



3

MINUTES AND RECORD
of the
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
HELD AT CONGRESS HOUSE, LONDON WC1
ON 19TH, 20TH, 21ST & 22ND SEPTEMBER 2011

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Bro. K ABRAHMS, Sis. L ADAMS,
Bros. K AGYEMANG-PREMPEH, I ALLINSON, S BEATTY,
K BENNETT, Sis. S BENNETT, Bros. C BOND, D BOWYER,
D BROCKETT, C CADMAN, J COOPER, Sis. J ELLIOT,
M ELLIOTT, Bros. P ENTWISTLE, M FORBES, D GRAHAM,
A GREEN, S HIBBERT, B HOLMES, Sis. S HUTCHINSON,
Bros. G JACKSON, J JAMES, M JOHNSON, J KENDALL,
M LYON, D MATHIESON, M MAYER, Sis. H McFARLANE,
Bros. S MILLER, J MITCHELL, Sis. T MOLONEY,
Bros. I MONCKTON, J MURPHY, J NEILL, M PLUMB,
P RUSSELL, Sis. M RYAN, S SHARP, J SHEPHERD,
Bro. J SHERIDAN, Sis. J STEWART, J STILL,
Bro. J STOREY, Sis. P STUART, Bro. M TAJ,
Sis. J TAYLOR, Bros. M THOMAS, M THOMAS,
Sis. A TOLMIE, Bro. H TURNER, Sis. M VANNET,
S WALLACE, Bros. P WELSH, D WHITNALL, D WILLIAMS,
D WILSON, F WOOD, T WOODHOUSE, Sis. G WORRELL

EX OFFICIO: Bro. L McCLUSKEY (General Secretary)
Bro. T BURKE (Assistant General Secretary)
Sis. G CARTMAIL (Assistant General Secretary)
Sis. D HOLLAND (Assistant General Secretary)
Bro. C MATHESON (PA to General Secretary)
Bro. A MURRAY (Chief of Staff)
Bro. E SABISKY (Director of Finance & Operations)

IN THE CHAIR: Bro. T WOODHOUSE

FIRST DAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER 2011

**Minute
No.161**

1. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Formal permission was requested to be absent from the sessions referred to for the reasons stated:

Name	Session	Circumstances
Ian Allinson	Monday & Thursday	TU Business
Dave Bowyer	Wednesday & Thursday	TU Business
Chris Cadman	Wednesday & Thursday	TU Business
Ruth Creaney	All sessions	Holiday
Mick Forbes	Wednesday & Thursday	TU Business
Andy Green	Thursday	TU Business
John James	Thursday	TU Business
Lizanne Malone	All sessions	TU Business
Dave Mathieson	Monday & Tuesday	Holiday
Pat McCourt	All sessions	Illness
Tam Mitchell	All sessions	Holiday
Therese Moloney	Thursday	TU Business
Peter Russell	Thursday	TU Business
Maggie Ryan	Monday am	TU Business
Sue Sharp	Thursday	TU Business
Jane Stewart	Thursday	TU Business
John Storey	Thursday	TU Business
Mark Thomas	Monday & Thursday	TU Business
Meurig Thomas	Thursday	TU Business
Dave Williams	Wednesday	TU Business
Mark Wood	All sessions	Holiday

Having full appreciation of the circumstances, as reported, the Council

RESOLVED: "That necessary leave of absence be facilitated."

2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Minute
No.162**

2.1 Mining Tragedy in Wales

A member of the Council referred to the mining tragedy in Wales and asked for messages of condolence to be sent to the NUM and the families involved and for a donation to be made to the families fund. In response, the General Secretary requested the decision on the amount of the donation to be left with the Executive Officers.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be agreed."

**Minute
No.163**

2.2 Obituaries

The Chair announced with a feeling of deep sorrow and regret that the undermentioned had died on the date stated:

Name	Designation	Date
Bro. G Orr	Retired National Officer Education Sector, Amicus/Unite	6.9.11
Bro. T Corfield	Former National Education Officer T&G Section	Aug.2011

Bro. J Gouldbourne Former Officer 23.5.11
 T&G Section

The Council were grieved to hear the sad news and, tributes having been voiced, the Council stood silent in their places for a period as a token of their respect and esteem.

It was thereupon

RESOLVED: "That a vote of condolence be recorded in the Minutes."

3. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES

**Minute
No.164**

3.1 Receipt of Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council held on 18th, 19th & 20th July 2011 were duly submitted.

The following decisions were recorded by the council arising from their consideration.

3.1.1 Matters Arising out of the Minutes

**Minute
No.165**

3.1.1.1 Min.100 CSEU 35-Hour Week Fund

A member of the Council requested an update in relation to the Fund. In response, Assistant General Secretary, Tony Burke reported that a full report had been given at the recent CSEU Conference advising that the matter was now moving albeit at a slow pace. The matter will be discussed further at the CSEU Executive meeting in October.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.166**

3.1.1.2 Min.099 Transfer of Members in the Servicing & General Industries Sector

A member of the Council requested an update on the situation. Chief of Staff, Andrew Murray reported on a problem that had arisen in relation to the membership card issue. Prior to the issue of the membership cards, approximately 100,000 former T&G members were reallocated sectors, with a large number of members, including activists, being moved from one sector to another. All members have now been returned to their original sectors and a protocol has been set in place to ensure this does not happen again in the future. The Council were required to make a decision on whether to send out new cards to all those misidentified or reissue cards to the reps contained in the group, approximately 3,000.

