

TUC Trades Councils Programme of Work 2020-21



Foreword from the TUCJCC

This year's Programme of Work for Trades Councils is different – but then 2020 has been an exceptional year. COVID 19 has impacted heavily on Trades Councils, just as it has on the rest of society. Whilst many Trades Councils have adapted as best they can and found new ways to continue their campaigning work, others have struggled to function at all. Some have managed to meet using online conferencing apps such as Zoom, but others have found it difficult or even impossible.

COVID restrictions on people meeting in public places meant our annual National Trades Council Conference, scheduled to take place in Leicester in June 2020, had to be cancelled – for the first time anyone can remember! In normal years, the Conference is the highlight event of the year for Trades Councils – a chance to meet and exchange ideas, debate the urgent issues of the day and decide on policy motions submitted by Trades Councils and County Associations. The TUC Trades Councils Programme of Work is normally built on the decisions of that Conference and is designed to help Trades Councils focus on a range of issues in the year ahead.

Instead of the usual conference, the TUCJCC held an online conference for Trades Councils activists in July with key speakers Steve Turner UNITE AGS and Dave Ward CWU GS, plus other speakers. We are grateful to Steve Gillan POA GS and TUCJCC Chair for chairing the meeting and Kevin Rowan and his team at Congress House for making it possible.

We did manage to elect a TUC Joint Consultative Committee (TUCJCC) using online balloting, which has been able to continue meeting on-line to coordinate the work of Trades Councils. We hope you find our bi-monthly TUCJCC bulletins useful and we have tried to ensure other useful information is circulated.

The TUC Trades Councils Programme of Work 2020, for all the reasons explained above, is more of a guide and support than previous years. The policy motions submitted before the Conference was cancelled have not been debated but are included in the annex for reference. In the next few pages, the TUCJCC sets out some views on the issues we are facing as a trade union movement, and some ideas on campaigning activity your Trades Council might be able to act upon.

Finally, do not forget that Trades Councils are still entitled to apply for TUC Development Grants, normally up to £300 each. Application forms are available from your regional TUC Office. The grants are intended to help fund the development work of the Trades Councils and the costs of campaigning on issues of importance to the movement.

Trades Councils and COVID 19

Trades Council meetings

Simply meeting as a Trades Council has been a challenge during lockdown. However, many Trades Councils have been able to meet using Zoom or any of the other online

conferencing platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams, WebX etc). If your Trades Council can't set up one up, you can ask your Regional TUC if you can use their zoom account. Some Trades Councils have used Zoom to widen their appeal and invite allies from across the movement to come together to discuss the impact of COVID in their communities and plan responses. Contact with activists can also be maintained via platforms like WhatsApp. It is also important to remain in contact with delegates who do not use the internet.

Public meetings/protests

Public gatherings and protests have not been banned under COVID restrictions, but participants must abide by social distancing rules and it is strongly advisable to wear face masks. A public presence on the street is therefore still possible. Although it is not advisable to encourage large turnouts, social media and press releases can be used to relay videos and photos of the event. Social distancing means that only a few people taking part can look quite large! As well as static protests, why not plan a cavalcade of cars with stickers and posters? You can make quite an impact taking your message into local communities. Horns blaring does get you noticed!

Using social media to get the campaigning messages across

It's a great idea to use Facebook to disseminate news and promote your campaigns during lockdown. You can get your message across with a website or via Twitter too. Issuing press releases to your local media is a good way to keep your Trades Council in the news – and get the message across how important trade unions have been during this crisis.

Trades Councils and COVID in the community

Trades Councils have a huge and important role to play during the COVID pandemic, standing up for our working-class communities, holding the Government and our local leaders to account, alerting the media to the plight of those on low incomes or struggling on Universal Credit etc. We can also link up with other campaigning groups to argue for a better, fairer future and not a return to austerity and inequality. Many Trades Councils have joined forces with local environmental action groups to argue for a Green New Deal and investment in sustainable growth. This would create good trade unionised jobs and help to raise living standards. The COVID pandemic has also exposed the failings of a liberalised market economy and gives us the opportunity once more to argue for public ownership of our vital public services, and oppose the Government's privatisation agenda. Trades Councils' key roles remain to promote the benefits of becoming a trade union member and to support disputes and campaigns of their affiliated branches.

Don't make Workers Pay for the Crisis!

Trades Councils can play a pivotal role in the community by campaigning on vital issues that affect working class families:

Standing up for Key Workers

The pandemic has exposed the fault lines in our unequal society like never before. Who kept the country going during lockdown? It wasn't the bankers and business leaders, it was the key workers like our NHS staff, care home workers, refuse collectors, posties, bus drivers, shop workers, delivery drivers, cleaners, those making essential equipment like ventilators and PPE and many more. Many of them are on the Minimum Wage or low pay and have suffered years of wage stagnation and attacks on conditions like pensions. We can stand up for them and help them demand the pay increase they deserve.

Low Pay, zero hours contracts etc.

Not everyone can work from home and many of those who have to go into work are those on low pay. They have disproportionately borne the risk of workplace infection. Those on zero hours have often seen their hours cut without warning as the economy contracted, yet they receive no compensation or Government support. The "forgotten workers", many of them women e.g. cleaners, have been the biggest losers, struggling on fewer hours or losing their job altogether. Trades Councils can speak up for them and demand an end to zero hours contracts and £10, rising to £15 per hour, as a realistic Minimum Wage.

[The 2020 TUC Congress unanimously adopted Composite 09 A new deal for workers with a real living wage – USDAW, BFAWU, UNITE which calls for an immediate rise in the NMW to £10 per hour and a call for £15 per hour for all workers. It also calls for a minimum contract of at least 16 hours a week and contracts based on normal hours worked. SSP should be increased to a worker's normal pay].

Black Lives Matter and COVID

Many low paid workers are from our BAME communities who have been disproportionately affected not just by economic deprivation but COVID infections. People from BAME communities are 4 times more likely to die from COVID. Black Lives Matter protests have highlighted much more than injustice at the hands of the police. They have thrown into the spotlight institutionalised racism that keeps our BAME communities in low paid jobs and overcrowded accommodation. Trades Councils can link up with BLM protests and show the value of trade unionism in fighting these injustices and inequalities in our society.

Job losses due to COVID

Trades Councils can campaign around issues of unemployment and highlight job losses in their community and the impact this is having on society and the local economy. Workers should not be paying the price for the crisis! It doesn't have to be this way: Spain made it illegal for firms to sack workers because of COVID. Much more could have been done to support business and keep people in jobs as countries like Germany have shown.

