at Christmas-time to try and get No. 1 in the UK chart to make all the money what he donates to go to the Trussell Trust, you know, because we'd got to the stage where people, no matter it could be a person working like a normal worker like us, a bank manager or not bank manager, you know, a shop worker in Sainsbury's, Morrisons, who's got to go to a Trussell Trust Fund food bank to go and get food, but they, like my brother, he's a taxi driver and he got furloughed, he had to go into the food bank to get food for his two kids and his girlfriend, but he felt embarrassed going in there but he goes, the only way I can get food is by going in the food bank to get food for my family. That's why I support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Nick Mead – Branch 253: I'm here to support this motion. I've said it on previous Conferences, my house is actually a drop-off point for our local food bank in Salisbury. Last month, so for the month of May, there was 3.7 kg of food taken to the Salisbury food bank. My mother-in-law's the co-ordinator in the village and she's the one who has to do it, but it's not even just food that's the issue. There's all the hygiene products as well that people are crying out for, toothpaste, sanitary items, soap. Please support this motion.

Brother Dimitru Manole – Branch 357: Hi. What I want to add to this, I support, I fully support the motion. What I want to add to this, to this motion is that last year, when we had the factory shut down, Branch 357 in co-ordination with the Northamptonshire Rights and Equality Council had the workers at the factory for two weeks with, which were struggling financially with money and local support from the [unclear]. So, support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody else? No. Obviously Sarah moved it, so

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Sorry, I tried to mute Michael and then somebody put their hand up and I muted you instead, I do apologise. That's what happens when we're not sat next to each other.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: isn't it. I saw Chris Hooker's hand go up, so I don't know if he was voting or if he wanted to speak, because I'm not sure whether I was muted now. If you put your hand back up 'cause you want to speak. I'm going to assume that it was you about to vote then. All those in favour? Everybody finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay. Those against? Thank you, Conference. That was passed unanimously. I'm going to just call out to see if Mohinder's in the room, do we know?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Can't see him on the list of Delegates.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. I'll keep holding the motion back, 'cause like I say, I do know he's passionate about this motion. So we'll move onto motion 75. It's me, isn't it [LAUGHTER].

This Conference agrees to support the Covid Bereaved Families Campaign's call on the Government to start an immediate public inquiry into the Covid-19 Pandemic and their call for the Government to provide adequate support to those who have lost someone to Covid-19.

The UK has one of the highest death tolls in the world in the Covid-19 Pandemic, with over 100,000 deaths. Gaps in the country's pandemic preparedness, delays to locking down, inadequate supplies of PPE, and the policy of discharging ill-people into care homes have all been identified as having contributed to the high death toll.

We also know that BAME and disabled people died in higher numbers. Lack of planning and protective equipment put many frontline workers in harms way. Families have also been left in financial hardship, with many struggling to get benefits or being denied access to the Government's compensation scheme for frontline workers. In addition, there has been little or no recognition of the trauma of losing someone in this way or that there will be additional strain on bereavement and mental health support services. We believe all families should be able to access adequate support wherever they are in the country.

Conference offers its condolences to the thousands of bereaved families throughout the UK.

Conference instructs the National Executive Committee:

- *Work with campaign <https://www.covidfamiliesforjustice.org/> and promote it through their usual communication and media channels*
- *Work with their Parliamentary Groups to promote the campaign in both Houses*
- *Encourage branch and regional groups and caucuses to promote and support the campaign*
- *Make a donation to the campaign*
- *Provide in-kind support to the campaign*

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That this Conference agrees to support the Covid Bereaved Families Campaign, call on the government to start an immediate public inquiry into Covid-19, I don't know what that is, sorry, something's just coming from my computer, can you hear me? Oh right, okay. I'll start again, apologies. That Conference agrees to support the Covid Bereaved Families Campaign, calls on the government to start an immediate public inquiry into the Covid-19 pandemic and their call for the government to provide adequate support to those who have lost someone to Covid-19. The UK has one of the highest death tolls in the world and Covid-19 with over, well it's over 150,000 deaths since we submitted this motion. Gaps in the country's pandemic preparedness, delays to locking down, inadequate supplies of PPE and the policy of discharging ill people into care homes have been all identified as having contributed to the high death toll. We also know that the frail and disabled people died in higher numbers. A lack of planning and protective equipment put many front line workers in harm's way. Families have also been left in financial hardship, with many struggling to get benefits or being denied access to government compensation schemes for front line workers. In addition, there has been little or no recognition of the trauma of losing someone in this way, or that there will be additional strain on bereavement and mental health support services. We all believe families should be able to access adequate support wherever they are in the country. Conference offers its condolences to those of the thousands of bereaved families throughout the UK. Conference instructs the National Executive Committee to work with the Covid Family for Justice and promote it through their usual communications and media channels, work with their Parliamentary Group to promote the campaign in both Houses, encourage Branch and Regional Groups to promote and support the campaign, make a donation to the campaign and provide in-kind support to the campaign.

Conference, I mean anybody who's seen the news yesterday and today, would have seen that Boris Johnson had no faith in the Health Secretary. He said he was incompetent, but here we are 18 months later with Matt Hancock, you know, still in his position, even 'though it was recognised he wasn't capable of doing the job. 160,000+ citizens of this country have died because of Covid. The lack of support (music playing), that's Mohinder, the lack of support, the lack of support that families have received, it's just disgusting, you know, but yet the media portray what the Conservatives has done as a success. The Leader of the Opposition goes on radio and says, the Tories are riding a wave of popularity on the back of a successful support programme and vaccine rollout. How you can go as the Leader of the Opposition, on a radio station, when 160,000 people have died and think that's a good job. It's shameful. So Conference, please support this motion. Do whatever you can to support anybody who's been a victim of this illness in your workplace and has lost a loved one. Please support and continue to support each other and please make sure that when the government says it's safe to do so, that we ensure that our risk assessments are carried out in the workplace and no matter what the government says, that we uphold the strongest and safest practices to keep us all protected, to make sure we don't lose people unnecessarily as we already have.

I had, I believe Mark Hilton wanted to come in and I'm just going to 'phone Mohinder.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Morning, Conference. Yes, you've got to support this motion. I'm the same as you. I watched the news last night and the accusations, Boris, Cummings and Matt Hancock and that and it's absolutely disgraceful, disgraceful, but we all know that. We should be doing everything we can for people that have died, families of people that have died. You've got to support.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, quite obviously I'm saying this motion. I mean, it is, it's just common sense. I mean, the trouble is the preparedness of this government. I mean, do you know that when Theresa May was Prime Minister, they carried out a simulation in London in preparedness for a SARS-type virus, which is Covid. They found out they needed more PPE, they found out they needed more beds and what did they do? What did these Tories do? They did nothing, nada, nothing. They didn't give a damn. They wanted to keep things going. In Vietnam, Vietnam has had 39 deaths total, 39 deaths, because as soon as it hit, they locked down, they'd prepared, they did it. If a developing world country like Vietnam can do it, surely we should do, we should be able to do it, but they didn't. They wanted to support their rich criminal friends in the City of London, because they're the ones they care about, not us. Thank you. Support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, any other Speakers? No? Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay, can you take your hands down, please. Okay, those against? Okay. Thank you, Conference, that's been passed unanimously.

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Executive Council

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted further that Statutory Sick Pay is not fit for purpose. Millions of people have been forced to exist on Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) alone if their employers do not provide any company sick pay. This Conference recognises that the SSP scheme is not fit for purpose.

