



## Young Members Conference 2010

Wintergardens  
Eastbourne.

# Agenda



# UNITE - National Young Members Conference 2010

27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 Devonshire Park Halls, Winter Gardens, Eastbourne

## AGENDA

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2010 11am-6pm**

1. **JOINT SESSIONS WITH ALL NATIONAL EQUALITIES CONFERENCES**  
Floral Hall, Winter Gardens, Eastbourne  
Joint General Secretaries Report  
Tony Woodley Derek Simpson  
Chaired by : Chair Unite Executive Council – Tony Woodhouse
  2. **Joint Equalities Panel – The Election and the Future for Equalities**  
Chaired by: Diana Holland, Assistant General Secretary Equalities & Organising
  3. Presentation on Organising
  4. Speaker – Challenging the BNP
- RECESS

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 9.15am-3pm**

5. Chair's Address
6. AGS/National Officer's Report
7. Panel Session: Young Members in the Workplace, in the Union and Campaigning
8. Workshops and Report Backs
9. Elections
  - (a) Standing Orders Committee for National Equalities Conference 2012 – one to be elected
  - (b) Unite delegation to the 2010 TUC (13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> September in Manchester) - one to be elected
  - (c) Unite delegation to the 2011 TUC (Brighton) - one to be elected)
  - (d) One substitute delegate for 2010 and 2011 TUC
10. Motions
11. Way Forward

**CLOSE**

**LUNCH**

Nb The agenda may be varied to accommodate guest speakers.

# Motions for Young Members Conference

## 1. Young Workers and the Recession

This Conference believes that for too many young people, choices are narrowing as unemployment runs rampant in the recession. Jobs remain concentrated in low skilled, low paying sectors, unpaid volunteering becoming the only route for many into the professions as competition for decent apprenticeships and university places intensifies with supply lagging well behind demand.

Conference agrees that while it's heartening to see this Government, unlike previous administrations, committing itself to addressing the needs of young people, it remains to be seen whether the package of support within the 'Backing Young Britain' initiative is of sufficient scale to make a significant impact in the problem of endemic youth unemployment.

Conference worries that the Government's enthusiasm for internships and work experience as a potential solution (which hinges on genuine commitment from employers) could further damage young workers rights. Without further guarantees of decent minimum standards, the unpaid work is always going to open to exploitation.

Ultimately, we need to be seen as the champion of young people in the workplace. And to show that becoming a trade union member is not some relic of a bygone industrial age, but the best way of guaranteeing decency and dignity at work in an age of huge change.

The NW Young Members Committee calls for the Unite National Young Members Conference to support:

1. The continued campaign and Government lobbying to ensure that job creation and work experience initiatives are rewarding and effective, providing sustainable pathways into employment and more good quality apprenticeships are made available to young people.

2. A commitment to developing cohorts of union reps who can play an active role in mentoring and supporting young apprentices, work experience placements and other new entrants not only to help those vulnerable young workers but to promote recruitment and organisation, demonstrating the value of union membership to new groups of workers. We need to develop future activists and make our union attractive and inclusive for young people. It's therefore essential that unions develop our younger members and empower them with a voice within their own union.
3. A back-to-basics organisation and recruitment campaign among young workers. Trade unionists used to complain that young people had become a generation of Thatcher's children and that they were no longer willing to join trade unions. The reality now is that rather than having a negative image of trade unions, many young people simply have *no image* of trade unions at all. We need to take positive action today to address this.

**North West**

## **2. Permanent, decent jobs for young people**

This Conference notes that:

- According to October 2009 figures The number of young people out of work has risen to almost 1 million, this means that national youth unemployment is at a record breaking 18.4%.
- The government's Backing Young Britain policies means every single 18-24 year old claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for six months or more is guaranteed a job, unpaid internship, apprenticeships or work experience

This Conference believes that:

- Despite New Labour's efforts, there's a real danger that our generation could become a 'lost generation' unless the trade unions and activists organise a fight back now.
- The 'Backing Young Britain' (BYB) package is inadequate as young people are being offered as cheap or free labour, unemployed youth on 'work placements' undercutting existing workers and collective bargaining power.
- The Youth Fight for Jobs (YFFJ) campaign is the only national campaign on this issue, and has energized young activists across the labour movement.

This conference resolves to:

1. Use our structures to organise, support and recruit workers employed on the BYB scheme and apprenticeships.
2. Campaign for a higher wage for apprenticeships and BYB workers
3. Support the YFFJ campaign nationally

**London and Eastern**

### **3. Securing the future of Trade Unions**

This Conference notes that:

- According to National Statistics trade union membership amongst the UK workforce (union density) fell to 27.4% in 2008. Before the recession really hit, there were 7.2 million unionised workers.
- Union densities of younger age groups have fallen compared with 13 years ago. This contrasts with employees aged 50 and above where there is little change over the same period.

This Conference believes that:

- Trade unions have a long tradition of fighting for social justice and democracy for all.
- Countries with highly unionised workforces (>65%) such as Sweden and Finland have better social democracies which benefit all citizens.
- Since 1979, the labour movement has lost 6 million members. A generation of workers and young people have lost touch and are unaware of our social and democratic importance.