The General Secretary amplified the report and members of the Council highlighted problems within their own Sectors and in relation to RISCs and delegates to conferences.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted and 3,000 new cards be sent out to activists."

**Minute
No.167**

3.1.1.3 Min.104 Form AR21

A member of the Council requested an update on legal advice that was to be sought in relation to the severance payment to former Joint General Secretary, Derek Simpson. In response, the General Secretary reminded the Council of the statement and Q&A document adopted at the previous meeting of the Council and advised that a copy of the legal advice would be circulated to the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.168**

3.1.1.4 Min.116 Rules Conference 2011 Report

A member of the Council referred to Rule 22 and requested an update on any further developments. In response, the Chief of Staff reported that the Irish Executive will be considering the amendment and any correspondence or resolution will be brought back to the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.169**

3.1.1.5 Min.128 Correspondence including Resolutions

A member of the Council referred to the resolutions and requested an update on any follow-up action that has been taken at every Council meeting. In response, the Chief of Staff advised that many of the points raised are picked up and reported to the Council on the relevant item on the agenda. The General Secretary advised that the resolutions referred back are embraced in the work that is done and is picked up in the reports given to the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

RESOLVED: "That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council held on 18th, 19th & 20th July 2011 be adopted."

4. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Minute
No.170**

4.1 Receipt of Minutes

The Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 2nd September 2011 were duly submitted.

The following decisions were recorded by the Council arising from their consideration.

4.1.1 Matters Arising out of the Minutes

**Minute
No.171**

4.1.1.1 Min.134 Strategy for Growth

A member of the Council requested an update on the appointment of RCOs. In response, the Chief of Staff reported that the jobs have been circulated internally. Ten separate appointment panels will be required for the Regions where the RCOs are to be appointed and it is intended to complete this in the next month.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be accepted.”

**Minute
No.172**

4.1.1.2 Min.139 General Secretary Report

A member of the Council requested an update on the review to be set up in relation to Rule 6. In response, the Chief of Staff advised that the Council need to constitute a sub-committee to conduct the review. The review should consider the decision of the Certification Officer in relation to the complaints from two candidates disallowed from standing in the Executive Council election as it has implications as to how the rules and guidance are implemented.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be accepted.”

**Minute
No.173**

4.1.1.3 Min.159 Presentation Scheme

A member of the Council referred to the presentation scheme and the award of the Union’s Gold Medal. In response, the Chair advised that the Council had accepted the way forward on the presentation of medals on behalf of the Union. The presentation scheme criteria should be reissued to Regional Secretaries who should also be reminded of the requirement to complete the forms accordingly.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be accepted.”

RESOLVED: “That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 2nd September 2011 be noted.”

9. International Report

**Minute
No.174**

9.1 Miami 5

Executive Officer, Tony Woodley updated the Council on the Miami 5 situation. It is the thirteenth year of imprisonment of the 5 Cubans and 13 years since two of the wives have had visitation rights. In the mid October, Rene Gonzales is due to be released on bail and the American government is insisting the 3 years probation be served in Florida. The Executive Officer, together with the General Secretary, had a meeting in Washington with Andy Stern, previous President of the SEIU and Mary Kay Henry the new President, who gave a strong commitment to keep up the pressure on Hilary Clinton regarding visitation rights.

The Executive Officer further reported on a seminar he had attended in Los Angeles with Cuba Solidarity prior to the prison visit with Gerardo Hernandez who is moving towards his final appeal. The decision on the appeal rests with the same judge that sentenced him in the first place.

For the first time, the three remaining mothers of the Miami 5 are coming to Britain to attend the Sector Conferences in Brighton in November. At the invitation of Unite, the four wives together will be coming to Britain in June next year.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

6. STRATEGY FOR GROWTH

**Minute
No.175**

6.1 100% Strategy

A written report had been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the Executive Officer, Tony Woodley.

The 100% campaign is moving towards completion of preparation and looking to start the implementation. Approximately 1,000 shop stewards have been brought together at different "buy in" and mapping sessions, seeking their support and active involvement.

A two-day conference is about to commence in Liverpool with Regional Secretaries, RCOs and Senior Organisers to finalise everything and also a demonstration of the IT system.

The Executive Officer highlighted the potential for recruitment amongst agency workers and the time spent by Officers answering queries and questions from recognised workplaces.

The retention project is continuing with close to 2,400 individual conversations having taken place. When members who drop out of the Union are contacted quickly, on average, 15% of the 50% where telephone numbers are available, rejoin the Union.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.176**

6.2 Organising Department

A written report had been circulated to members of the Council and was verbally supplemented by the Director of Organising, Sharon Graham.

The Director of Organising highlighted a number of CACs that had occurred since the last Council meeting reporting that more employers are moving towards taking the Union through the CAC route.