- *It excludes nearly 2 million people because they fall below the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL) according to TUC figures.*
- *It pays only £96.35 for up to 28 weeks. This is well below the National Living Wage (NLW) figure of £348.80 for working a forty hour week.*
- *It operates with a 3 day waiting period meaning most claimants miss out on 60% of their first week's payments, unless they've claimed it in the previous 8 weeks, and are now eligible again after having already missed out for those 3 days.*

These shortcomings mean those people who most need support are left short of money whilst being off work sick. This is unacceptable to this Conference.

Conference agrees to continue the campaign launched with don't leave organise in 2020 and for the executive to work with our Parliamentary group to call for the following;

- 6 weeks of full pay from day one (average earnings based on the last 12 week for those on zero hours/part time/low contracted hours) funded by those employers who don't currently pay company sick pay
- Following that 28 weeks of SSP paid at a higher rate in line with statutory maternity pay.
- Because we know that some illnesses don't go away after 6 weeks and support is needed long term.

Conference also agrees that in every recognised workplace when negotiating on terms, conditions and wages, 100% sick pay should be on the agenda.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Motion 76. I'm not going to read the whole motion out, but what I will say is, obviously we started a campaign last year alongside Don't Leave Organise, in ensuring that we raise the issue that statutory sick pay was inadequate and it wasn't just inadequate during Covid, but it's inadequate outside of Covid too. People can't survive on statutory sick pay, you know. What we're saying is that there should be a minimum, a minimum guarantee for people of six weeks' full pay, that companies should be levied to go into a fund to make sure that that sick pay is there for people and if you're a zero hours contract worker, it should be based on your last average of four weeks' pay, sorry six weeks' pay, then obviously what that would mean is that people wouldn't be struggling or having to make a decision of whether or not they go into work sick. They wouldn't be faced with losing their home because they're unable to get out of their bed, you know. What we're saying is the government needs to change the statutory sick pay and whether Covid ends anytime soon, we still will need to ensure that statutory sick pay is improved and actually adequate for people to be able to protect themselves. So, please support the motion, Conference and it's obviously formally seconded by the Executive and I know Douggie wants to come in and I believe Mohinder's just joined us as well, Sarah, I think that was Mohinder.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, obviously I want to support this motion, you know. Again, being a boring sod who likes reading economics, you know. If you look at the most successful country in Europe, is Germany, the most successful economy, indeed in one of the most successful economies in the world and what do they do?, they pay 100% of your wages in benefits, you know. If you lose your job, you get 100%, you know.

I think that says something about the German economy. I think that they realise, you know, that people, when they are well, when they are sick, you support them. The Scandinavian countries that do, their economies are in far better position than the Casino economy that we call the UK, the Scandinavian economies does the same, because they believe in supporting workers when you are sick, you know. Their economies are doing far better, you know. You look at this Covid ones, the ones that are, the ones like Norway that have supported their workers, yes, are coming out of the Covid, the Covid downturn in a lot better position. It makes just economic sense and the Tories claim they're good at running the economy. Well, I don't think they are. I think this is sensible. I think it, we should do something about this. Vote for the motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Any other Speakers? Okay Conference, to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, take your hands down, please. Okay, those against? Okay, no opposition, that's been carried unanimously.

I believe, I believe we have Mohinder in the room, ah, right, I think he might

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Send him a message.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes. So will he be able to join by 'phone, Sarah?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Yes he can do, do we need to give him the number?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Ah, I don't know. He probably, I would have thought that if he just 'phones on his, as long as he's got zoom on his mobile, he should be alright, shouldn't he?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Yes, there's a number he can ring.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Sorry Conference, just bear with us. While we're sorting that out, while we're sorting that out, what I'll, I can't while I'm sorting that out because it's you isn't it (music playing). Hello?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Apologies, Conference. We knew we'd have a hiccup somewhere along the line. Conference, whilst Ian's on the 'phone doing that, do you want to take a five minute comfort break and that should give us enough time to sort it out, rather than you all just sitting looking at us, looking at you, yes? I will, I will make an executive decision [LAUGHTER]. Thanks, Conference.

Sister Rachel Mullen – Branch 529: Can you hear me now? Alright, we'll still be able to do it on the 'phone then.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Have we, have we all gone for a brew?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I thought that might be best, just to send them for a five minute brew, whilst we were sorting it out. Apologies.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: I've turned the sound down, hold on a minute, Sarah. Sorry.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I thought it were best just to send them for a five minute brew rather than them sitting watching you, watching me, watching them.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, good idea. Why didn't I think of that? So, I've just talked to a young woman that's obviously trying to help him, with that number.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Yes. Okay. It should work, 'cause that's what Jason's done for the EC's when he's not been able to get on the laptop and Mark Hilton's joined the Health and Safety Committee with that number. Mark Dickinson, I meant, not Mark Hilton, that's 'cause I could see him on the screen, pretending to be Bagpuss.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's a puppet [LAUGHTER]. How long did we give 'em?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Five minutes, I was very strict.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Well done, well done. Yes, definitely, that'll cost Matt Hancock. I'm ready for karaoke-ing. Do we know if he's come in yet, Sarah? Are we

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Yes, he's here. He's here. He's got his hand up, that's why I couldn't find him. He's got his hand up, so he's at the top of the list, instead of the bottom where he was last time.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cool, cool.

Conference, we're going back to the motion, I believe it was 72. I believe and I believe it's Mohinder, under his pseudonym Kuldeep, that's moving the motion.

That this Conference stands in solidarity with the Indian farmers, and decrees their treatment by the Modi government.

Brother Mohinder Badhan – Branch 331: Hello. Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can indeed, we can indeed.

Brother Mohinder Badhan – Branch 331: Oh, right. Ian, Ian, first of all, I must apologise and I nearly had a heart attack, right. I'm sitting here now. How long I'm going to read it and I will be very sharp. Can you give me five minutes?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: The floor is yours.

Brother Mohinder Badhan – Branch 331: Right, right. First of all, I want to congratulate our new General Secretary, Sarah Woolley and I'm glad the Union has woken up after 100 years to elect the first female Secretary General. I'm definitely, I'm puzzled, I think the Union was suffering for 100 year from a sex discrimination virus, right. Anyway, you have corrected it and it's good, very good. Now, I wanted to say something about myself, but you know me, I'm going to, believe that I'm not going to say that but I'm just coming straight to the motion. Can you hear me now?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can, we can, pal.

Brother Mohinder Badhan – Branch 331: Right. I am here to support this motion wholeheartedly and I hope the motion will be passed unanimously because comrades, no farmers, no food. No food industry, no food industry and no Bakers Union, no Ian Hodson, no Sarah William, sorry, Sarah Woolley and no Mohinder [unclear]. This is a crucial moment in the history of India, in the history of India. India is sitting now on a sleeping volcano and it will, it can erupt at any time and it will be a major disaster, worst than the World Wars. There are millions of Indian farmers of all religions, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christian, Buddhist on the road since the last one years. 400 people have lost their lives and people sitting there, they have not visited their homes for one year and the moment is led by the State of Punjab, where I was born in a poverty stricken family. Now, farmers are not going to back down at no cost. It is the land of [unclear] Singh. The various people of India, they will not be defeated by this mad Modi. Please don't call Modi a dog, because it will be an insult to the dog community. Dogs are very faithful and friends of the human beings and also do not, people call him Hitler, please do not do that either. Hitler was a criminal, he committed a lot of serious crime against the humanity, but at the end when this fool realised that he has done something very, very serious and if, whatever conscience he had left, he had committed suicide, right, at last. Mr Modi is a coward. He has no guts to commit suicide, right. India is ashamed to have such a Prime Minister.