Holding the Government to account for their handling of the pandemic

Trades Councils are an important independent voice in our communities that can express constructive criticism of the Government's appalling handling of the pandemic, and put forward the alternatives:

- i) The Government was too late with the Lockdown in March because it was toying with the dangerous idea of "herd immunity" – which would have cost half a million deaths
- ii) The Government could not provide PPE when it was needed – and failed to give out contracts to local businesses who offered to make it. Why? The dangerous failure of the fragmented and privatised NHS procurement and distribution system was to blame. Rather than give contracts to firms with expertise in making such items, they instead gave contracts to businesses that had no experience of making PPE, or that provided sub-standard PPE.
- iii) Care Homes were recklessly abandoned and suffered the worst of the initial outbreak. It wasn't just that adequate PPE was not available to care workers. Elderly patients with COVID were discharged from hospitals to care homes which simply did not have the ability to care for them safely. There should have been a "ring of steel" around Care Homes and the care Sector.
- iv) The Government rushed to reopen the economy without putting enough safety measures in place first – and now we are paying the price with a second wave. They failed to listen to the teaching unions who said they need extra space and more staff – and the funding to pay for it – to make schools COVID secure. They failed to listen to the TUC who said employers must be required to carry out and publish a risk assessment, and called for extra funding to the HSE to carry out inspections.
- v) The Government failed to support the lowest paid and many vulnerable workers fell through the net. We congratulate the TUC for persuading Rishi Sunak to introduce a furlough scheme and save millions of jobs. But those on the Minimum Wage should have been better protected, and zero hours workers and many on bogus self-employment got nothing
- vi) Reducing the furlough scheme from 80% to 66% of earnings was the last straw and showed a contempt for those on low wages. At the very least he could have made the Minimum Wage the minimum. Why should high wage earners get a bigger bailout than poorer citizens anyway? Is that really fair?
- vii) Testing has been a total disaster and promises made have never been kept. Providing an efficient, accessible testing service is vital but beyond the capability of a Government that is more obsessed with outsourcing contracts than delivering a decent service.
- viii) One of the Government's most serious failings was on Track and Trace. It is a scandal that they abandoned it altogether in March which lost us valuable time. When they relented and started a new Track and Trace in May, it was contracted out to privateer SERCO with no experience of this type of work. It should have

been rooted in our local communities under our Public Health departments that have knowledge and experience of countering infectious diseases. SERCO has failed to

reach up to 50% of contacts and some have only been reached 14 days later when the self-isolation period has expired! Another example of the costly failures of privatisation!

Campaigning for a better, fairer future – We are not going back to how things were!

One thing the trade union movement is totally united about is that we cannot simply go back to how things were, if and when we finally get on top of this deadly pandemic. The lockdown and the huge pressures on our NHS exposed how underpaid and undervalued our “key workers” are, and that health and well-being are more important than profit and wealth. It has also exposed how unequal our society is, and the poverty and hardship faced by the poorest in our society – yet the UK is still the 5th wealthiest country in the world! Trades Councils can and must be on the frontline, speaking up for our working-class communities and campaigning for an alternative vision of a better, fairer society.

Invest in our public services

Our NHS was stretched to breaking point before the pandemic, following 10 years of austerity spending cuts and the disastrous impact of creeping privatisation. Our NHS is not for sale and must be fully funded to cope with demand in normal times AND have the capacity to face crises like another pandemic. An even bigger scandal is the dire state of our Care Sector, ravaged by privatisation on the cheap, desperately low pay and starved of resources. Like so many of our public services, this must be brought back in house. The pandemic has also shown the important role Local Councils play. Massive austerity spending cuts crippled Councils and have pushed them to the brink of bankruptcy due to loss of revenue and increased costs during the pandemic. The pandemic has also made the case for other privatised services to be brought back in house such as our railways and local bus services.

No to austerity

Trades Councils have a huge role to play in getting across the message that another round of austerity to pay back the debt is not acceptable – and would not work. The truth is the Government’s net borrowing increased very little during the crisis because of next-to-zero interest rates and a massive purchase of Government debt by the Bank of England via quantitative easing. In any case, cutting spending impacts more on the poorest in society, increasing inequality and depressing the economy. We must argue for state investment in our infrastructure and in a Green New Deal (see below) as a way to grow the economy out of the crisis. Getting people back to work and so increasing tax revenues to the Treasury is the best way to achieve healthy public finances.

Trade unions proved themselves – we need new rights and freedoms

We know the vital role that trade unions play on a day to day basis, but we live in a society where trade unions have been marginalised for decades, and our rights under attack. Trades unions have got noticed during this pandemic and we've had a better press coverage than for many years. It was the trade unions that forced the Government to even consider furlough pay, and health and safety shop stewards played a vital role making workplaces safe across the land. Now we need to step up the campaign for a restoration of trade union rights including the right to strike, free from legal loopholes that allow employers to frustrate us. We need the right of access to workers to recruit and organise and we need to see collective bargaining restored as the norm for regulating wages and conditions.

It's time for a Green New Deal to invest in sustainable growth and create a million climate jobs –

The surest way to build back better after the pandemic is to invest in sustainable growth so that we can get people back to work, distribute wealth more fairly and combat climate change. There is so much to be done. We need to remodel our energy mix away from fossil fuels to renewables. We need a massive insulation programme for houses and buildings to save energy and reduce peoples bills. We need to bring our public transport back in house and upgrade and expand it to achieve modal shift away from private cars. We need a huge building programme of zero emission council homes to combat the housing crisis and reduce carbon emissions. The trade unions have long called for "A Million Climate Jobs": by using public spending as the motor for recovery we can combat climate change and create desperately needed well-paid unionised jobs at the same time. We must also campaign for a "just transition" so that workers and their families in carbon gas-emitting industries are not left behind. That means arguing for job guarantees and retraining to new jobs where companies can adapt to low or zero emission. Where they can't, investment in green industries must be brought to those communities where jobs are at risk.

Peace and international solidarity

Trade Unions have always stood for peace and international solidarity. We oppose imperialist wars and have called for the phasing out of nuclear weapons which, if ever used, would destroy the very planet we live on. Our trade union movement reaches beyond national borders - we are an important voice giving solidarity to workers and their trade unions in struggle in different countries; standing up to injustice and persecution; campaigning for peace, fairness and democracy; and calling for an end to exploitation and child labour, and for progressive policies that benefit working class families

Standing Up to racism and fascism – defending migrants and asylum seekers

Trades Councils have a vital role to play combating the far right and the politics of hate. Scapegoating of immigrants and asylum seekers diverts attention away from the political reasons for unemployment, low wages, housing shortages and creaking public services. Black workers and their families have suffered disproportionately from coronavirus, being four times more likely to die from the disease than the rest of the population. Direct and indirect discrimination is the root cause, with BAME communities disproportionately suffering low pay, zero hours, essential worker status and poor housing/overcrowding. Trades Councils can link up with Black Lives Matter and demonstrate the solidarity and support that trade unions can give. Trades Councils have to be heard in their communities, campaigning against racism and fascism and putting the blame for society's problems fairly and squarely where it lies. We should also be there standing up for the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and expose the injustices meted upon them in our "hostile environment".

Eradicate poverty and scrap Universal Credit

Trades Councils will continue to campaign for the scrapping of Universal Credit and its replacement with a proper social security system that supports those in need. It's not just the five-week wait, the sanctions and the bedroom tax that's bad. The level of financial support is a fraction of the Living Wage and far below comparable rates in most of our neighbouring European nations. Many more people have been forced onto Universal Credit due to the effect on the economy from the pandemic – and are facing real poverty. The Government was forced to increase UC by £20 per week – an admission that it was totally inadequate. But even at just over £90 per week, Universal Credit is a tiny fraction of the Living Wage – and much meaner than comparative social security systems in neighbouring European nations. It is a scandal that millions of British people have had to turn to food banks to survive. Trades Councils will continue to demand an end to poverty in the fifth wealthiest country in the world.