An update on the situation at Honda was given with a detailed report on the suspension of the Convenor on charges of breaching IT policy. The commitment of the Union to the Honda workforce has been underlined by the direct involvement of the General Secretary who had met with the Head of Honda UK Operations to set out the Union's position in relation to the reinstatement of the Convenor. A comprehensive and strategic plan of action to deliver reinstatement has been developed.

The transposed agency worker regulations come into force on 1st October in the UK and significant loopholes have been worked into the legislation on behalf of the employers lobby. The most important loophole has been the adoption of the so-called "Swedish Derogation" into the UK legislation. The loophole has been inserted to provide employers with a means by which to circumvent the spirit and, very possibly, the legal rights contained within the agency worker regulations. The "derogation" has the potential to be extremely damaging and a negotiators' guide will be developed to enable Officials and representatives to successfully tackle this key issue.

The General Secretary supplemented the report on the Honda situation and questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

3. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MINUTES continued/...

3.1.1 Matters Arising out of the Minutes continued/...

**Minute
No.177**

3.1.1.3 Min.104 Form AR21 continued/....

Further to the earlier discussion in relation to the severance payment made to former Joint General Secretary, Derek Simpson, the legal advice was circulated to the Council and verbally supplemented by the General Secretary.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.178**

7. Sector Conferences

Chief of Staff, Andrew Murray reported that Wednesday 30th November 2011 had been set for the Public Service day of industrial action and up to 250,000 members will be involved in that. As this is the Wednesday of Sector Conferences week, it was felt it would be inappropriate for the Union to be holding a conference on that day. As a consequence, the Public Service Sectors and Construction conferences will be moved to Sunday 27th November in Brighton. The conferences scheduled for Monday and Tuesday will proceed as planned, no conferences on Wednesday and the conferences previously scheduled for Wednesday will now take place on Thursday.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

5. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

**Minute
No.179**

5.1 Report

General Secretary, Len McCluskey updated the Council on the Bombardier situation where the Government have given the contract to build trains to Siemens in Germany. A meeting had taken place with the Secretary of State where it was pointed out that the impact on jobs is going to be quite dramatic, particularly in the supply chain and between 10-20,000 jobs could be lost. The campaign will continue which includes linkage with unions in Germany.

The threat of an industrial dispute within the oil distribution sector has subsided but there is still an element of uncertainty in the sector.

A meeting had taken place with BA representatives at Gatwick where there had been some tension between Gatwick and Heathrow following the conclusion of the BA dispute. The issues were difficult and there is a feeling of optimism about the reconstruction of the Union at Gatwick.

There are still outstanding issues in relation to the BA dispute and members who were dismissed. The ACAS arbitration has not yet taken place but the

company have indicated that they will be represented by a barrister but the likelihood is that the arbitration will not be concluded until December.

Discussions have taken place on the schools programme and it is the intention to produce a programme whereby the Union visits every school in the UK for 14-16 year olds to tell them what trade unionism is all about. A pilot scheme may be triggered in the London & Eastern Region to see how it works. Discussions have also taken place with National Officers in relation to the youth programme.

The General Secretary highlighted the Durham Miners Gala, Tolpuddle, Liverpool Pride and Show Racism the Red Card.

A number of conversations have taken place with Labour MPs about constructing the outline and framework of an alternative strategy. Issues of refounding Labour and where we are going in terms of the direction of Labour has formed the basis of several discussions with Ed Miliband.

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

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

The General Secretary reported on administration and organisation issues involved in bringing about full integration. Discussions are on-going with retired members which it is anticipated will be concluded by the end of the year.

Since the last meeting of the Council, various appointments have been made; Regional Women's Officers, Steve Hart formally appointed as Political Director and Peter Kavanagh has been appointed as Regional Secretary for the London & Eastern Region.

The Council were advised that, as a consequence of Tony Ayres, Director of Personnel & Development retiring at the end of the month and Ray Fletcher, HR Director having indicated his intention to leave, the process of selecting a new Director of Personnel & Development had been commenced and the Council would be advised once it had been concluded.

Questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to by the General Secretary.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.180**

5.2 Public Services Campaign – Cuts

Assistant General Secretary, Gail Cartmail reported on the activities in Public Services and updated the Council on the situation at Southampton City Council.

The details of the day of industrial action on 30th November which had been announced at the TUC Congress were reported to the Council, highlighting the preparations Unite is making in connection with the necessary ballot for industrial action. The campaign against the cuts had been built up over the

year and communications with members about the action, including campaign literature will be stepped up over the coming weeks.

The General Secretary amplified the report and emphasised the need to work with the other unions concerned.

Questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to by the General Secretary and the Assistant General Secretary.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

SECOND DAY, 20TH SEPTEMBER 2011

IN THE CHAIR: Bro. T WOODHOUSE

**Minute
No.181**

12. Industrial Report – Manufacturing

A detailed written report had been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by Assistant General Secretary, Tony Burke.

The Assistant General Secretary referred to the current situation in manufacturing, the new Jaguar/Land Rover engine plant, disputes and BMW, Ontario.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.182**

13. Industrial Report – Services

A detailed written report had been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by Assistant General Secretary, Gail Cartmail.