This conference resolves to:

4. Spearhead an education drive, informing young people about the role of trade unions through the citizenship curriculum, using the “School Pack” material developed by our predecessor organisation.
5. Develop a strategy to conduct a similar drive in Further and Higher Education Institutions for 2011.
6. Get support from the Executive Council on this issue

**London and Eastern**

#### **4. Apprenticeships and the Minimum Wage**

The NW Young Members Committee believes that the National Minimum Wage remains an essential tool in tackling unscrupulous employers who might otherwise exploit workers of all ages. Unfortunately, since its inception, the differential structure of the National Minimum Wage has continued to discriminate against young workers.

The NW Young Members Committee believes that the National Minimum Wage should be equal for all people old enough to work, and a significant monetary increase would not only help ensure that low-paid workers do not get left behind once the expected resurgence in average earnings growth kicks in, but it would also help combat low pay in general.

If we are to win the battle against low pay, the new National Minimum Wage rate needs to go beyond just keeping pace with average earnings, and become a real living wage. Such an increase would help address the gender pay gap, as the TUC estimates that two-thirds (66%) of the one million or so low-paid workers covered by the national minimum wage are female.

The NW Young Members Committee also finds it unacceptable that apprentices aged over 19 and in the first 12 months of employment or under the age of 19 are currently excluded from the National Minimum Wage, and could currently receive as little as £95 a week. Certainly not enough to grant them independence or even the incentive to pursue this type of training. By making sure that all apprentices are entitled to an hourly minimum wage, the Low Pay Commission can prevent exploitation, improve the quality of apprenticeships and help to ensure that more people complete their course.

The NW Young Members Committee calls for the Unite Conference to support:

1. Increased efforts in persuading the Government to end the discrimination inherent in the age differentials within the National Minimum Wage.
2. An end to apprenticeships exemptions.
3. Significant steps towards closing the gender pay gap in low paid workers.
4. The introduction of stringent financial penalties for employers who do not comply with the law on the payment of National Minimum Wage.

**North West**

## **5. Reduced/Pro-Rata Rates for Young Members**

We call upon Conference to consider a pro-rata reduction of membership subscription, taking into account net income and student loan repayments and also age related minimum wage, in order to potentially increase the membership of members aged 27 and under.

**North East, Yorkshire & Humberside**

## **Composites and Withdrawal of Motions**

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**The Standing Orders Committee recommend that:-**

- (a) Motions 1 and 2 be withdrawn in favour of the following composite**

### **Composite 1 – The Recession and Permanent Decent Jobs for Young Workers.**

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- The government's Backing Young Britain policies means every single 18-24 year old claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for six months or more is guaranteed a job, unpaid internship, apprenticeships or work experience.

This Conference believes that:

- for too many young people, choices are narrowing as unemployment runs rampant in the recession. Jobs remain concentrated in low skilled, low paying sectors, unpaid volunteering becoming the only route for many into the professions as competition for decent apprenticeships and university places intensifies with supply lagging well behind demand.
- there's a real danger that our generation could become a 'lost generation' unless the trade unions and activists organise a fight back now.

- Conference agrees that while it's heartening to see this Government, unlike previous administrations, committing itself to addressing the needs of young people, it remains to be seen whether the package of support within the 'Backing Young Britain' initiative is of sufficient scale to make a significant impact in the problem of endemic youth unemployment. Young people are being offered as cheap or free labour, unemployed youth on "work placements" undercutting existing workers and collective bargaining power.
- Conference worries that the Government's enthusiasm for internships and work experience as a potential solution (which hinges on genuine commitment from employers) could further damage young workers rights. Without further guarantees of decent minimum standards, the unpaid work is always going to open to exploitation.
- Ultimately, we need to be seen as the champion of young people in the workplace. And to show that becoming a trade union member is not some relic of a bygone industrial age, but the best way of guaranteeing decency and dignity at work in an age of huge change.

This Conference resolves to:-

- 1 Use our structures to organise, support and recruit workers employed on the BYB scheme and apprenticeships.
- 2 Campaign for a higher wage for apprenticeships and BYB workers.
- 3 The continued campaign and Government lobbying to ensure that job creation and work experience initiatives are rewarding and effective, providing sustainable pathways into employment and more good quality apprenticeships are made available to young people.
- 4a A commitment to developing cohorts of union reps who can play an active role in mentoring and supporting young apprentices, work experience placements and other new

entrants not only to help those vulnerable young workers but to promote recruitment and organisation, demonstrating the value of union membership to new groups of workers. We need to develop future activists and make our union attractive and inclusive for young people. It's therefore essential that unions develop our younger members and empower them with a voice within their own union.

4b A back-to-basics organisation and recruitment campaign among young workers. Trade unionists used to complain that young people had become a generation of Thatcher's children and that they were no longer willing to join trade unions. The reality now is that rather than having a negative image of trade unions, many young people simply have *no image* of trade unions at all. We need to take positive action today to address this.