Solidarity with strikes and other union campaigns

Trades Councils are a vital source of solidarity for workers in struggle. It's at the core of what we do. We support workers who take strike action, we stand on the picket lines, we speak up for them to the media and we help raise financial support. We are there when the nurses are demanding an immediate pay rise. We help organise young workers to join a union and fight back against low pay. We support union branches in their campaigns and spread their message to other unions and the wider community. We know there is a need for a fightback so that workers and their families achieve a much fairer share of the nation's wealth. Trades Councils are there to support workers in struggle whatever the issue, whether it's pay or long hours, attacks on their pensions or unfair shift patterns, health and safety or a fair disciplinary process. It's at the very heart of what Trades Councils do – and what makes us so important, now and in the future.

Campaigning on local issues is also important

This Trades Councils Programme of Work cannot provide an exhaustive list of issues Trades Councils can campaign on, nor does it intend to. There are also local issues that crop up in your community that Trades Councils can lend their support to and give a voice. By doing so, we establish closer links with our communities and show the value of not just Trades Councils but the wider trade union movement. We encourage your Trades Council to get active – and do let your TUCJCC rep know what campaigns and activities you have been up to.

Motions

Rights and Equality

Oppose new tory anti-union legislation

Conference believes that:

The election of the Boris Johnson led Tory government represents a renewed threat to the pay, jobs and working conditions of workers as well as trade union rights

- i) This government will act in the interests of big business

We note:

- a) The government's implicit support for the High Court decision to prevent strike action in Royal Mail despite the national CWU ballot result of a 97% yes vote on a 76% turnout
- b) The Tory manifesto commitment, and included in the queen's speech, to introduce new anti-union legislation, targeted specifically at the rail and transport unions, and, if established, could set a precedent for other public service sectors.

We believe that:

- 1) There needs to be an immediate meeting of the TUC and the unions to discuss and prepare the union movement for attacks by the Tory government
- 2) No union or unions must be allowed to fight alone – if any union is targeted by anti-union laws, all others must come to their aid, supporting any action they deem necessary

We urge the Trades Council Conference to exert its influence on the TUC to:

- i) Alert all local members to this attempt to undermine the effectiveness of union action
- ii) Organise a special conference open to workplace reps and shop stewards on opposing the anti-union laws;
- iii) Organise a Saturday London demonstration as soon as possible on the demands - Stop the Tory anti-union laws, Defend the transport unions & For workers' unity against the Tories

This motion was selected to progress from the Trades Councils Conference to TUC Congress where the motion was passed with the following explanation:

The motion notes the High Court ruling against strike action by the CWU at Royal Mail and government proposals to limit industrial action in the transport sector. It states that "if any union is targeted by anti-union laws, all others must come to their aid, supporting any action

they deem necessary.” It calls on the TUC to alert local members; organise a special conference for workplace reps and shop stewards on opposing anti-union laws; and organise a Saturday London demonstration. The TUC is committed to working with affiliated unions in the transport sector, to counter proposals to limit industrial action in rail and potentially in the wider transport sector and even beyond. The TUC is adamant that workers have the right to take industrial action to support their interests and that current laws make it easy for employers to halt action on spurious grounds. In supporting the motion, the General Council notes the sovereign rights of affiliated unions to pursue trade disputes as they see fit and in accordance with their own democratic procedures, and reaffirms this important principle. The solidarity that each union seeks and offers must be the democratic decision of that union; while unions will seek solidarity they cannot dictate the terms on which sister unions should give it, as all unions are sovereign bodies accountable to their own membership. The current restrictions designed to protect public health will guide the precise form of action taken to stand up against unfair and undemocratic anti-union laws.

Trades Councils are urged to continue to support union and TUC campaigns to oppose further restrictions on trade union activity and to continue campaigning for a fairer balance of employment law that would support trade union industrial campaigns.

Alf Morris – voice of disabled people

2020 will be celebrated as the fiftieth anniversary of Alf Morris's (The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970) bill being enacted into law. This motion proposes that Trades Councils and affiliates actively publicise and support the celebration of 50 years of the “Magna Carta” for disabled people and engage in discussion with disabled trade unionists on the way forward for the next fifty years for disabled people.

This anniversary should be celebrated through Britain and in consultation with affiliates and trade union councils’ meetings and a possible seminar on issues that are important in improving the quality of life for disabled people.

We propose that the issues to be discussed should be the following: -

- i) We call on the TUC to consult with Sports England, Arts Council, PFA and other institutions to as to the viability of the founding of an accessible (online-library) sporting and leisure archive to record the day-to-day ordinary lives of disabled people.
- ii) A kite mark system for building and infrastructure green and blue with accredited disability audit standards. Request a meeting with the Government’s innovation charity organisation (nesta.org.uk) especially in areas with high density of disabled persons.
- iii) Infrastructure accessibility planning –consultation on retaining guards on trains, accessible signage formats etc.
- iv) Accessible transport including regional disparity of government spends. (It is not clear what green sustainable transport will include regarding the needs of disabled

people. This needs urgent clarification and involvement of disabled persons in planning the "Green" future.)

- v) Solving problems with commuting enhanced rights for disabled people travelling to work. (Talking Buses for instance)
- vi) Democratic representation involving disabled people's oversight when planning facilities for disabled facilities –housing, public toilets etc.

Current speculation is that new technology will supplant the role of human carers. Trade unions are not opposed to technology that has qualitative improvement in disabled people lives. These developments should be monitored with the express consent of disabled persons in concert with trade union academics and those organizations engaged in this sphere.

As Alf Morris is recognized as a pioneering disability legislator, a major new national section of accessible infrastructure or a new national bank holiday should be named after Alf Morris.

This conference recommends that the TUC National Disabled Members Committee review the efficacy of this celebratory year's events and report in 2021 on the positive aspects and what lessons can be drawn from Alf Morris's legacy.

Trades Councils are encouraged to work with local disabled worker campaign organisations and trade unions to campaign for all public services to fully inclusive for disabled people. This motion will be shared with the TUC's Disabled Workers Committee.

Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000

The Trades Union Councils' Conference considers that Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 is a breathtakingly broad and intrusive power to stop, search and hold individuals at ports, airports and international rail stations. It can be exercised without the need for any grounds of suspecting the person has any involvement in terrorism – or any other criminal activity. This means it can be used against anyone a police officer, immigration or customs officer chooses. Powers like this are ripe for overuse and abuse. They are invariably used in discriminatory fashion, with stops based on stereotype rather than genuine suspicion. Recent research suggests Asian passengers are 42 times more likely to be stopped under Schedule 7 than their white counterparts. The figures indicate that examining officers are targeting people who are perceived to be Muslim.

Conference calls upon the Trades Union Councils and the TUC to:

- i) campaign for the repeal of Schedule 7 immediately;
- ii) campaign for the Home Office to release the data on the religion category profile of those who are stopped as this has been refused;

- iii) campaign for the Government to co-operate fully with the cross-party APPG (All Party Parliamentary Group) of British Muslims on any investigation into the use of Schedule 7.

Trades Councils are encouraged to support campaigns to end the discrimination endemic in the implementation of Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Police Surveillance

This conference notes

- i) More than 1,000 political groups have been spied on since the Special Demonstration Squad was formed in 1968.
- ii) The Campaign Opposing Police Surveillance (COPS) has been established help co-ordinate, publicise and support the quest for justice for people affected by political undercover police spying and to ensure such abuses do not continue.

