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CENTRAL OFFICE

17 December 2010

TO MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL and ALL UNITE EMPLOYEES

Dear Colleagues,

Tony Woodley has written to you separately to announce his intention to resign as our General Secretary in the New Year, notwithstanding Rule Book provisions which entitled him to hold office until the end of 2011.

You will all appreciate that this was a difficult personal decision for Tony. That he has taken this step in the interests of Unite is typical of his selflessness and his commitment to putting our union first. I am truly grateful to Tony personally, and on behalf of the union as a whole, not just for his work over the years as our General Secretary – the time for a full appreciation of his contribution to the movement is not upon us yet by any means – but also for deciding to clear the way for Unite moving forward rapidly in a unified way now the General Secretary election is behind us.

As you all know, the Rule Book agreed following the merger of Amicus and the T&G obliged Tony to leave the post of General Secretary a year before his normal retirement date. To this sacrifice in the interests of creating Unite, he has now made a further one, agreeing to leave office on his 63rd birthday, despite having a perfect right to stay on. Tony is in no way ready to retire from the world of work, as anyone who knows him can testify, and nor are we ready to let go of his energy, enthusiasm and wisdom either.

I am therefore proposing to ask the Executive Council to appoint Tony as Unite's Executive Officer for Organising at an appropriate grade, to work for a two-year period until his normal retirement date at the start of 2013. This will involve Tony focussing on his first love – organising workers to fightback – and will be a tremendous shot in the arm for our organising efforts. Tony will work out of the Organising Department alongside Sharon Graham, focussing in particular on our 100% campaign. He will take over Executive Officer responsibility for this from Jimmy Kelly, who we should all thank for his efforts in this respect over the last two years. While Tony will be based in Holborn, I can safely say he will be coming soon to a town near you to ensure that Unite workplaces are one hundred percent union workplaces!

I will therefore be assuming office as your General Secretary as from January 31st 2011 as a result of Tony's decision. I know I will be able to rely on the same support as you have always shown Tony and Derek in carrying out the demanding mandate our members have given me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Len McCluskey".

Len McCluskey
General Secretary - designate