People call him only Prime Minister, I do call him dishonourable. He is a coward and I'm, I stand with the farmers of Punjab and I, the Bakers Union and all of us are, without farmers we are nobody, Ian, right and let us, I hope, that the Union will pass this revelation unanimously. I hope so and after this meeting is over, I am going to go to the press, if the Union failed to do it, pass it, unanimously, I will make a [unclear] of it. I will, because Ian, knowing me, you know, you know I am prepared. I have contributed to the people of Punjab financially out of my pension and I don't know about the [unclear] system, it has already cost me £50/£60, right. I am prepared to do that, right and I know for my extreme views, if I go to India, I will be arrested and I will be happy to let it happen. You know, give me two minutes and I will finish with that. I want to say one thing, I want to thank the Bakers Union. What I am today, it is all because of the Bakers Union. I was, when I came to this country in 1960, free, I had no education, but now I have done 20, about 20 National Conferences and I have attended with the UILO, I have a **wife ?**, people, I am a founder member, founder General Secretary of the largest Indian Untouchables, human rights organisation since and I'm prepared to do everything and do you know at the UN, I was shocked and I really had an attack when I was, I had a note there that the Director General of UN want to see me for half an hour.

I've been to his office [unclear] and this man he said I have heard about your activities and I have some emails what you are doing and he told me to sit in his chair and he was standing behind me, right and he said, he said so many things about me. I was advised to [unclear] on racial issues and I'm a friend of, I hate the Labour Party's Tony Blair, he's a parasite. I'm a friend of Arthur Scargill and a fan of Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner, I met him, right. Please, Ian, I do congratulate, the credit goes to you for, for electing under your leadership, the first female woman, right. Good luck. I hope to meet you, right. A lot of our members come to the Annual Conference just for drink, right, sleep, right, I don't, right. I have a cause and this country has given me lots of things, right. What I am today, it is, it is because of your Union. It is about time, Ian, standing with the people, show Solidarity and defeat this evil, right. I don't know what I have to call him, I do not like to call people bastard because everyone, every father, right.

So thank you very much, Ian, I'm very proud of you, friend of mine and had I not been connected now, I'm certainly, certainly I was going to have three full drinks and probably commit suicide. Thanks, you have saved me, you have saved my life. All the best and let us support behind Sarah Woolley. Thanks, thanks very much. Thank you. Thank you, Ian.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, Mohinder. Thank you very much and I believe Duggie's now going to second your motion. So, we're going to turn you on, going to turn you on mute now, Mohinder. Duggie Johnson.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I would love, I'm proud to second Mohinder and a great speech there by Mohinder, you know. This is so important, this is so important motion, you know. India is the largest democracy in the world, on that it matters. If you, if you look at what has been, how the farmers have been treated in India, it is an egregious disgrace. Over, you're talking, because of the neoliberal reforms enacted by Narendra Modi, you know and by the way, there is a little bit of a connection with Narendra Modi and Hitler. The group he is a member of are SS in the BJP, actually take Mein Kampf and read it as inspiration, they read it, but Narendra Modi and his reforms already, you're talking farmers that have committed suicide because of this, are talking in the hundreds of thousands in India. They have reached the end of their tether.

They are forcing them to take, originally they tried to force them to take the Monsanto genetically modified food, whereupon the Indian farmers would take the seeds and would save a proportion of the seeds to the next year to farm. They now, with these genetically modified foods, you cannot save them over, you just have to sow them automatically. Already in India, the majority of the farmers do not, as revealed by very many watchers of India, very many human rights groups, Indian human rights groups, farmers are not receiving, cannot have enough sustenance in food. We talked recently about people not getting enough food in this country. The farmers can't even feed themselves in India. Narendra Modi has sold India out to the likes of Bill Gates and Monsanto. Please, please support the motion and tell Narendra Modi we know what you're doing and we will not, we will not, we will support the farmers. Thank you.

Brother [unidentified]: Hi, Conference. Mr President, General Secretary. Very passionate Mohinder and Douggie. I'm here to fully support this motion. Modi is pushing through the Farmers Act in a Tory undemocratic manner. This total right wing regime will remove the minimum price that small farmers must currently be paid for their produce. This is akin to the UK government abolishing the minimum wage and will drive farmers and their families into grinding poverty. Big business will drive out independent farmers and protesting farmers have faced brutal oppression at the hands of the state. Please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Wasili Ali – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Here to support the motion. I just want to say a few things about the original Speaker. There's so much passion. People need to look past some of things that he might have said, could have offended or rubbed people the wrong way. The bottom line is the motion, we need to look at the motion. I like the example he gave, don't even call him a dog or a member of the dog family, you know, dogs are faithful. That's a powerful statement. We need to look at some of the things he said, because there was so much passion. I didn't want to speak on this motion, but I listened to the guy. We need to support the motion. I've got a bit of history, what I know about what is happening in India, but I didn't come here to preach on that. I just wanted to make sure that people vote on the motion, forget about other things that was said, that may have offended or rubbed people the wrong way. Thank you, Conference.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, you've got to support this for all the obvious reasons. Mohinder, please don't commit suicide, because you are so valuable and so passionate and we support you every bit on this, my friend. We're all there with you. Solidarity.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, Conference. There was no opposition to it, so I'm going to go to the vote. Everybody finished voting? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay. Anybody against? That motion's carried, Conference. Thank you very much.

So Conference, we are on motion 77.

Conference agrees that Supermarkets are in control of our industry which is wrong, over the years our terms and conditions have been forced down. Hundreds of people have been made redundant due to supermarkets putting pressure on the employers we work with to drive down costs in order to maximise their profits. This creates an unnecessary race to the bottom in order to claim contracts with the supermarkets, which in turn impacts members.

The executive ask Conference to agree that we continue to work with our Parliamentary Group to stand up and fight back against the power of supermarkets ensuring that they cannot continue to profit on the back of our members as they have, even more so over the last 12 months and that we protect terms and conditions ensuring they aren't further eroded away because of the pressure supermarkets put on the industry.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, oh sorry

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Go on, I was just waiting to un-mute, sorry.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: It's not as smooth when we're not sat next to each other. Conference, for years now we have seen the devastation caused by supermarkets pitting employers against each other for the sake of a penny here and there off a loaf or a box of cake. The latest casualty is Allied, who lost a Co-Op order, resulting in yet more redundancies in our industry. What we are experiencing as a result is not just mass redundancies each time, but tougher negotiations to raise terms and conditions and it's not just bread, it's cake, biscuits, fish, it's across the board. Supermarkets are a disproportionate level of power in the food industry that needs to be better regulated. Conference, we ask that you support this motion, so that we can work with our Parliamentary Group to look at areas of legislation that we can focus on to change, to remove some of their power and ensure that we protect and build upon current terms and conditions in our industry and stop the race to the bottom they are currently causing.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Sarah. That motion's formally seconded. I've got Douggie and Mark that indicated in advance they want to speak.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes. I would ask people to support this motion, you know. I nearly, I nearly jumped up and rushed over and grabbed one of my books like, 'cause I've got, I've got a little bit of data, I've got a little bit of worrying, worrying things about the supermarkets, you know. There's a great book out by How Corrupt is Britain? done by academics and activists and in it, it reveals just how the supermarkets operate. There isn't one, even under the present legislation, there isn't one of the big supermarkets that hasn't been convicted of price fixing. They haven't been convicted. They've been convicted of it. They are in control of everything. They want, they are, do you know what, to be honest, they resemble mafia families who just take everything, that's what they, they resemble the mafia. So, I can't really say more than that. Please support the motion.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558 (Rathbones, part of Morrisons), Leeds: Comrades. I've been waiting for this motion. Supermarkets, where can you start? A lot of you have been messaging and asking and there was a statement given earlier in the Conference and everyone wants to know what's going on, well I'm going to tell you now. A supermarket, that perhaps I am associated with, has decided that despite the Covid, despite everything else, despite the massive, massive profits the supermarkets have made during this pandemic, despite even the revolt last week of their own shareholders to opt for massive bonuses to the CEO and Senior Directors and now a Branch has courageously turned round and said no, we're not accepting this, we're not going to take it any more and unfortunately this has, as you will have heard, led to a campaign of persecution, harassment, victimisation, the attempt to use consultation groups, non-Union that is, to steamroller over this, put the supermarket's values first. It's absolutely disgraceful.