COPS calls for:

- a) An end to spying on social justice, environmental, industrial and family campaigns
- b) The outlawing of intimate and sexual relationships by police officers whilst undercover
- c) The release of the cover names of the officers involved
- d) Protective measures to prevent serving and retired intelligence gathering officers passing information to private sector corporations and investigators
- e) Support and encouragement for police whistleblowers
- f) A public apology from the police to all those affected
- g) That alongside Police Spies Out of Lives and the Blacklist Support Group, COPS recently organised a trade union conference to discuss these issues

This conference believes:

That swathes of campaigns and individuals have been targeted by Britain's secret police for decades. Everyone has the right to participate in the struggle for social and environmental justice, without fear of persecution, objectification, or interference in their lives. However, citizens have been spied on and psychologically and sexually abused by officers for being part of, or simply knowing people who were part of, such campaigns.

This conference resolves :

- h) To support the Campaign Opposing Police Surveillance (COPS) and encourage the Trades Union Congress, Trades Union Councils and County Associations of Trades Union Councils to affiliate to COPS, as well as publicising events and conferences organised by COPS.

Trades Councils are encouraged to affiliate to the Campaign Opposing Police Surveillance and to support local events organised by COPS.

<http://campaignopposingpolicesurveillance.com/>

No to European historical revisionism

Conference deplores the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 19 September 2019 on “the importance of European remembrance for the future of Europe”.

The resolution makes highly contentious statements about the causes of the Second World War, for example that it was caused by the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact. It ignores the demand for ‘Lebensraum’ from Nazi Germany, the non-intervention policy adopted by Britain and France in relation to the Spanish Civil War and the wider policy of appeasement towards the fascist powers, which emboldened the expansionist ambitions of Hitler and Mussolini, and led to the invasions of Poland and Abyssinia.

We reject in the strongest terms the equivalence given to communism and fascism in the resolution. We note that tens of thousands of communists and other anti-fascists from around the world, motivated by international solidarity and opposition to fascist ideology, volunteered to fight Franco, Hitler and Mussolini in the Spanish Civil War. Thousands of them gave their lives. Many more continued the fight against fascism in the Second World War, whether in Allied forces or in underground resistance and partisan movements, including communist and other patriotic forces. We salute their bravery, sacrifice and memory.

We also have deep concerns that the European Parliament’s resolution fails to acknowledge the decisive role played by the Red Army in defeating Nazism and the enormous sacrifice of the Russian and Soviet peoples in doing so. This is an insult to their memory and, by equating communism and Nazism, seeks to place the liberators of Auschwitz on the same moral footing as the perpetrators of the Holocaust.

We are dismayed that the resolution was carried by MEPs 535-66 with 52 abstentions, and that among those voting in favour were members of the S&D socialist and social democrat group in the European Parliament, including the British Labour Party. Consequently, though Britain is in transition from the EU, there is a risk that the politics of “European remembrance” will – unless challenged – become entrenched in the main political parties in Britain. If this approach becomes mainstream, then the labour movement is under threat.

Conference therefore calls on:

- i) the TUC general council to make a public statement rejecting the European Parliament’s resolution, and to raise the matter with the Labour Party;
- ii) all trades councils to write to their local MPs, whatever the party, to ask them to dissociate themselves from the European Parliament’s resolution.

Trades Councils are encouraged to contact their MP(s) in line with point (ii) of the motion.

Stronger Unions

International Workers Memorial Day 2021 A Memorial in Barking Town Square

We need your support to place a national memorial in Barking Town Square in remembrance of those who died of asbestos related diseases.

Barking and Dagenham has an exceptionally high asbestos mortality rate, a marker of how hard the area has been hit by the legacy of the Cape Asbestos Factory, the industrial killing machine. Health and Safety Executive figures show that Barking and Dagenham is the worst borough in the country for the number of women dying from mesothelioma. Women's asbestos exposure is often attributed to washing dusty overalls of men working with asbestos but in the Cape factory women worked alongside men. It was used extensively in all industrial buildings throughout the last century, particularly power stations, gas works and chemical plants. Asbestos was finally banned in 1999.

We feel strongly that a significant, prominent memorial should be placed to remember all those who have died as a result of working or living with asbestos. Barking Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council are working with Barking and Dagenham Council to place a substantial memorial at the centre of the complete regeneration of the Town Square, which will include a garden, staging for public events, seating and a safe play area for the community and visitors. In remembrance of those who died building our industrial past but also to show our commitment to building safer, healthy communities.

This Conference agrees to:

- i. Circulate information about this initiative to your members and request financial support from affiliated union groups.
- ii. Promote training and support for health and safety reps and advisors on asbestos management and air quality monitoring initiatives
- iii. Support the Joint Union Asbestos Committee campaign for the development of a planned, phased and costed programme of removal of asbestos from all schools and public buildings.

Trades Councils are urged to support the memorial campaign and to work with trade union based Asbestos in Schools campaign groups to seek the complete eradication and removal of asbestos in schools, and to promote trade union education programmes for health and safety reps and campaigners.

Building a mass movement for Social Change

Conference believes that a new economic and financial world crisis is developing. The Government is currently attempting to blame economic "downturn" on the coronavirus. The real cause is internal to the "free market" capitalist system, and will see

- i) Renewed attacks on working class communities through “austerity” measures.
- ii) the establishment of competing and hostile trade blocs, and “hard diplomacy” to back them up, with an even greater propensity for conflict and war.

Conference recognises such threats cannot be defeated solely by think-tanks and lobbying, rational debate, and parliamentary procedures. Of necessity the monopoly corporations and the class that own them will, in such economic crises, attack the working class with the support of their preferred politicians and media.

This underlines the need, in addition to parliamentary strength, to build a mass extra-parliamentary movement against such policies and those who impose them, and for progressive social change.

Conference believes that the defeat of the Labour Party in the General Election is another illustration of the fact that there is an urgent need to build such a mass movement for social progress. The organisation, policies and campaigning direction must come from within our working class communities, workplaces and trade union memberships, and the movement must remain rooted and led in that way

Conference notes and welcomes the TUCJCC support for close joint planning and working between Trades Union Councils and the People’s Assembly at local level. These joint approaches can provide the beginnings of a mass progressive people’s movement rooted in all our villages and towns, in workplaces and communities

Conference calls for increased Trade Union participation at all levels in the People’s Assembly and welcomes the recently stated intention of the PA national steering committee to include greater Union representation and participation in its structures.

Conference agrees to encourage all Trade Union Councils to

- i) affiliate and take part in the People’s Assembly, nationally and locally
- ii) Encourage local People’s Assembly to send a delegate to the Trades Council meetings
- iii) include information about People’s Assembly in local & national Trades Council publications
- iv) send representatives to PA conferences and committees
- v) urge all Trade Union branches/affiliates to the Trades Council to take similar action.

All trades councils are encouraged to affiliate to and participate in Peoples Assembly events and actions. The TUCJCC will continue to receive PA updates and include information in TUCJCC bulletins to trades councils.

New deal for workers: Precarious Work – a role for Trades Union Councils

Conference notes the significant percentage of jobs that are now outside a traditional employer employee relationship with collective bargaining, contracted hours, paid leave and sick pay. This reduction in pay and loss of contractual and other rights for workers is present across all sectors of employment, not just those most commonly known like care, hospitality, fast food, warehouse distribution and construction. It is now the norm across education, health, transport, manufacturing, government services and more – and across many levels of skill and qualification. It is often accompanied by many discriminatory practices and abusive & bullying management. In this environment, the level of workplace union organisation is very low in most types of work – even where there is some density of union membership

The Tory Government, acting in the interests of big business, has an interest in continuing with this source of unorganised low wage “flexible” labour. It is only our trade unions working together nationally, within sectors and locally that can reverse the trend.