The Assistant General Secretary referred to the situation within the construction industry and highlighted the report on blacklisting.

Members of the Council expressed their views and opinions which were responded to by the Assistant General Secretary.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted together with the report on blacklisting."

15. FINANCE

**Minute
No.183**

15.1 Finance Report

The preliminary financial results for Unite overall in the second quarter and first half of 2011 had been circulated to the Council and were verbally supplemented by the Director of Finance & Operations, Ed Sabisky.

Were it not for the pension deficits, the financial picture for Unite in the first half of 2011 would be satisfactory and, in fact, showing a decent improvement compared with last year.

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

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

Unite recorded a surplus from Contribution Income of £6.4 million in the first half of 2011 – an improvement of £2.7 million versus the first half of 2010.

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

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

Taking everything into account, Unite posted an overall surplus of £4.2 million for the first half of 2011 – a result which was £3.9 million better than last year.

Unite's liquid assets have risen to £66.6 million as at 30th June 2011, up from £65.2 million as at 31st March and £61.7 million as at year end 2010. The rise was roughly in line with the surplus earned in the quarter. Since the end of June, liquid assets have increased further by the £13.3 million proceeds of the sale of 35 King Street less the £5 million contributed to the pension scheme; however, the recent stock market fall will have negatively impact the value of the Union's stocks and shares. Going forward, the Union should continue to benefit from being able to sell some of its surplus properties. As a negative (to the liquid asset position), the refurbishment of the Union's Regional Office in Bristol has commenced.

The total paying membership of Unite has risen to 1,213,551 as at 30th June 2011, up nearly 20,000 members from year end 2010. However, one should be cautious about this increase as it comes at a time when the Union is

moving the administration of its membership database (from a situation where the former Amicus Section's database was administered at Hayes Court to a consolidated operation at Newcastle). When the former T&G Section moved its membership administration (from the Regions to Newcastle), the membership figures rose for two quarters during the transition period but quickly resumed declining once Newcastle caught up with the backlog created by the transfer.

The Director of Finance & Operations reported that, to date, Unite has had two auditors – Fishers and Chantrey Vellacott. However, now that the Union's finance systems have been unified, the F&GPC have recommended that Chantrey Vellacott be appointed as Unite's sole auditor. This would save about £140,000 per annum in audit fees. Chantrey Vellacott would also act as Auditors for Workers Uniting.

Questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to.

The General Secretary supplemented the report, highlighting that the process of reviewing a number of departments within the Union is on-going with further reductions in areas that do not impact on the service to members.

A discussion on expenses and property ensued with response from the General Secretary and the Director of Finance & Operations.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be adopted in line with the preamble to this Minute."

**Minute
No.184**

15.2 Changes to Lay Members' Expenses Regime

A written report had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the Director of Finance & Operations, Ed Sabisky.

At the March meeting of the Council, the concept of replacing travel warrants with cash advances was raised and debated. As a consequence of a number of concerns raised, the matter was not approved but taken away for further review. It is now proposed that use of travel warrants be discontinued and a new system of cash advances be put in its place, effective for meetings being held after 1st November and the further issuance of rail warrants be eliminated simultaneously.

The Director of Finance & Operations also referred to an anomaly that exists in the calculation of the payment of loss of earnings above the standard £55.80 per day. Specifically, the calculation is based on net basic pay excluding any overtime, shift premiums, etc but also excluded is the pension contributions that the employer would make to the member's pension pot based upon his/her basic pay. It is, therefore, proposed that the definition of loss of earnings be amended to include loss of pension contributions that would be made by the employer on the member's basic pay.

It is the intention of the General Secretary to try and reduce the amounts of loss of earnings claimed from the Union by using Officers to negotiate with employers to pay for as much of this time as possible.

A discussion ensued with questions and comments from the members of the Council being responded to by the General Secretary and the Director of Finance & Operations.

A resolution had been received from the North West Regional Committee which called on the Union to revert to the system whereby expenses are claimed in advance of meetings. Following discussion, the General Secretary proposed that the Executive Officers further discuss the issue of travel warrants, taking onboard the comments made, and bring a further proposal back to the Council. It was also proposed that the resolution be left on the table and a proposal for the future would be brought back to the Council but, in the meantime, continue with the current expenses regime.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted in line with the preamble to this Minute."

**Minute
No.185**

15.3 Unite Branch Financing

An amended written discussion document had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the General Secretary, Len McCluskey, the Director of Finance & Operations, Ed Sabisky and Chief of Staff, Andrew Murray.

A general discussion ensued during which the changes to the previous document were highlighted and the Council were advised that this is an ongoing debate and discussion. A full report on branch reorganisation will be presented to the December meeting of the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be noted."

**Minute
No.186**

10. Equalities

A written report for the Equalities Sector had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by Assistant General Secretary, Diana Holland.

As pressure mounts in both public and private sectors to cut back expenditure for workers, the Union needs to ensure the important gains made, particularly in enhancing legal minimum rights, are not undermined. The negotiating arguments that won these rights must not be forgotten.