Branch Secretary, Sean Molloy, has been forced off work with mental health issues because he's cracked under this and that's what the statement of support earlier in the week was about. The supermarkets don't care. The big boys of the supermarkets are sat with their Tory politicians, looking at their shares, looking at their options, looking at the money, they don't care. The supermarket people high up, they're looking at short-term profit. They don't care about long-term effect. They don't care about anything other than making money. Terms and conditions, what do they care? Safety, what do they care? People dying, what do they care? As long as they get their profits. Well it's time to turn round and say to the supermarkets, no, you're greedy and we're not going to accept this. That's it. Please support.

Brother Dave Suddards – Branch 561 (Hovis, Bradford): Here to support this motion wholeheartedly. What I'd like, while I support Mark and what's going on there, I'd like to draw attention, the supermarkets started this way back in probably the 70's and then through the 80's. One of the downturns was when we did away, well when the government allowed them to introduce Sunday shopping. Everybody goes oh, fantastic, it's great to go shopping on a Sunday. No, it isn't. It started the erosion of terms and conditions for people. Then they're doing it again. The amount of people what go oh, I'll go to a self-scanner, 'cause it's quicker. Every time we use a self-scanner, we're putting somebody out of work. I'll take you back, we should be looking at this with the Parliamentary Group under the motion 36, what was earlier on. There's things that we can do, as Delegates and our members and encourage them. If we don't have self-scanners or people do not use self-scanners, then [unclear]. I've just read a thing this morning, till staff redundant and introduce self-scan tills. It's a scandal what the supermarkets are doing. I urge you to support this motion and support 558.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277 (Warburtons, Bristol): Chair, Delegates. I probably, as a lot of you will gather, Warburtons seem to be mopping up a lot of the stuff that's been mentioned, you know, through the Co-Op and stuff like that, delivering and all the rest. Now, although that might be good for Warburtons, it doesn't bode very well for every other bakery. What I would say and I'm not sure how we could influence the Union is, why don't the bakeries talk to each other? They seem to be fighting each other for the scraps that are out there and as long as the supermarkets are going to keep doing this to them, they're going to screw us down to the ground. We need to organise to fight back against these supermarkets. Please support this motion.

Brother John Newman – Branch 247: Speaking in support of the motion. A few years ago, we had a conversation. We had a National Allied Meeting and out of that meeting came the power of the supermarkets. I feel if we're asked to speak to our bakery managers and ask them to contact the CEOs of the company and give information regarding what the supermarkets were doing. I did that by word of mouth, that was passed up the line over a 'phone and about a month later, the answer came back unofficially that it would be better if we didn't comment or antagonise the supermarkets because we're afraid that they will pull out. So even our employers are terrified of the supermarkets and they will not raise a complaint against them for fear of losing business, which is an absolute disgrace and we need our Parliamentary Party to fight on our behalf. Thank you. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, any more wishing to speak? In which case, to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, can you take your hands down for me, please. I like the fact that Ruth Stephenson has a wine glass. Okay, anyone against? It's not, it's gin, not wine, so sorry, I couldn't tell from here. That's passed unanimously. Okay, motion 78.

78

No 3 Regional Council

That this Conference believes that this country is ill served by the mainstream broadcast media and we should support good independent broadcasters such as Novara Media.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Okay, that's me again. That this country believes, that this Conference believes that the country is still served by the mainstream broadcast media and we should support good independent broadcasters, such as Novara Media. Do you know what? I think we know how awful the broadcast media is. I think we know, you know, just how they replicate the talking points of the likes of the Murdoch press and all these people, but I like, I like to use examples. During the last election, there was great talk in the broadcast media when the Chief Rabbi accused, issued a statement accusing Labour of Anti-Semitism. Yes, okay, even though I disagree, it is an important story that should, should have been reported, but on the same day, the same day the Muslim Council of Britain issued a statement condemning the Conservative Party for Islamophobia. It is not reported, it didn't happen. Nobody, nobody said anything.

Surely that should have been reported. I only knew about it because of Novara Media and the work they do and the same time, recently, we've heard that by September 11th, yes, the all US and British forces will be taken out of Afghanistan. Yes, it's an illegal war, but where have you heard on the broadcast media, when have you heard that the war was lost years ago. The elite Afghan war logs admitted it, the war was lost. We don't hear about it. Everybody else knew it, you go to Afghanistan, the Taliban know it, that's why they're not going, attacking British and American forces any more, they know we're going. The war was lost years ago, yet it's not discussed on the broadcast media, never discussed. When do we ever hear the words Israeli Apartheid? We never hear it, it doesn't exist. It's only on the independent broadcast media we hear about it. Please support the motion. We need a change in our, in how our news is told. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Anybody from No. 3 seconding that? Formally second Jackie and Michael now. Are you wishing to speak?

Sister Jackie Barnwell – Branch 331: No, it's formally seconded, mate.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, thank you very much. Do you want to speak, Michael? No.

Brother Michael [unidentified]: Yes, I fully agree with Douggie on this. The political bias we've got, especially on the BBC, is just ridiculous. We've heard, we've discussed it at Conference so many times. Nobody can fail to see what's happening. My only concern is that if we do go to more commercial news broadcasting, we'll end up with a British Fox News and nobody wants that. Please support the motion.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277 (Warburtons, Bristol): Chair, Delegates. Yes, it's already been said. We have technically a broadcast system that should be impartial, it's called the BBC. As we all know, that is just run by Tories, their cronies, their friends. It makes a mockery of independent news. I'm not sure if you've heard, well, I mean obviously it has been broadcast and everything else, but most news channels in this country are of right-wing origin and we've now got an even better one. That fest that is GB news or whatever it's called. It beggars belief that Julie Dyers has just painted a brilliant picture of how these right-wing Capitalists run this country and keep us all safe and well and yet in the background all they're doing is just stabbing the working man in the back. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Anybody, anybody else? General Secretary.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Conference, we ask you, that you support this motion. We have all seen examples of the lies pushed out by the right-wing media, that is no friend of Trade Unions or the working class.

It is purely focused on dividing us, as the right know that that way we are weaker. We need a voice in the media that reports the truth and our stories, so that when our members go on strike they aren't attacked for being greedy or trying to starve people. When we launch reports like the Right to Food one, there is an impact and people understand the issues food workers face and we need a voice in the media that doesn't dumb down our industry and instead recognises the skills we have and the importance of them in keeping the nation fed without issues. Independent broadcasters are that voice and we should support them.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay, to the vote. Those in favour? All finished? Okay, take your hands down. I know the answer, looking at that figure. Anyone against? Okay, that was carried unanimously. Emergency motion, I believe it's No. 2 and it's Pauline McCarthy, also moving on behalf of the Executive, I believe. Oh right, motion, sorry, I thought it was an emergency motion, I don't know why. Emergency motion No. 1, apologies. I don't know why I put 2.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I don't know what it is.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It's long Covid.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): I can't talk.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Hello?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: It wouldn't be you, Dave, would it? Long Covid, it was an emergency motion put in on long Covid? Hello? Yes, that would be the first, Mark. Mick?