The TUC’s New Deal, which so far exists in not much more than name, outlines the direction necessary for the future survival of our movement.

Conference believes that real progress could be made at national and local level by trade unions and trades union councils:

- i) Applying our agreed policy from TUC 2019 for trade unions to cooperate on recruiting millions of unorganised workers.
- ii) Developing new ways of organising precarious workers, which some trade unions, both TUC affiliates and others, are already leading in
- iii) Providing support, training and advice in developing workplace organisation
- iv) Offering practical solidarity to precarious workers taking action against employers
- v) Setting up local Trades Union Council organisation to investigate and report on the worst examples of super-exploitation refusal to recognise our unions and other abuses through precarious work
- vi) Exploring sources of Trades Union Council support with Peoples Assembly groups and other local activists, such as “Sheffield Needs a Pay Rise” and other similar strategies
- vii) The recruitment of precarious and unorganised workers into a Trades Union Council led social and educational network in the first place, with the aim of trade union membership and workplace organisation in the appropriate Union
- viii) Request the government, and if they do not take the appropriate action the next Labour government, to ban zero hours and bogus self-employment contracts.

Organising young workers in precarious employment and the gig economy

This National Trades Councils Conference recognises the huge importance of bringing trade unionism and collective action into the modern young workforce in our low-wages

exploitative sectors of the economy.

Too many workers face a bleak future in dead-end jobs on minimum wage or below, zero hours contracts, bogus self-employment or temporary and insecure jobs. Many have little or no sick pay provision or paid holidays let alone a pension to look forward too. Such workers often endure bullying bosses, dangerous working conditions and little choice but to accept the shifts offered or lose their job.

It doesn't have to be this way. Whilst we look to change the law to give these workers a better deal and more security, we also know the only effective way to make improvements is to organise these workers and help them to fight back.

Conference welcomes initiative taken by trade unionists anywhere that help to make this fightback a reality. We particularly welcome the initiative of Sheffield Trade Union Council in establishing a partnership with BFAWU to take on a full-time Union Organiser for the city.

Fantastic progress has been made in organising bar and fast food workers, giving them the confidence to fight back and joining a trade union to take collective action.

Such initiatives cost money but bring real results. In Sheffield's case, the post was part-funded by donations from union branches and other local organisations and individuals.

This type of funding need to be more secure and long-term.

We call on other Trades Councils to consider ways they can develop similar initiatives and we also call on the TUC and the wider Trade Union Movement to support. For once we might have found a model that can bring real results and bring trade unionism back to our towns and cities

We urge Trades Union Councils to campaign for the TUC's call for a new jobs guarantee for every worker under 25 and under who has been unemployed for three or more months so that young people have access to a minimum six months job with accredited training, paid at least the real living wage, or the union negotiated rate for the job.

Trades Councils are urged to work with trade unions to support campaigns and actions to organise precarious workers and to secure improvements to quality of work and employment standards. The TUCJCC will share examples of trades councils making a difference in this area, including Sheffield Needs A Payrise and other campaigns.

Economy and environment

Educating and Organising for the Climate Emergency

This conference welcomes that finally there is increased public awareness of the droughts, heatwaves, floods and fires, and that 270 local councils have now declared a Climate Emergency;

We note:

- i) that the movement voted at TUC to protest in solidarity with the Youth Climate Strikers to demand Global Action on the Climate;
- ii) that global leaders are now scheduled to convene in Glasgow in 2021 to address these issues;
- iii) the many trade union movement initiatives focussing on the Climate Emergency, including the excellent Leeds Trades Union Council conference;
- iv) that Labour's Green New Deal was widely welcomed, however will not be enacted by a majority Conservative Government.

As trade unionists we recognise:

- a) the need to redouble our efforts;
- b) that the Transition to a low carbon economy has to be a Just Transition for the Workers, their families and communities;
- c) that existing TUC policies on public transport, better insulated homes, localised services, etc will be essential to a low carbon future;
- d) our role in preparing and organising for International COP 26 in Glasgow in conjunction with the Scottish TUC and Glasgow Trades Union Council, to welcome Trade Union delegations from around the World, and persuade World leaders to significantly cut carbon emissions;
- e) that to respond urgently to the Climate Emergency, education and training must be provided for all students and workers to alert them to the changes that are necessary;
- f) the fantastic work unions such as PCS are doing in appointing and training Workplace Environment Reps, and publishing information and guidance on environmental issues in the workplace, and in policy development.

This conference calls:

- 1) For all trade unions at every level, to follow the lead of PCS and appoint and train workplace Environment reps;
- 2) For all unions and the TUC, to provide Eco education and training for their members and to continue lobbying to amend ACAS code of practice.

- 3) For all trade unions and the TUC to lobby employers and government and its agencies to develop and provide education and training for all workers, students and citizens on the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency.
- 4) All trade unions and Trade Union Councils to engage with campaigners from other sectors, to address the Climate Emergency in each LA and Region, and to prepare for COP26.

Action on Climate Change

This Conference notes:

- i) The urgent need for action on the climate emergency.

This Conference believes:

- a) That big business: the military and super rich are the main cause of climate change, yet the global working class and poor are disproportionately at risk.
- b) A just transition to a decarbonised economy that protects livelihoods and rights of the poor and disadvantaged is not only a right but the only way the movement against the climate crisis will secure the mass support needed to win.

This Conference congratulates:

- 1) School students striking around the world for real climate action and those workers who took strike and other action in their support, despite repressive anti-union legislation in Britain and elsewhere.

The Conference resolves to:

- i) Publicly state our support for the climate strikers and other protests calling for rapid and effective climate action
- ii) Educate our members about the climate emergency including inviting climate strikers and protesters to speak at union branch and trades council meetings)
- iii) Give practical support to the climate strikes, without adults taking over.
- iv) Support workers joining climate strikes & protests and maximising member involvement.

Call on employers and local authorities to declare a climate emergency and involve workers and communities in planning, implementing and monitoring activity to rapidly achieve zero net carbon emissions, including ending investment in fossil fuels

Call on employers to recognise union green / environment reps and give them work time for their activities

Call on unions and the TUC to back future climate strikes & protests

Call on unions to investigate the potential positive and negative impacts of the climate crisis and responses to it on employment

Campaign for a legal right to strike and to repeal all legislation that makes it harder to strike over climate

Discuss what climate-related demands to include in collective bargaining, including ones which could be the basis of a lawful 'trade dispute' under current legislation and to produce guidance on this

Ensure that unions are visible and play a positive role within the climate movement and that participants are encouraged to join a union

Demand significant public investment in the jobs required to address climate emergency, including massive improvements in renewable energy, housing and public transport

Send this motion to local trade union councils union branches and local Labour Parties.

Global sustainability

That this Conference notes that the 2019 Sustainable Development Index, which measures each nation's human development score (life expectancy, education and income), and was created to update the United Nations Human Development Index, Cuba was ranked number 1 in the world outperforming advanced capitalist countries including the United Kingdom, which is ranked at 131. Conference calls on the Trades Union Congress Joint Consultative Committee to urge the TUC General Council to convey this message to the appropriate government department and ask what plans it has to improve its position in the league table.