With reference to the Equality Act 2010 – Public Sector Duty, the Officer briefings have now been arranged in the final regions where they have yet to take place. The clear aim is to achieve mandatory pay audits and statutory rights for union reps.

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

For Black History Month, the Union ran a poster competition and a number of entries were received, particularly in the 5-16 age group category, which was a key aim of the competition to get young people involved in Black History Month and talking about equality issues. The posters will be used as part of the campaign in October.

The disabled members are planning to take part in the series of local and regional rallies and campaigns to take place in October 2011 in opposition to the Welfare reform bill. This is the obvious target since it promises deep cuts

to disability benefits including Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance.

Unite has been heavily involved in a number of Pride events across the country, including Liverpool Pride. A DVD has been produced which can be used for campaigning. The Union is also supporting equal marital rights for gay and transgender couples which is an issue that is currently being discussed in many arenas.

As part of the Unite strategy, a Unite Charter for Young People was developed to coincide with International Youth Day on 12th August and was circulated throughout the Union and it is hoped that branches, workplaces and industrial sectors will use and adapt it to encourage discussion and action on getting more young people involved in the Union.

A training pack has been drafted to be used to train young members and other Unite members in using the Unite Schools Pack in schools across the regions. The first proposals are to hold briefings in London, Leeds and Glasgow in November.

The General Secretary supplemented the report on the schools project and questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.187**

24. National Equalities Conferences 2012

A written report including the draft Standing Orders, distribution of delegates and the Standing Orders Committee 2014 had previously been circulated to the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.188**

14. Industrial Report – Transport & Food

A detailed written report had been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by Assistant General Secretary, Diana Holland.

Updates on the current situation within the Road Transport Commercial, Logistics and Retail Distribution Sector were given.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.189**

18. Disputes, Industrial Action Ballots and Repudiations Report

The Council were advised that under Rule 3.3, the Executive Council's power shall enable inter alia the authorisation of industrial action, approval of dispute benefit and repudiations for the whole Union. In accordance with this, written reports detailing all relevant information were circulated to members of the Council, copies having been filed on the records of the EC.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the Disputes, Industrial Action Ballots and Repudiations Report be adopted."

THIRD DAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER 2011

IN THE CHAIR: Bro. T WOODHOUSE

**Minute
No.190**

14. Industrial Report - Transport & Food continued/...

Assistant General Secretary, Diana Holland continued her report, updating the Council on the current situation within the sectors with members of the Council reporting on their own sectors.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.191**

25. TUC Congress 2012 and 2013

A written report detailing the scheme of representation in accordance with the election of 2010 delegates and assuming the TUC Congress will not be a reduced meeting in 2013 had previously been circulated to the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be adopted."

**Minute
No.192**

8. Political Report

A separate written report on political activities had been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the Political Director, Steve Hart.

Unite has been working hard with TULO colleagues to ensure that Labour's Refounding Labour discussions contain positive proposals which can modernise and democratise the Party, in a manner which empowers the membership. Any view that restricting the democratic rights of unions will help in that direction are absurd, and Unite, alongside TULO, has made it very clear that such suggestions will not be supported. A positive report is hoped for and rule changes the Union will be able to support, although final propositions have not yet been released.

The Scottish Region has been addressing restructuring proposals and leadership matters arising out of the difficult defeat earlier this year at the Holyrood elections. The Union successfully headed off some bad changes proposed in the leadership electoral college.

Preparations are under way for the Mayor of London elections next year. A Unite4Ken website has been established in support of Ken Livingstone which is an organising tool of telephone banking.

Parliament has been in recess for most of the summer, however, for the second time, Parliament has been sitting for two weeks in September.

During these two weeks, the Unite Political Department has been working with MPs and the Labour Party, giving assistance around the Health & Social Care Bill both in Parliament and on the Big NHS Weekend.

Unite has been working closely with the new group in Parliament that was established to develop a progressive agenda and renewing Labour's involvement with working class people and unions. There will be an official launch in early October. The "Think Tank" 'CLASS' will be beginning in October with a full-time worker. These two steps are critical in developing a progressive agenda and policies and then fighting for them.

With reference to parliamentary selections/Boundary Commission report, this will affect the Union in a number of ways. It will reduce 50 seats nationally which will result in Labour losing 17 seats while the Tories lose 3. There will be no more selections until late 2013 as a consequence of the Boundary Commission report which brings upheaval to all but 77 constituencies.

Unite has been very much involved in mobilising against the EDL who declared a national mobilisation and march through Tower Hamlets. Together with Hope not Hate and Unite Against Fascism, the Union campaigned successfully for the provocative march to be banned.

The National Political Committee and Regional Political Committees will follow the cycle of meeting dates issued nationally, with committees mirroring NISC and RISC meetings respectively. This will provide a clearer route of accountability for these committees. A draft political strategy is in preparation which will be presented for debate and agreement at the National Political Committee and the next Council meeting.

Plans are well advanced for an effective Unite presence at the Labour Party Conference in Liverpool. There are two main fringe meetings – one concentrating on Employment Rights and one on the Economic Alternative. A contemporary motion on the phone hacking scandal had been circulated to the Council and was agreed for submission to the Conference.

Questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to by the Political Director.

A statement was moved by EC member, Martin Mayer and agreed on Unite's political involvement as follows:

"The right wing in the Labour Party is alive and well – and calling for a major reduction in the voting strength of Trades Unions at Party Conference from 50% currently to possibly just one third of the votes. There are also many calls from New Labour acolytes for the Trades Unions to lose their votes or see it much diminished in the Electoral College for Labour Party leadership elections.

Decisions regarding UNITE's involvement in the Labour Party have often been made by officers at the most senior level, no doubt with the best of intentions, in order to "serve the best interests of the Labour Party" or "ensure the influence of the Union in the future". All too often with hindsight we can see how the Unions were increasingly sidelined by New Labour as a result. The result has been a Labour Party shifting inexorably towards the neo-liberal right, disillusioning working class voters and trade unionists alike. We welcome that Ed Miliband has begun to challenge this drift in a number of important respects, from challenging the dominance of the banks to apologising for the Iraq War, as well as acknowledging the last government's shortcomings on inequality, economic management and other issues. If we are to be serious about the fightback in the Labour Party to which we are

committed as a Union i.e. “reclaim the Labour Party for working class values” we must change the over-conciliatory and often undemocratic tactics of the past whereby concessions have been made to the Labour Party leadership, especially prior to Conference.

The UNITE Executive resolves to:

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

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be agreed in line with the preamble to this Minute.”

**Minute
No.193**

9. International Report

A detailed report had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the International Director, Simon Dubbins.

The instability in the global economy has intensified further. In the United States an intense battle over the raising of the debit ceiling culminated in last minute agreement preventing a default, but this only came at the price of severe welfare cuts to be implemented in the coming years. The agenda was driven largely by the extreme right wing ‘Tea Party’ group within the Republican Party.

As the US debt issue was resolved, the attention of the international financial markets reverted to the Eurozone, where the financial markets attacked weaker Eurozone countries and forced further austerity programmes on a number of countries including Spain, Italy and Greece. The Eurozone instability is forcing the whole issue of Eurozone governance to the fore with serious questions being raised about the democratic accountability of the current system. The austerity programmes continue to create social unrest in many countries where unions are fighting the measures being imposed. The largest confederation in Italy held a one day General Strike on 6th September, while the two Spanish confederations are trying to force a national referendum to oppose deficit limits being fixed in the constitution.

A letter of condolence was sent by the General Secretary, on behalf of Unite, to Norwegian trade unions and the Norwegian Labour Party. This was in response to the brutal murder of more than 70 young activists by a right wing extremist during July 2011.

The first meeting of the reconstituted Workers Uniting Steering Committee took place on the eve of the USW Convention in August. The bulk of the meeting was concerned with debate and discussion over a proposed action plan. The adopted Action Plan focuses on deepening and strengthening activities and links in a number of key areas. In particular, developing our shared vision of an alternative economic strategy with a specific focus on increased co-ordination in political work. Other areas agreed included deepening activist engagement in key industrial sectors and multinationals, and the development of further educational initiatives under Workers Uniting.

Solidarity activities in relation to Colombia, the Miami 5 and union development in Africa will also continue.

The International Director gave a brief report on the USW Convention at which the General Secretary was a key note speaker during the international issues part of the agenda. Whilst at the congress, as well as meeting key activists and officers of the USW, the opportunity was taken to arrange a number of additional side meetings for the Unite delegation with other international guests.

The first education course for EWC reps has taken place and it is intended to put on another one later in the year.

With regard to DFID, the final seminar has taken place in Malawi. The project will be coming to an end in December.

The Unite International Committee has now met on two occasions. The meetings proved to be extremely positive and beneficial, with detailed discussions and exchanges taking place concerning the future direction of the union's international work.

The Workers Uniting Congress will take place in London on 11/12 November with the Action Plan forming the basis of the congress. The USW will be bringing around 35 people including most senior leadership and senior lay activists.

The General Secretary supplemented the report on the USW Congress and the Workers Uniting Steering Committee.

Questions and comments from members of the Council were responded to by the International Director and the General Secretary.

The General Secretary reported that, as a consequence of the Director of the Research Department, Roger Jeary's forthcoming retirement, Simon Dubbins will be Director of Research and International.

The General Secretary further reported that it is intended that 35 people, including the Steering Committee, will be in attendance from Unite at the Workers Uniting Congress and sought the Council's authority to bring the group together.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted in line with the preamble to this Minute."

17. LEGAL

**Minute
No.194**

17.1 Legal Report

A detailed report was submitted to the Council including updates on recent developments in various areas of law. The report was verbally supplemented by the Legal Director, Howard Beckett.

The Legal Director outlined examples of successes in regional legal cases which is the type of material the Union will be looking to advertise going forward.

The judiciary review of the use of RPI/CPI in Civil Service pensions, which is being pursued with a number of other unions, is due to be heard on 25th

October and is currently listed for 3 days. This is not an impossible case but is described as having a 14% chance of success.

The claims in respect of Southampton City Council remain on-going with solicitors still gathering all information for unfair dismissal claims. There are limited prospects of success but felt in Southampton it had an industrial importance.