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 365: I've just told Pauline she can move the motion

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes.

Brother Mick McDonald – Branch 365: and she can read the motion and then it can be discussed, so she can, she can put that motion forward.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, for certain. Yes, you only need to read the motion, Pauline, that's it. Right. What about you, Dave, can you, can you read it?

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Hello. Yes, I'm just in the process of getting the minutes up. Could you move on and I'll come back to the motion after please, Ian, if it's possible?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Emergency motion No. 2 then. Who, who is emergency, who's moving emergency

Brother Michael Blundred – Branch 390 (Premier Foods, Stoke): That one was me.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: There you go, Michael, the floor is yours.

Emergency Motion 2

This conference acknowledges the landfill operation run by Red industries at Walleys Quarry in Silverdale, Newcastle under Lyme is a blight on the locality and must be shut down. The Environment Agency's Enforcement notice issued on 26th March does not go far enough and still allows waste to be dumped in the landfill.

This issue has blighted the local community with an incessant rotten egg reek that is ruining people's day to day lives, and their health. The County Council's Director of Care and Health said, "We cannot exclude a risk to health from pollutants in the area, although we would stress any risk to health is likely to be small and short term – for example temporary irritation to the eyes, nose and throat..."

This is unacceptable, Conference, please vote to cap the tips, close down this operation and to show support and solidarity for the pressure groups calling for it's closure.

Brother Michael Blundred – Branch 390 (Premier Foods, Stoke): Good morning, Conference. I'm here to put forward emergency motion No. 2. This Conference acknowledges the landfill operation run by Red Industries at Walleys Quarry in Silverdale, Newcastle-under-Lyme. It's a blight on the locality. It must be shut down. Environment Agency's Enforcement Notice issued on the 26th March doesn't go far enough and still allows waste to be dumped in this landfill. This has blighted the local community with an incessant rotten egg reek that's ruining people's day-to-day lives and their health. The County Council's Director of Care & Health said, direct quote this is, we cannot exclude a risk to health from pollutants in the area, although we would stress that any risk to health is likely to be short, small and short-term, for example temporary irritation to the eyes, nose, throat. This is unacceptable. Conference, please vote to cap the tip, close down this operation and to show support and Solidarity to the pressure groups calling for the, for its closure. I know Dave and Rich probably, their place of work is a lot closer than ours.

Our factory's three miles away from this landfill and I had to report the stench to the Environment Agency of the local Council, because I could smell it inside the factory. This is mad. We've got, we've got local people who are getting stuff like puffy eyes, nose bleeds, sore throats, headaches, loss of sleep, increased number of asthma attacks. They have mental health issues because they're worried about the thing so much. It's crazy. If this was in a workplace, you'd accept the proper PPE for the thing and if the PPE didn't deal with it, you'd be out of there, you'd remove yourself to a safe place. These people are really suffering and they're having to resort to things like air purifiers in the house, all the windows are shut even in the current weather, they've got to keep them shut to keep the horrible stink out. Please vote for this motion, Conference, to show support and Solidarity to these suffering workers. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay. Are you, are you seconding this, Douggie? Okay.

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Yes, I'm seconding it. I'm unfamiliar with the area, but landfill is a disgrace anyway, you know. We should be using, you know, the government talks about zero, we'll move to zero carbon by the next millennium and well, I'm exaggerating there but, you know, by the year 3000 I think it is, you know and that's all it is, it's talk. We should be moving to an environmentally zero carbon economy and the fact that people have to do, have to suffer that where they live and that Michael can smell it inside his factory, you know. It's, it's, you know, it's obscene. It's a damn disgrace, you know. Please support the motion, you know. Thank you very much.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: I'm not going to say too much, 'cause everyone's said it. Please support.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Good morning, Conference. Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. I'm here to support this motion. On health issues, the actual methane gas that these places actually, what it actually creates, is really detrimental to the health of people and not only about their health, but even for the environment and the ozone layer. That's why we've got this, well, it adds to the climate change. We need to actually stop all this. So, please support. Thank you.

Brother Terry Povey – Branch 277 (Warburtons, Bristol): Chair, Delegates. What has already been said, in all honesty. In this day and age of recycling, why are we still using landfill? It's ridiculous. Please support this motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any other Speakers? The Executive would ask Conference to support the motion. To the oh, sorry, Tahir, did you want to come in?

Brother Tahir Rashid – Branch 390 (Premier Foods): Yes, thank you very much. Good morning, everybody. I mean we're quite lucky in one way, we go to work and we leave work and we alter that area so we don't smell it. I've recently done a first aid course which was literally round the corner from the quarry and the stench was unbelievable and I absolutely felt for the people that have to live and deal with that day-in and day-out. I mean they had, the property values have gone down so they can't afford to sell their houses and move on, which they shouldn't have to do in the first place. What really gets me, how the Environmental Health and the Council are still giving them permission to keep using it, because it's affecting such a high proportion of the number of people who live in that area. I mean what's going on? Wholeheartedly support this, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thanks, Tahir. Anybody else? In that case, the Executive would ask Conference to support the motion. To the vote, please. All those in favour? Okay, can you put your hands down for me, please. I know the answer to this one already, just waiting for, that's it. Anyone against? That was unanimously carried, Conference. Are we ready, Dave? Emergency motion 1?

Emergency motion 1

That this Conference agrees that Long Covid needs to be recognised as a potential life long disability. The symptoms that Long Covid leaves some people can be life changing. Some have had blood clots on their lungs which leaves minor to very severe scarring which, I'm told by NHS staff, never heals. This leaves patients with breathing difficulties, as their lungs are not working to full capacity. We are told by scientists that Covid 19 looks likely to be here for some years to come. Long Covid can and will affect workers all over the UK. Please vote for this motion.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can indeed.

Brother Dave Lawrence – Branch 582 (Premier Foods): Thank you, Mr President. Good morning, Conference. Emergency motion 1. That this Conference agrees that long Covid needs to be recognised as a potential life-long disability. The symptoms of long Covid can and have left many people with life-changing health issues. Many have had blood clots on their lungs, leaving a variety of serious health issues. Many health experts and scientists predict that Covid-19 looks likely to be here for many years to come.

Long Covid can and will affect workers and their families all over the UK, so could you please support this motion. Many thanks, comrades.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Are you coming in, Pauline? Formally second?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): un-mute. Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: We can indeed.

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Hey

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: What's all that about?

Sister Pauline McCarthy – Branch 582 (Manor Bakeries, Carlton/Premier Foods): Well, my computer's 91% uploading and my 'phone's playing up and I've got a hospital appointment in one minute, so Here to support the motion. It's most important, especially as we've gone through this terrible year or 18 months nearly now and it's important that we support members and support the motion. It's been prevalent throughout the country and we need to do more and make sure that long Covid is recognised as a disability. Thank you. Support.