Trades Councils are encouraged to engage with climate and environmental campaigners to campaign for actions on climate change and trade union engagement in COP26. Trades Councils are urged to support campaigns to improve investment in green technologies in public services and public transport.

Millions of Climate Change Jobs

This Trade Union Councils' conference has witnessed the Coronavirus health emergency become an economic crisis, as sector after sector of the economy announce closures and job losses.

We fear for the future. With poverty wages and delay built into Universal Credit applications we know food banks are seeing greater demands - and this whilst the furlough scheme still operates.

All this of course, when the greatest imperative is to decarbonise the economy to fend off further major effects of the Climate Emergency.

We note:

- i) the ongoing challenge of Coronavirus infection especially for those in close proximity, for example in overcrowded public transport.
- ii) the Creative industries, especially those with live music and audiences are critical to the cultural life of this country.

- iii) the new styles of working lead to a much reduced need to travel, and undermine the case for expanded air travel.

This Conference calls on Government to undertake a major investment in decarbonising the economy whilst providing employment for the millions who would otherwise be thrown into poverty.

We call on Government to create a National Climate Service to coordinate research and fund Local Authorities to:

- a) Undertake a major home insulation programme, to invest in the present building stock and make warm zero carbon homes.
- b) Develop a cycle network within all local authority areas, and between towns and cities, including a network of facilities for rest, refreshment and shelter along routes.
- c) Invest in science and research to develop further zero carbon solutions.
- d) Require all developers and businesses and employers to prioritise decarbonisation of the workplace; to make government supply contracts contingent on using renewable energy etc.; to create safe bicycle storage and charging points for electric vehicles, so that workers can more easily convert to zero carbon solutions.
- e) Local Authorities to be given the duty to develop the resilience and sustainability of their local businesses and organisations through adoption of "most local SME" principle for provision of services, as Preston has shown the way.
- f) To communicate the necessity of these emergency measures and the advantages of creating long term changes, artists, across the creative industries, to be commissioned to work with children and young people to create new and wider engagement.
- g) Create a National Biodiversity service to undertake footpath maintenance, tree planting etc, and to support farmers to convert to more agro ecological methods.
- h) Cancel HS2 in favour of investment in improving rail links across the North.

Trades councils are encouraged to work with local environmental and campaign organisations to promote local sustainability strategies, including the principle ideas outlined above. Note – Congress policy is in favour of HS2 construction as well as improvements in the rail network in other areas of the UK.

Nuclear annihilation and environmental catastrophe

Conference notes that:

- i) The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock has been moved forward to 100 seconds to midnight, reflecting the twin dangers of nuclear annihilation and environmental catastrophe.

- ii) Conservative governments have protected and expanded 'defence' expenditure, while other areas of government spending, of greater social benefit, have been cut back.
- iii) The COVID-19 crisis has shown that:
- iv) nuclear weapons are no defence against the new third great danger to humanity, namely the threat of global pandemics;
- v) co-operation between states, rather than domination, is essential to tackle environmental and health emergencies;
- vi) Britain's civilian manufacturing base is far too weak and the 'just in time' system is unable to respond to urgent demands; but that
- vii) the potential exists for rapidly reconfiguring 'defence' manufacturing for socially useful production."
- viii) In campaign point 2) insert, after "weapons", "and drastically cutting the military budget in favour of public services and civilian manufacturing investment"
- ix) Britain's possession of nuclear weapons and the Trident submarine system is closely linked to the 'special relationship' with the United States. This in turn includes a determination to control Middle East oil and gas resources, strategically as well as on behalf of the big oil companies.
- x) There is an urgent need for Britain to cut back drastically on combustion of fossil fuels, in order to contribute to international efforts to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius.
- xi) Britain's relationship with the Middle East kingdoms like Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar has a parasitic influence on the British economy, with much investment into Britain from those countries going into service centres, property and investment banking. On the other hand, apart from arms sales, direct British exports to the Middle East comprise a relatively small and declining proportion of industrial exports.
- xii) While trades unions have an internationalist duty to oppose imperialism, tyranny and genocide, the jobs of workers in the energy and military manufacturing industries would be at risk from moves away from fossil fuels and the military posture to secure control over oilfields in the Middle East.

Conference therefore calls on trades councils, and the TUC general council, to support campaigns for:

- 1) scrapping the 'special relationship' with the USA, and withdrawing from intervention in the Middle East;
- 2) ending Britain's possession of nuclear weapons; and
- 3) a 'Just Transition' for workers in both the energy industries and military manufacturing, so that jobs, skills and pay levels are preserved, and priorities reoriented towards production for social use.

Trades Councils are urged to support campaigns to end the possession of nuclear weapons in the UK and campaigns to support a just transition for workers in the nuclear sector to non-militaristic industries.

A Housing Programme for all Tenures

This Conference supports the Homes for All Charter & other Campaign groups working to deliver a Housing Programme for all tenures including Ethnic minorities, to build Traveller sites & to stop the gentrification of mooring sites for Bargee travellers. To make a real change to end decades of a worsening housing crisis that has seen more tenants, individuals, families living in poor overcrowded high rent homes or even living on our streets. These conditions only add to the poor quality of well-being and add more pressure on our already stretched social services Prison & Probation services & the NHS. All of the proposals would resolve nearly all of the social problems caused by austerity & lack of investment.

Trades councils are encouraged to support campaigns:

- i) To Build 100,000 council homes a year by Direct Investment
- ii) For the use of Direct council labour & Apprenticeship Programmes.
- iii) To control Private, Housing association, & council rents.
- iv) To End Evictions Due to Universal Credit rent arrears or bedroom tax.
- v) To Ensure section 21 eviction legislation is adhered to
- vi) To Improve regulation of Private & housing association landlords
- vii) For more accountability to tenants
- viii) To ensure fair unbiased ballots on estates demolition programmes.
- ix) To map and remove all unsafe cladding from all homes & replace with safe materials,
- x) By attending the homes for all meetings, getting involved in protests lobbies, demonstrations & being involved in local council housing policy and planning.
- xi) To build Traveller sites & stop gentrification of mooring sites for our canals & waterways.
- xii) By supporting NBTA National Bargee Traveller association in their campaigns.
- xiii) Supporting the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison groups & National Traveller Council campaigns.

Trades Councils are urged to support and affiliate to housing campaign groups the improve and increase council and social housing and specific campaigns to support traveller housing campaigns.

Child Hunger and Equal Rights

Conference Believes:

- i) That a society committed to equality is more likely to be an equal society;
- ii) That Finland is a country committed to equality;
- iii) That Finland has led Education in Europe over many years and has influenced The Foundation Phase in many of our Infant and Primary schools;
- iv) That the Finnish system of Education is based on the British Comprehensive School System;

That Finland provides free breakfasts and lunches to children at its state funded schools regardless of the incomes of their parents and that this contributes to the ethos of equality in that country.

That Finland is an advanced country and its model of Education is one to be imitated and developed.

Conference Resolves:

- a) To support a Trade Union led campaign for free breakfast and lunches at local authority funded schools in Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland for all young people (aged 3 to 19) during term time;
- b) To support the same campaign in calling for free breakfast and lunches in Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland for all young people of school age at centres close to home out of term time on presentation of a photo identity card demonstrating that they are at a local authority school;
- c) To call on Government in Westminster to fund a programme for England and to ensure that adequate funding is available for the devolved Governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland so that no child of school age will go hungry in this country.