The Legal Director referred to the Mesothelioma Employers' Liability insurance 'trigger issue' test case, which the previous Joint General Secretaries had given authority to support, and is a most important case in respect of jurisprudence. It is potentially the most important test case in the recent history of asbestos litigation. If the insurers succeed, it will create black holes in historical EL insurance cover adversely affecting thousands of workers with asbestos related illness in future – particularly the membership Unite represents in at least 15 of the top 20 HSE designated high risk occupations for mesothelioma mortality – and could also affect claims for other types of latent industrial disease.

With reference to action taken since the last meeting of the Council, the intention is to give ownership of legal services to the Regions and Officers and specific guidelines have been issued to Regional Secretaries on how employment tribunal cases should be referred to the solicitors. The guidelines had been circulated to members of the Council and were verbally supplemented by the Legal Director.

The Legal Director reported on personal injury and the self-insurance premium scheme. Reporting standards have been brought in to all solicitors which they are complying with and the self-insurance scheme has been altered to make it a tiered premium. The standards will also stop bad practice and reporting mechanisms have been put in place. An audit procedure will be also be introduced going forward.

The Legal Department has begun to implement the necessary changes to the Ballot procedure and the revised procedures will be reissued in the next few weeks. The principle will be for Officers and reps to take ownership albeit for the centre to monitor and check all ballot correspondence.

The Council, having previously been advised of the civil justice reforms based on those recommended by Rupert Jackson, were updated on the current situation. The Bill is currently in Committee in the House of Commons and when the Bill returns to the Commons, Labour MPs will seek to amend it and propose reforms to road traffic accident (RTA) claims. The Bill is expected to go to the Lords towards the beginning of November and the Government continues to look to the end of October 2012 to implement.

Unite is clear that any claims culture exists only with road traffic accidents. The banning of referral fees and the tightening of costs such as credit hire costs would resolve any problems that exist in the RTA market. Our members have issues regarding health and safety and litigation has a valuable role in ensuring health and safety standards are maintained. Our members should not be punished and denied access to justice as a result of the abuses of those who operate in the road traffic accident market.

The Legal Director responded to questions and comments from members of the Council.

A member of the Council raised questions concerning past work done by the Director of Legal Services which the Director addressed to the satisfaction of the Council.

The General Secretary reported to the Council that Maria King had been appointed as Director of Personnel & Development Designate. It is anticipated that she will take up her position from 1st November 2011 and work alongside HR Director, Ray Fletcher.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

15. FINANCE continued/....

**Minute
No.195**

15.4 Core & Ancillary Membership

Further to the discussion at the last meeting of the Council in relation to Scale 1 membership, the Director of Finance & Operations reported that an option of £2,500 personal accident cover or £5,000 fatal accident cover would be offered to members to choose which one they wanted. Eventually, it will become an ancillary benefit to every member. With effect from April 2012, members can pay additional contributions for extra benefits. In responding to comments from members of the Council, the General Secretary reminded the Council that core and ancillary membership was a decision taken by the previous Executive Council but due to an administrative error, the decision had not been implemented and the transitional period had been extended to April 2012. It is anticipated that the Legal Director will have improved the benefits by April 2012 but the status quo remains until then. Information will be circulated to Scale 1 members of the changes.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

17. LEGAL continued/....

**Minute
No.196**

17.2 Community Membership

A detailed document containing proposals and constitutional issues relating to Unite Community membership had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the General Secretary.

Community membership is an attempt to try and reconnect with our communities and a community branch structure will be set up. A community support unit within Central Office will be set up to assist in the initial period. Aside from the benefits package, it will give individuals in the community, who at the moment feel completely disconnected, an opportunity to have a voice and play a role in the Union. A new form of trade unionism going forward.

The General Secretary reported on discussions that are on-going with retired members representatives to make their role within the Union more effective.

The General Secretary responded to questions and comments from members of the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.197****17.3 Community Membership Benefits Package**

A document outlining the package offered to Community Membership had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by the Director of Legal & Affiliated Services, Howard Beckett.

The offer to members for Community Membership has been specifically designed to offer achievable services which can be offered remotely by our affiliate partners. The most important offer to Community members is to become an active member of the Union; to use the offer of services as a conduit to becoming an active member of the Union and being a member of an active branch.

The Legal Director outlined the package offered which includes:

- Financial Health Check
- Back to Work Service
- Hardship Grants
- Gas and electricity comparison service
- Unite Current Account (incorporating Unite Emergency Cash Facility)
- Legal Benefits
- Free Personal Accident Cover (up to £2,500)
- Retail Benefits

The Legal Director responded to questions and comments from members of the Council.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the report be accepted."

**Minute
No.198****26. Letter of Apology**

In accordance with an agreement reached in resolution of a Tribunal application by Ray Smith, a member of the Union in the Newcastle Central Branch, a letter of apology to Brother Smith from the Chief of Staff on behalf of the Union was placed before the Council and drawn to its attention.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the letter of apology be noted."

**Minute
No.199****20. Draft Revised Rule Book**

Following the decision of the Council at the previous meeting, an amended draft revised Rule Book had been circulated to the Council and verbally supplemented by the Chief of Staff, Andrew Murray.