Brother Mark Hilton – Branch 558: Comrades, I didn't actually know a lot about long Covid until one of our members came and told me about it. Unfortunately he's a driver, so they've just paid him over to Wincanton, but I've already discussed that sort of issue from the supermarkets. Myself, I suffered from pleurisy nearly 20 years ago. It left severe scarring on my lungs. I go every year or less, last year, I know Sarah's aware and a few of my friends. It comes up when they x-ray and check me. It looks like cancer. I have arterial samples regularly. You know what I'm saying, Pauline. It's horrendous and this should be registered as a disability. It's simple as that, so fully support you, love. Alright.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: I'm here to support this motion, because of actually the symptoms of long Covid. Extreme tiredness, yes. People can't get out of bed to do their work, they can't get up. The shortness of breath, it's like having asthma, it's even worse, yes. Chest pain or tightness, yes. Problems with memory, yes and concentration. I have that trouble anyhow, but I call it an age thing, but problems with memory. Difficult sleeping, insomnia. So if that, that adds to the extreme tiredness, yes. This, the one that actually gets me is the pins and needles, yes, because it attacks your nervous system as well, yes, so it gives you pins and needles, you know and it attacks your nervous system and it attacks your circulation as well. So, please support this motion. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Any, any other Speakers? No? Conference, the Executive would ask you to support the motion and in doing so would also point out that if you do or are aware of anybody that has got the symptoms of long Covid, the TUC is looking to do research into this really important issue and if you go to the TUC's website you can take part in a survey there or encourage members to take part in a survey there and then that will help us understand long Covid and have as much information available as we can to try and reduce the effects and the impact of long Covid going forward. So, to the vote. Those in favour? Okay Conference, can you take your hands down for the very last time. I already know the answer, but I'll ask the question anyway. Just our Matthew to put his hand down. Thank you very much. Anybody against? Oh, we haven't quite finished, we have got an emergency motion No. 3 [LAUGHTER]. Sorry, we've got two more to do. That's carried unanimously. Emergency motion No. 3.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Can you put your hand up, the mover, because I can't remember who it was, please.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Looks like Douggie. Douggie's got his hand up.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks, Douggie.

Emergency motion 3

That after the Israeli government's latest evictions in the East Jerusalem district of Sheikh Jarrah, the storming of the Al Aqsa compound (the third holiest site in Islam), and the recent bombing of Gaza we condemn the actions of Israel and call upon all nations to stop providing weapons to Israel. We also see the bombing of the AP building in Gaza as another attempt by Israel to stop any reporting of its crimes upon the Palestinian people and shut down any form of dissent. As before we stand with the Palestinian resistance

Brother Douggie Johnstone – Branch 356: Alright. That after the Israeli government's latest evictions in East Jerusalem, the East Jerusalem district of Sheikh Jarrah, the storming of the Al-Aqsa compound, the third Holiest sites in Israel, in Islam, sorry, bloomin', sorry, my computer's playing up and the recent bombing of Gaza. We condemn the actions of Israel and call upon all nations to stop providing weapons to Israel. We can also see that the bombing of the AP building in Gaza as another attempt by Israel to stop the reporting of its crimes upon the Palestinian people and shut down any form of dissent. As before, we stand with the Palestinian resistance. Do you know what? Last night, last night I couldn't believe what I saw, yes. I saw, two days' ago, in East Jerusalem, hard right Israeli's did the March of Flags celebrating the seizure of East Jerusalem in 1967. They were shouting out, death to Arabs, death to Arabs. When the Palestinians tried to counter-protest, they tried to put up Palestinian flags. The Israeli police were beating the hell out of them.

You should see the scenes of this. They were beating the hell out of them and arresting Palestinian women, children. You have never seen anything like this in your life, you know and if, you know, there's lots on the media made about terrorism, you know. Let's just, I'll give you a quote about terrorism. Terrorism is the deliberate and systemic murder, maiming and of the innocent to inspire fear for political ends. The quote is from somebody who knows about terrorism, Benjamin Netanyahu. What he has done and what they are doing against the Palestinian people is terrorism. Please support the motion.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers. Secunder? Abid (?).

Brother Hussain Abid – Branch 312 (Banbury): Hi, Ian. Can you hear me?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Yes, we can.

Brother Hussain Abid – Branch 312 (Banbury): I just want to add to what Douggie's just said. It is a genocide, to be honest with you and it's shocking what's happening there. Not many people understand this, because media doesn't really show the, what's happening there. I was in Gaza in 2010 with a charity for medical aid and some of the things I heard from the people there were shocking, how they're treated and how they're turned out of their houses and things like this. I just want to say that, I just want everybody to support this motion and everybody keep sharing the information and showing Solidarity to Palestine. Thanks a lot, Ian.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Thank you, mate. Cheers, pal.

Brother John Fox – Branch 405: Mr President, General Secretary, Conference. I'm here to support this motion. I'm just reading up about it now. Eight Palestine refugee families residing in Sheikh Jarrah are facing forced eviction due to a legal challenge by a Nahalat Shimon Settler Organisation, with the risk imminent for four of the families, according to the OHCHR Office. A guy called Rupert Colville said that the evictions, if ordered and implemented, would violate Israel's obligation under Israel law. So, Israel are totally wrong in this and we should stop providing weapons to Israel. We should stop providing weapons to every, every country, because we should have, everybody's equal, everybody's the same in my, there's only one race and we've only got one life and we've only got one earth to live on, yes, so therefore all this war should actually stop. All the weapons should be dismantled and got rid of, in my view, this is in my view, so I support this motion wholeheartedly. Thank you.

Brother Tahir Rashid – Branch 390 (Premier Foods, Stoke): Like everybody, wholeheartedly support this motion. I heard a quote not long ago, when injustice becomes law, resistance becomes a duty. We must feel for the Palestinians. If one person in their family is caught throwing a stone or any sort that's going against the Israeli regime, the whole house will be bulldozed, whether there's people in there or not. As technology's advanced, everyone's got Smartphones and people are videoing and the world is becoming aware of the atrocities that are going on there. It is a crime against humanity, which is supported by America and Britain. How long are they going to support it? People's eyes are opening. When people are given a number instead of a name, they are automatically being dehumanised there and then. So their lives have no value over ours? Everybody's got a right to life. If the two-state solution happened, they could live peacefully, but the way that the agenda is forced upon the Palestinians, that's why they're getting no resolution. I will wholeheartedly support this motion. Thank you very much.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: That's good to hear. Anybody else? John Fitzpatrick to respond on behalf of the Executive.

Brother John Fitzpatrick, speaking on behalf of the Executive: They applaud the Israeli's attacks on mosques, where people worship, relax and take the peace and everything else. To invade it with smoke bombs and everything else, I've seen that bit on television, it was horrendous. We'd ask you to support this motion. Please support.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Okay Conference, to the vote. All those in favour? Okay, can you take your hands down. Okay, those against? Okay Conference, I'm just waiting for my numbers, so that was passed unanimously.

Thank you very much, we've got to the end of all the motions. Well done to everybody and, you know, absolutely incredible contributions you've made this week. Thank you very, very much.

Okay, so I know normally we go, we go through lots of, lots of congratulations and everything now and that's quite right to do. I mean, I think, I think obviously a lot of us probably started this week with concerns about whether or not this would work and as the week's gone on, we've put an extra day in. I think, I think personally, you know, it's felt very personal by being on zoom, so I'd like to thank you all for taking part and sharing this experience. It's one of the best experiences on zoom I've had in the last 18 months, so thank you very much.

I'm going to invite now, normally we'd finish with speeches for new Delegates from certain people and obviously I'm going to invite Mick McDonald to give his closing speech to Conference.

Mick McDonald's Closing Speech to Conference

Brother Mick McDonald: – Branch 365: I'm supposed to be Chair, we haven't had Standing Orders. I've really enjoyed this Conference. I've had more to do in this Conference. I've spoke more than I have for the last three years, with being in the Standing Orders. I think it's been brilliant and the main word I can say for it is respect. Everybody's respected the other person's opinions and such. There's been good dialogue and I can't, I've loved it, it's been brilliant and thank you, Ian and Sarah, because you've done a great job. That's all I can say. I hope to see you next year, 'cause I still love, you know, I call it the real Conference. I still like to get up on that stage, look out and I can stand there for five minutes looking at the faces. So, I hope we get one next year, but if we don't, I've no fear of us running another good digital Conference. Thank you one and all and thank you all for your respect, diligence and well, good manners. Thank you.