Trades Councils are encouraged to support local and national campaigns for free school breakfasts and lunches throughout the UK.

Campaigning for Equality

Conference is committed to eradicating inequalities in society, and particularly the trade union movement. We are inclusive and welcoming to people of all walks of life, including but not limited to: all faiths, genders, sexual orientations, disabilities and ethnicities. We recognise the need to be inclusive in all our activities and we recognise our own weaknesses in this area. In our efforts to improve this, we make the following commitments:

To hold regular equalities meetings and support campaigns and activities to promote equality in all our trades councils.

To investigate rule changes to require delegate unions sending more than one representative to meetings to ensure the characteristics of the reps are diverse.

We will encourage and promote diversity within all levels of our organisation (e.g. Exec)

When more than one attendee is sent to a meeting we will ensure at least one will be a woman

Caring costs for children and dependents will be covered by anyone needing them to facilitate attendance at trades council meetings. Alternatively, children or dependents are always welcome to attend with their parent/carer/guardian

If anyone attending trades council meetings has any additional needs or requires support (e.g. needing minutes in a large font, being a breastfeeding mother, coming out as LGBT+, transitioning) they are welcome to discuss them in confidence with the secretary or president (or equivalent) to work out how they can be supported

Meetings will be held in locations that are disabled accessible and also welcoming

Trades Councils are urged to consider specific steps to encourage representation and participation from under-represented groups and to improve equality and increase diversity.

Fighting for Jobs and Skills, Post Pandemic

Conference/DATUC notes that it is now widely expected that the pre-existing developing economic crisis, the Covid 19 pandemic, the Government mishandling of the virus crisis and their austerity policies that will follow it will lead to the loss of upwards of 6 million jobs, mass unemployment, bogus and insecure self-employment and the proliferation of super-exploitative precarious jobs in the gig economy. This will have devastating effects on those directly involved and all working class communities.

We are not “all in this together”. There are many employers who are already casting workers aside and using the situation to reduce pay, conditions and individual workers’ contractual and trade union rights for those still employed. There has been a consequent surge in membership of trade unions – and this will undoubtedly provoke renewed and sustained attacks on trade unions by employers and their government.

The trade union movement needs to fight for jobs and skills and to develop strategies – including R&D for new green deal jobs, and diversification into socially useful products. We need such strategy and organisation at every level - national, regional, employer and workplace - and in every town, community and village together with our communities.

To assist with this Conference/DATUC calls on the TUC

To collate and publish regularly updated figures on job loss at industrial, national, regional and local levels

To invite individual unions to share strategies of resistance to job loss, and to produce a draft TUC wide strategy for the next TUC Congress

To encourage all unions and trades unions councils to work nationally and locally with bodies such as the People's Assembly Against Austerity and other community organisations to develop an active campaign for jobs in every workplace and community

Trades Councils are encouraged to work with trade unions and bodies such as the People's Assembly to support local industrial strategies and campaigns for good quality employment across the economy.

Capita and benefit claim assessments

Shropshire and Telford Trade union Council call upon the trade union congress to work will all unions to Lobby parliament for the removal of capita from the process of assessment and information gathering for the Department for work and pensions (DWP) as part of its Personal Independent Payment (PIP) benefit claim assessments.

Capita have failed the DWP and failed the most vulnerable in sociality. It is a known fact that any assessment carried out by capita will result in the most vulnerable and depend of society been denied help and support.

The vulnerable and disabled people have to endure a long and arduous process to fight the DWP Decision based on the Capita assessments, while been unable to pay for much needed and in many cases life supporting care.

They are rejecting the majority of applications made but those who have the support or knowledge of how to appeal have a success rate of over 60%. In a large number of cases capita totally ignores the tribunal rulings and immediately slaps on an appeal which puts the claimant back to being refused benefit until after the appeal.

Capita has recently been successfully prosecuted for malpractice for a person suffering life limiting illness awarding a 0 score after the tribunal and appeal which lasted 2 years, a total of 26 points was granted by the judge Capita failed to show, What does this tell us.

We ask that the trade union congress lobby for that assessments and information gathering for the DWP, that is currently undertaken by capita is brought back in house to the DWP, this will allow for much better monitoring and fairer system for all, this will save the service and government money and save people's lives.

Capita kills most vulnerable in our society.

Trades councils are encouraged to work with trade unions and campaign organisations to end any private sector role in benefit claims or assessment processes.

National Recovery Council

This National Trades Council Conference 2020 notes:

The call to form a joint "council" bringing together the state, the employers and the representatives of the trade unions to run the economy that is in blatant contradiction with the very reasons why the workers built their trade unions so as to defend their own interests against the employers and the governments which support capitalist exploitation.

The call for National Recovery Council has been made at a time when massive lay-offs have been signalled. These announcements came after it emerged (in a leaked document published recently by *The Telegraph*) that the Treasury intends to make ordinary people pay for the economic crisis: an increase in income tax; a possible NHS/social care surcharge; the end of the triple-lock on state pension increases.... a "*National Recovery Council, replicated at sectoral and regional level where unions and employers will work together with government*" is being presented as a response to this unprecedented offensive against the working class.

However, the response should be a united struggle by all of the component parts of the labour movement to impose a ban on lay-offs and job-cuts.

The government was quick to give £350 billion to the banks and businesses, but has left millions of working people wondering how they will survive.

Conference believes:

It is not by teaming up with the Tories in a "national unity" body together with representatives of the banks and big business that those claiming to represent the working class can avoid the impending disaster.

Conference resolves to:

Say NO to any attempt to institutionalise subordination of the labour movement to the government.

Say that the response should be a united struggle by all of the component parts of the labour movement to impose a ban on lay-offs and job-cuts.

We urge the Trades Council Conference to:

Totally reject this corporatist committee, and call on all trade unionists to oppose it.

This motion is not in line with TUC policy.

Public Services

NHS Unions and Trades Councils

Conference agrees that much can and should be done to improve trades councils' links with NHS Unions. NHS Union Reps are often overworked and suffer from stress, one reason why even where NHS Union Branches affiliate to a trades council, there are no delegates attending.

Smaller specialist NHS unions offer excellent professional advice to their members, but are often isolated from the trade union movement outside of NHS Trust and/or District Hospital staff-side meetings. Some of these smaller unions never consider affiliating to trades councils, citing their lack of a branch structure.

Conference agrees that to begin to remedy this serious situation, during 2020/2021 all trades councils are encouraged to:

Compile a list of main contacts for ALL NHS unions with members who live and/or work in their council area. Such contacts with the larger unions would be usually be a branch secretary or senior steward, with the smaller unions this would usually be a regional or even a national officer. NHS Unions include UNISON, Unite, GMB, POA, RCM, SOR, CSP, BDA, BIOS, HCSA, College of Podiatry, and (non-TUC) RCN and BMA.

Write to all these contacts, enclosing local and national trades council information, and asking them to come and speak to a trades council meeting;

Consider media releases supporting different NHS union campaigns and/or policies;
Consider a larger NHS Unions event that brings as many of these unions together under a trades' council banner.

Consider including non-TUC Unions such as the RCN and the BMA (Junior Doctors) in NHS campaign considerations.

The NHS and social care after coronavirus

The pandemic has put future of the NHS is in the balance as never before. It will either return to its principles or become a semi-privatised system, distorted by demands of marketisation and profit-making companies.