# Standing Orders

## National Women's, Black, Asian & Ethnic Minorities (BAEM) Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT) and Young Members Conferences

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### 1) Purpose

The National Equalities Conferences have the following purposes:

- 1.1 to set key policy for women's, black, Asian & ethnic minorities', disabled members', LGBT and young members' equality as appropriate, provided that it is not inconsistent with the general policy and objectives of the union
- 1.2 to elect representatives to attend the annual TUC Congress
- 1.3 to elect the Standing Orders Committee for the following National Women's, BAEM, Disabled Members and LGBT Conferences

### 2) Composition and Size of National equalities conferences

- 2.1 National equalities conferences will be comprised as in the attached scheme of representation agreed by the EC September 2009, which is based on appropriate regional membership.

### 3) Delegates and attendees

- 3.1 The National equalities conferences will be open to all accountable representatives of workers elected by the appropriate Regional equalities conferences, as set out in Rule 11.5, (and in EC Guidance on Rule 9 on Young Members).
- 3.2 All delegates will be allocated a numbered seat and will retain that for the duration of conference.
- 3.3 Appropriate women/BAEM Executive Council members not elected as delegates shall be invited to attend on an *ex officio* basis.

#### **4) Chair**

- 4.1 The Conference plenary shall be chaired by the Chair of the Executive Council.
- 4.1.1 The Women's Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National Women's Committee; the BAEM Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National BAEM Committee; the Disabled Members Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National Disabled Members Committee; the National LGBT Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National LGBT Committee; the National Young Members Conference shall for 2010 elect a chair at the Conference.
- 4.2 The Chair shall only have an ordinary vote on all matters if elected as a delegate.
- 4.4 The Chair shall not have a casting vote.

#### **5) Secretary**

- 5.1 The Assistant General Secretary Equalities/National Official or other employee shall act as Secretary to the conference - advising the chair as appropriate and recording decisions taken and the outcome of the elections.

#### **6) Order of Business**

- 6.1 The Order of Business for the Conference shall include:
  - 1. Joint General Secretaries Plenary
  - 2. Election of delegates to form the SOC for the following National equalities conferences
  - 3. Assistant General Secretary/National Officer Equalities' Introduction and Apologies
  - 4. Assistant General Secretary/National Officer Equalities' Report inc national strategy for women, BAEM, disabled, LGBT, young members

5. Consideration of composites and motions approved by Standing Orders Committee inc noting withdrawn motions
6. Election of delegates to the annual TUC Congress for the next two years
7. Political, international and other speakers

## **7) Conduct of elections**

- 7.1 All nominees in conference elections shall be individually nominated and seconded. Nominees who do not attend may be elected provided they have given an appropriate apology reported by the National Officer and accepted by conference.
- 7.2 Votes shall be cast by a ballot vote or by show of hands from amongst those delegates present at the Conference.
- 7.2 Any dispute about the conduct of an election should be settled by the Chair. If it is not possible to settle any dispute at the Conference, then an appeal should in the first be lodged with the Standing Orders Committee which has overall responsibility for the conduct of the elections.
- 7.3 In the unlikely event that any such dispute cannot be settled, an appeal against the decision of the Chair can be forwarded to the Joint General Secretaries, who may delegate handling the appeal to an appropriate senior official.

## **8) Conduct of Business**

- 8.1 The Chair shall be responsible for the conduct of the meeting. Delegates may only speak when called by the Chair. The Chair shall have discretion on whether to allow a delegate to speak more than once on a subject.
- 8.2 The mover of a motion shall be allowed five minutes and subsequent speakers three minutes each. No delegate shall be allowed to speak more than once on any motion except the mover who shall have the right of reply.

- 8.3 Next business, that the vote be taken or such other procedural motions may be moved and seconded by any delegate who has not previously spoken during the debate. There shall be no speeches on such motions.
- 8.4 Emergency motions shall be put if in writing to the Joint General Secretaries for the attention of the Standing Orders Committee. No such motion shall be deemed an 'emergency' that is connected with circumstances which could have been dealt with by conference/committee allowed to forward motions for the agenda.
- 8.5 The Chair shall have the same speaking rights as any other delegate. In addition, the Chair may intervene during or at the conclusion of any discussion, to clarify the issues decided and/or to sum up the discussion.
- 8.6 A delegate who wishes to raise a point of order (which must be confined to the manner in which the meeting is being conducted) should say "*point of order*" and hold his/her hand aloft until called by the Chair. Subject to that exception, delegates should not interrupt another speaker.
- 8.7 The ruling of the Chair on any question relating to the conduct of the meeting shall be final unless a challenge to the Chair is supported by at least two thirds of the delegates present.
- 8.8 Save as provided herein, the business of the Conference shall be conducted in accordance with the normal rules of debate as laid down by Walter Citrine in the ABC of Chairmanship.
- 8.9 In the event of an equality of votes, the proposition before the conference shall not be carried.

## **9) Smoking/Alcohol/mobile phones**

- 9.1 There shall be no smoking or consumption of alcohol allowed at the Conference.
- 9.2 All mobile phones should be switched off at all times during conference.