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Cheers, Mick [APPLAUSE]. Now, obviously we're very grateful for the work that was done by Standing Orders in the run up to this Conference. We know it was different and we know we had to, we had to learn new things as we went along and the support we got from Standing Orders for this Conference to happen was absolutely imperative that one, we got it right and I think, apart from a couple of technical difficulties and maybe poor Chairing, I think, I think the work that the Standing Orders did has been, you know, what's led to a very successful Conference.

You know, obviously we would normally always thank our full time Officials that have, normally obviously, for the new Delegates, you might not realise it, but the full time Officials would normally be serving you your teas and coffees while you sit down and wait on you hand and foot. If that doesn't happen next year, then obviously you need to hold them to account, but obviously thank you very much for the full time Officials that have taken part in this Conference. You know, obviously they've taken on board some of the new ideas, taken responsibility for the new direction that we're going in and obviously we appreciate their support and thank them for their participation and obviously for taking part in the fringe meetings too and for their contributions.

Obviously there's nobody from the clerical staff here, but obviously we always pass our regards on. You know, the administration team that we have do a fantastic job. I know when you 'phone up the Offices and you need some support and you need advice, I mean even though it's probably not their role, they're always prepared to give it, but they make sure that this Union functions. So thank you to all of our clerical staff and I'm now looking at the General Secretary, as I invite our General Secretary to make her closing speech to Conference.

The General Secretary's Closing Address to Conference

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Thanks, National President or Richard, as we've now been fondly referred to for the week and now I'll refer myself as Judy going forward.

Conference, before I start my closing speech, I was asked on Sunday how many legal cases we've won. In the background this week, we've been trying to collate the exact amount. Unfortunately we've only heard back from one of the solicitors from three so far, who have informed us that we've won 63 cases with them last year, however it's important to point out that that what is classed as a win isn't necessarily a positive ruling in a tribunal case. These days, cases become so complex that it's rarely cut and dried and the majority of cases are settled out of court, even if it is on the day itself, sat in a court building, which I've had to do myself and it would happen more often than you would realise. This means that we are accountable for the costs incurred, but as I said on Sunday, that is the cost that we will always bear, because it's right that members receive legal representation when dealing with their employers. We've had cases where members have won, in out of court settlements, amounts up to £50,000, but what we will do going forwards is work with the solicitors to collate that information quarterly to report in the Foodworker. This means that members can see how many other members have challenged employers or initiated accident claims and hopefully it will encourage and empower others to stand up if they've experienced an injustice in their workplace and to my closing speech, I'll keep it short, because we're slightly over time.

Conference, what can I say? I'm absolutely blown away by the engagement and support this week. I know there were reservations around how we could run a digital Conference and ensure Delegates had the opportunity to talk and speak on motions. There were concerns it would be boring and dull and that sitting in front of a screen for hours on end each day would be disengaging rather than engaging, especially for first-time Delegates and for it to come from you that you wanted to debate on the Executive motions and the ones that we couldn't fit in on the second, on an extra day, well, that was just ace and wow, collectively, we have made a clear stand against racism. We have had an open debate about the menopause. Vow to fight the Tories against their planned cuts to funding for adults and children with autism and learning difficulties. Agreed to recognise and train Environmental Reps. Made sure we can continue to function in the future, should we ever experience something like this again.

Agreed to support JENGBA and the fantastic work that they do to campaign against injustices and we've made it known that we will always support Brothers and Sisters within our Union and internationally when they are being targeted, oppressed and persecuted. There have been so many fantastic motions moved, debated and carried. Alongside that, we've had some amazing fringe meetings. We spoke to our Branch Secretaries about the challenges they face, which was clear, lack of engagement especially with Branch meetings, but also with people joining and feeling empowered to become Reps. We invited our women members to talk to us about the issues they face and covered the issues with periods and a lack of understanding of their impact on women, as well the menopause and how actually Statutory Maternity Pay isn't fit for purpose, especially if you're not a full-time worker. Made a great session with Andy Birchall, who talked to the biggest group of the week so far, about the importance of Branch mapping and organising your workplace. Richard Burgon joined us to talk about politics and Haroon brilliantly facilitated our very first meeting that focused on and listened to [unclear] members, their experiences and their issues and yesterday afternoon Ian Byrne, MP, joined us to talk about the Right to Food Campaign and look at next steps around it.

The way you have contributed this week, telling us your stories and experiences, has been truly inspirational and I felt so proud and honoured at the openness and honesty we've had. There's been so many of you talking about your personal circumstances, whether in fringe meetings or commenting on motions and it means the absolute world that you felt comfortable and safe enough to do that, because it's never easy opening yourself up. All the ideas, the points raised and documents touched on will become the foundations of our next steps to rebuild our great Union. We intend to keep talking to you, we will keep talking to you. We'll contact the fringe meeting attendees in the next few days to set up the next round of meetings and circulate the documents and resources we have spoken about, asking for feedback and building on those groups to create networks that can support each other, share best practice and raise each other up. We want to build on those meetings because, as I mentioned on Monday, you are the membership, are the BFAWU and it is important that we hear you in order to truly represent you, so together we can improve our industry.

What we need now though is for you to go back into your workplaces and take the energy from this week, the discussions we've had, the resources we will circulate and use those to organise your workplace. Aim for 100% density and increase your membership, so that our great Union will be here for generations to come. I know you can do it and we are here every step of the way to support you, because that is the only way we remain a powerful, independent Trade Union that continues to put larger Unions in the movement to shame. We'll get you the link to the new website, we're introducing the organising meetings, we've circulated and will do again Branch mapping documentation and we have mastered the art now of holding Conference digitally, which gives us massive opportunities in the future to try new things, drawing new people from our industry into our Union. Conference, I don't know about you, but I'm really excited about our future. We've got some amazing activists and Reps in our Union, those that have spoken out this week, but also those back in your Branches and also those that don't know their capabilities yet because we haven't reached them and I know together, as the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union, we will create change, we will ensure our industry is recognised for its contribution to our economy, we will get to the point where people are proud to work in our industry and where you are recognised, not only in name but in terms, conditions and pay. Thank you for your indulgence and patience this week and your continued support. As I said on Monday, I'm really looking forward to meeting those of you that I don't know yet and working with each and every one of you to build and grow our Union. Together we are going to achieve great things. Solidarity.

I'm doing my bit now, aren't I?

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: You are, you are.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Apologies, apologies [LAUGHTER].

Conference, as you can see, I don't make a very good Vice President, but in the absence of a Vice President, I would like to welcome our National President to give his closing address to Conference.

The National President's Closing Address to Conference

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Conference, thank you very much and obviously thank you for your participation this week. It's been great to see so many first time Delegates on here, but so many first time Delegates that have contributed. You've now become seasoned Speakers at our Conference and obviously next year, hopefully, you'll be talking from that rostrum and absolutely smashing it, so well done to all that's made those fantastic contributions. Now, I want to start though by saying, you know, some massive thanks to people who've got us through this crisis. They're sat on our Executive, they were elected three years ago, they did find it uncomfortable staying on an extra year without your support, but they did their duty and made sure that this Conference continued, sorry, this Union continued to run and worked with us to make sure that this Conference was going to go ahead.