The Coronavirus has forced the government to by-pass the Clinical Commissioning Groups and push aside the Health and Social Care Act as they proved to be obstacles to dealing with the crisis. But the government has also handed big contracts to favourite companies, such as Serco, Deloitte, Sodhexo and Mitie without scrutiny or tendering. It has also overseen huge numbers of deaths in the privatised and dysfunctional care sector. Some Health Bosses are reported using the crisis as a cover to push through cuts and closure plans.

10 years of Tory austerity led to the UK having almost the lowest ratio of doctors to patients in Europe and almost the lowest ratio of hospital beds as well as 100,000 NHS staff vacancies.

In truth the brave ongoing battles of health staff during this crisis is DESPITE the Government and many of the Health Bosses. The fantastic social and community response to support NHS staff has been inspiring.

To save our NHS, part of our vital social wage, we need an offensive mass movement, with everyone doing what they can and not waiting for a lead from others, including other unions or MPs.

We need to stop privatisation, end private contracts including PFIs and return the NHS to being a public service, paid out of the public purse.

No health insurance, no private health care with services based on need, not on wealth.

We need to fully fund the NHS, start training staff, pay bursaries to student nurses and reverse closures of services across the country.

The NHS must be free for all to anyone. No 'eligibility' test, charges and an end to compulsory reporting of residency status to the Home Office. Health staff are not to be used as immigration officers, nor anyone frightened of asking for healthcare.

We urgently demand a National Care Service with national standards ensuring proper training, pay and conditions for staff.

The NHS was fought for by the entire working class and must be again.

We will inform and mobilise our members around these issues and - along with local health campaigns and national unions - we will remain affiliated to, and actively support, Keep Our NHS Public and Health Campaigns Together.

We refuse to let them steal our NHS.

Trades Councils are encouraged to work with health unions to support campaigns to support pay and conditions improvements for health workers and to work with unions and organisations like Keep Our NHS Public and Health Campaigns Together to keep the NHS in public ownership.

Public transport should be a public service

Public transport should be a public service, not a source for private profit. Deregulation needs to be ended and buses returned to public ownership under democratic control, which requires legislation from central government.

Local and regional bodies to use their powers to influence national policies and to improve bus services to the benefit of local communities and to reduce carbon emissions The principles for improving bus transport are:

Public transport should be a coordinated and integrated system across the country, removing discrepancies and inequalities and providing the best for everyone

- i) The bus network should be welcoming and accessible for all passengers, regardless of age, impairments or frailty
- ii) All communities to have access to a frequent and reliable bus service
- iii) Routes should enable people to travel to where they want or need to go when they wish to travel using orbital as well as radial routes where possible
- iv) Fares should be cheap and standardised across the country, with the view of creating a free bus service for all

We call on the TUC to campaign for:

- a) National legislation to return bus services to public ownership and democratic control
- b) Transport authorities to implement bus franchising in order to control routes frequency quality and fares and to facilitate the smooth transfer of people from car to bus use as part of a coordinated and integrated bus network
- c) A call on central government for a sustained and reliable increase in funding for bus transport in order to address the challenge posed by the climate crisis, introduce and extend the use of carbon buses, speed up investment for bus priority measures to counter congestion and to support free travel for all.

Reinstate free bus passes for people aged 60+ living in England

The Trades Union Councils' Conference notes:

That pre-2010, all residents living in England who had reached the age of 60 years were given a National Concessionary (free) bus pass by local authorities which was funded by HM Government and the local authorities.

Since the changes in 2010, in order to be eligible for a free bus pass, the majority of people living within England would now have to be almost 66 years of age.

Conference also notes:

That free bus passes are provided to people aged 60+ in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, London and Merseyside.

Free bus passes would help to sustain high street shopping, aid public transport by increasing passenger numbers, improve the environment and increase mobility and the health and wellbeing of the elderly.

Conference calls upon the TUC to request:

The British Government and applicable local authorities to reinstate free bus passes for people who reach the age of 60 years living within England.

Integrated and green transport network

This conference believes that it is essential that the government makes a fully integrated and green transport network a priority.

This is an essential part of dealing with the climate crisis that threatens us all. It will also help ameliorate the danger posed by carcinogenic diesel particulate emissions that currently account for 30,000 premature deaths a year in the UK.

This conference believes that good public transport is good for us all. This demands ending deregulation which causes services to be run for private profit not to meet the needs of our communities.

Annual funding for buses is now £400 million less each year than a decade ago and more than half of local authorities have cut funding by at least 50%.

This has led to a loss of over 3,000 services in England and Wales. The people worst affected by this are those on low incomes, the elderly, students and young people.

This conference welcomes the Transport Manifesto 'Better bus services: good for people, good for the planet' produced by the Yorkshire and the Humber Pensioners Convention. It calls on Trades Councils to campaign with others for the re-regulation of the bus industry in the public sector with franchising as a possible intermediate step. This is the only way that the spiral of increasing fares and decreasing services can be addressed.

This means working with campaigns like Campaign for Better Transport, National Pensioners Convention, local campaigns for better buses and with unions organising transport workers.

Trades councils are encouraged to work with trade unions and public transport campaign groups to increase access to free transport for vulnerable groups or underserved communities, and end to franchising and for a fully integrated, green transport system in public ownership.

Temporary Changes to Public Services

During the Covid-19 pandemic many public services have been temporarily closed or altered, this is a natural process allowing public services to respond to changes in need. Some of the temporary changes have not helped people through the lock-down period, for example libraries were closed in many areas just at a time when many people would have found them extremely useful. In most cases these temporary changes will, by many people, be seen as justifiable.

Conference is concerned that some changes are being made to our public services that will be become permanent, without a public consultation. For example, a consultation was in progress before the outbreak into the future of Community Hospitals and Minor Injuries Units across Somerset, but in April some Minor Injuries Units were closed to allow Covid-19 treatment centres to be established. The concern is that the Minor Injuries Units affected were those most widely expected to close after the consultation.

The Royal Mail cynically attempt to suspend Saturday letter deliveries on National Postal Workers Day, and it is widely believed that they want this to be permanent.

Conference calls on the TUC to demand that the Government introduces a moratorium on all unacceptable permanent changes to public services linked to the Covid19 crisis to last at least for the whole of 2020, any such unacceptable permanent changes already made during 2020 should be rescinded. This moratorium would allow time for unacceptable changes to be rolled back, and a proper, informed debate and consultation process to be started in 2021. The moratorium would also ensure that any unacceptable proposed changes, and their consultation processes, are suspended until such time as the public may be better able to engage in consultation processes

Trades councils are urged to work with trade unions and public service campaign groups to maintain high levels of public service provision and to oppose cuts to public services.

Administration

Unity Trust Banking Charges

We are now facing increased bank charges from Unity Trust Bank as a Trade Union Movement not only quarterly but for every cheque we submit.

We were under the impression that Unity was a bank that offered the Trade Union movement favourable and ethical advantages.

We believe that the Trade Unions do not have any representatives on its board, so why is the TUC and a number of Unions recommending we use them when their charges are higher than other High St. Banks

This Issue has been discussed by the London East and South East executive who then passed it on to the TUCJCC Committee by their representative, but so far, no progress has been made on the issue.

We therefore call on this Conference to raise this with its affiliates, and to ask the General Council to assist in getting the best deal for all its members by either speaking frankly to Unity Trust about removal of the charges, or finding us different providers.

The TUCJCC will explore preferential banking facilities for trades councils.