So I want to thank all of our Executive for the work that they have done and I want to make a special thanks to our Vice President who stood down, Mandy Ambrose, who served on our Executive from Region 1 for a number of years, thank Mandy for the work that she's done and obviously she will continue to do her Branch in Enfield. To thank both John Newman and Jason Moore, who have stood down in Region 2 for, you know, between 13 and numbers of years of experience that we're going to lose now with those two moving from sitting on the Executive, but we're very grateful for the contributions that they've always made and obviously everybody knows the contribution that Jason makes at Conference with his DJ-ing and hopefully, you know, when we all meet together, if you've not experienced the dulcet tones on the spinning decks, I'm sure it'll be an experience for you to see in the coming years.

I also want to say thank you to Jim Carlin and to Lizzie, who both stood down from the Executive, but stood up for years for our Executive. I want to thank both of them for their contributions to this Trade Union, but I also want to make a special mention for two, two of our Executive Council members. John Fitzpatrick, who obviously has taken on the role of our International Spokesperson. I believe it's around 40 years he's been on our Executive. I mean, I think we probably call him the Father of the Executive and alongside him, probably the Mother of our Executive, Jackie, who's always been there for us whenever we've needed her. Both of them, both of them with their knowledge and experience about what's happened over the years has been invaluable, certainly to me as the National President, as I was learning my role and I know obviously in the short period of time that Sarah's been in position, because we've spoke about it that both of those contributions that they make for us have absolutely been really solid and really helpful for us to do our roles. So I want to say a special thank you to Jackie and John Fitzpatrick and obviously John, I wish your health improves and I wish you well for the future. So, thank you very much to all of those that sat on our Executive over the past few years.

But I also want to say, Conference, you know, in thanking the Executive, that the reason that this Conference went ahead is because we didn't want to not have our members' voices heard and our Executive was determined for that to happen, but let me tell you the reason why this Conference has been successful, is because of the work that our General Secretary did in putting it together. The format that she laid out, the way that this Conference has been run, is down to the fact that our General Secretary basically wrote the full layout of this Conference and I want to thank and congratulate our General Secretary for the fantastic Conference that she has created and made sure the voices of our members and our Delegates could be heard this week. Thank you very much and I really do look forward to working with you, going into the future.

You know, I think we have seen this week, we have seen this week that we have listened to our members and we are changing as a Union. You've seen what we're trying to do with the website, you've heard the foundations that we want to lay to make sure that this Trade Union is here for the long term. You know, you know, I'm here today in Blackpool, you know, in my home town and I'm remembering my political heroes like Nye Bevan, who gave incredible speeches, by the way, in Blackpool, Classic Bevan and I'm going to do a bit of politics, Classic Bevan, because obviously, you know, I can't not get on a platform and not say something, can I? Classic Bevan, no amount of cajolery or ethical or social seduction shall eradicate from my heart a burning hatred for the Tory Party who have condemned so many first class citizens to mere starvation. For me, they are lower than vermin. I'm thinking, if he was here today seeing working class communities falling for the media spin on the Tories handling of Covid, because it's tough to think any other, when the Leader of the Labour Party is praising them for their handling when they've had 150,000+ Covid deaths, I'm certain he would have said that the Labour movement and the communities we come from, something like this.

I do apologise to Nye Bevan in advance, I do. I'm certain he would have said something like, some who hold positions of power in our movement believe we are beaten, that we cannot win, but here, in Blackpool, because of a sense of temporary popularity of a tyrant Prime Minister riding on the wave of a vaccine rollout, are we really going to say that we cannot do anything, that we must accept our lot? Of course not. When we see the tides of history are flowing in our direction, that we are not beaten, that we are the future. When we say it and we mean it and when we join together, we can lead our people to where they deserve to be and I want to make this clear call and send this message to these political careerists who are supposed to represent our class. When you fail us, which you have, when you deny us, which you do, then we will move forward without you and as we have seen this week, as we have seen this week, our General Secretary, in her inaugural speech, has laid out a clear vision for our Union and all those that work in our industry. This Campaign is clear in its aims, it's about ending injustices that too many face in our industry and our communities. You have always been essential workers, it was never an issue, it's a fact. Without food, people die. What could be more essential than food workers to maintain a healthy food chain?, but you know this. It's you who have been serving on our front lines in this war of survival, not just battling the Covid virus, but an incompetent government and a failed opposition, who don't understand what they're supposed to be doing and failing to hold this abysmal Tory government to account, costing thousands of our fellow citizens' lives.

We all know it wasn't the bankers, the big business owners that ran to our aid, no, they ran off to the airports to board their private jets to their tax-dodging luxury homes, only pausing for an interview with TV media crews from some Caribbean home, calling for us all to go back to work regardless of the risks, who weren't bothered, they weren't here, apart from when they jumped the queues flying back to benefit from our tax-funded NHS vaccine rollout. It was the undervalued workers who served alongside you, literally millions, transport workers, posties, fire crews, teachers, cleaners, supermarket workers and of course our fantastic care and health workers, amongst many others. The undervalued workers, who may in some cases be clapped, but then forgotten. But let's make it very clear to the British public. We expect the support from you that we gave during this time of crisis. A clap won't wash with organised labour and we're not accepting the crumbs from anyone's table any more. We understand people want a bargain, but food is not cheap. It's been cheapened in some cases by cutting our members' terms and conditions and reducing the quality of the products, creating job insecurity as in the Right to Food surveys showed, inadequate pay to be able to even afford to put the basics on the table. Well, this is unacceptable.

To our employers we say, work with us to ensure no food worker is earning less than £15 an hour, that we end job insecurity and any form of discrimination. We call on those who work in the food sector to join us. If you value yourself, then join with us to win for you and your family. You know you deserve a decent life, like we know you should be having too. Join us and fight by our sides. If you're sick and living on the breadline, join us and together we will raise your pay. If you're tired of living in hope that your boss will ring you to offer you some hours, then join us and let's make those exploitative contracts history. If your workplace isn't organised, then change will be impossible, but when you join with those who have built workplace power, then change will come. The war against this virus may take years to end, but we should not be prepared to accept low pay any longer and we give this commitment to you. We will train you to win £15 in your workplaces. We will train you to end inequality in your workplaces. We send this clear message to employers that the days of exploitation are over.

We know our worth and if you don't want disruption, then value us. When we come together, we are unstoppable. We must stand together. The time for change is here, not tomorrow. No more standing on the shoulders of giants and travellers, but stop being a burden and observing our demise, but raising ourselves up and marching by the sides of those giants, driving forward off this low road economy and we have been, that we have been on for far too long and becoming the tide of change, washing away the [unclear] that inequality and insecurity and poverty brings. So Conference, you have served the people, now it's time to make the demands to those with the power to ensure you are rewarded or be faced with a tidal wave of strikes, as we stand by your side to ensure you get the rewards that you deserve. Solidarity, Conference.

Normally, normally we'd have Big Sam down here to give us a rendition of The Red Flag, wouldn't we? But, but we might, we might have to settle for, we might have to settle for a bit of Billy Bragg instead, so I don't know if you can hear that or not.

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: Hold it closer to your microphone.

[MUSIC PLAYING – BILLY BRAGG, *THE RED FLAG*]

Brother Ian Hodson, National President: Can we hear it?

Conference, thank you very much. Thank you very much for the whole week. We look forward to seeing you very, very soon and enjoy the rest of the day and there's been no electrical storms. Can we un-mute everybody, so they can say ta-ra to everyone?

Sister Sarah Woolley, General Secretary: I've asked everybody to un-mute.

[DELEGATES SIGN OFF)

[CONFERENCE ENDS]