The Chief of Staff reported that the Rule Book will be put on the website. In addition to points raised by a member of the Council, there will be a slight adjustment to the attached guidelines due to rule changes which makes the guidelines refer to the wrong clause.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: "That the revised Rule Book be adopted in line with the preamble to this Minute."

- Minute No.200** **Election of Sub-Committee – Review of Rule 6**
- The Chief of Staff, Andrew Murray reported that it was necessary for the Council to elect a Sub-Committee to review the implementation of Rule 6 as per the decision taken at the Rules Conference.
- At the close of consideration, the Council
- RESOLVED:** “That the Sub-Committee to review the implementation of Rule 6 be comprised of: Bro. T Woodhouse, Chair, Bro. M Lyon, Vice-Chair, Bros. J Sheridan, S Hibbert, D Mathieson, I Monckton, M Taj, Sis. M Ryan and J Taylor.”
- 23. UNITE POLICY**
- Minute No.201** **23.1 Policy Manual**
- The Unite Policy Manual 2011 detailing policy as determined by the Policy Conference 2010 had been previously circulated to the Council.
- At the close of consideration, the Council
- RESOLVED:** “That the Unite Policy Manual 2011 was noted.”
- Minute No.202** **23.2 2011 Policy Implementation Progress Report**
- The Progress Report on Policy Implementation had been previously circulated to the Council.
- At the close of consideration, the Council
- RESOLVED:** “That the report be noted.”
- Minute No.203** **21. Proposals for Revising Constitutional Structures within Unite**
- A document detailing proposals for revising the constitutional structures within Unite had previously been circulated to the Council and was verbally supplemented by Assistant Chief of Staff, Adrian Weir.
- A discussion regarding the proposals ensued during which the following changes were agreed:
- Proposal 2: Point 6 – “some flexibility would be allowable around these dates” to be deleted.
- Proposal 4: Point 3 – “some flexibility would be allowable around these dates” to be deleted.
- At the close of consideration, the Council
- RESOLVED:** “That the report be adopted in line with the preamble to this Minute.”
- Minute No.204** **11. Education Report**
- The Chair advised the Council that due to the absence of the Director of Education, the report would be left on the table until the next meeting.
- At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be accepted in line with the preamble to this Minute.”

**Minute
No.205**

**19. CORRESPONDENCE INCLUDING RESOLUTIONS FROM
REGIONAL & NATIONAL COMMITTEES**

A document was circulated detailing all the resolutions received. Each item was individually considered by the Council and the responses verbally amplified.

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

Canadian Asbestos Mining – The resolution was submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee and called for the Union to campaign for the Canadian Government to overturn the Quebec Government’s decision. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council.

Health & Safety Unit – The resolution was submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee and called on the Union to review the restructuring of the Health & Safety Unit. In response, the resolution was remitted in light of a report of the Director of Research that the new Health & Safety Unit is now well established in Research and is currently reviewing its priorities to ensure that the Union continues to provide the high standard of service to members and activists across the wide spectrum of health and safety issues.

Hazards Campaign – The resolution was submitted by the East Midlands Regional Committee and called on the Union to encourage as many branches as possible to affiliate to Hazards. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council.

Lay Member Expenses – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to revert to the system whereby expenses are claimed in advance of meetings. In response, the resolution was left on the table in light of ongoing discussions at the Council regarding lay member expenses.

Pension Salary Sacrifice – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to reconsider its decision. In response, the resolution was noted by the Council.

Bombardier – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to make every effort to get the decision changed. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council in light of Unite’s on-going campaign.

Telephone Switchboard Facilities – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to install proper switchboard facilities at Jack Jones House. In response, the resolution was referred back to the North West Regional Committee and Director of ICT, Dominic Hook to resolve the situation with regards to telephone switchboard facilities in the North West Regional Office.

12 Point Peoples Charter – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to endorse the TUC position. In response, the resolution was noted by the Council.

1911 General Transport Strike – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to support a memorial

plaque or a rally to commemorate the centenary of the event. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council.

Higher Education – The resolution was submitted by the North West Regional Committee and called on the Union to call for charges against Bryan Simpson to be dropped. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council.

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

GPM Sector Membership – The resolution was submitted by the Wales Regional Committee and called on the Union to ensure GPM Sector membership is brought back into the regionally administered process. In response, the resolution was remitted in light of the on-going Branch Consultation.

Rules Conference 2011 – The resolution was submitted by the London & Eastern Regional Committee and called on the Union to have a full review of the running of Rules Conference. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council.

National Demonstrations – The resolution was submitted by the West Midlands Regional Committee and called on the Union to take into account parking arrangements for future demonstrations. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council and will be referred to the TUC.

Fixed Term Contracts - The resolution was submitted by the West Midlands Regional Committee and called on the Union to engage in a full survey of workplaces. In response, the resolution was remitted with a view to examining how it could be implemented.

Unique Colour Identity – The resolution was submitted by the West Midlands Regional Committee and called on the Union to select one colour to give specific identity to Unite the Union. In response, the resolution was supported by the Council in light of the decision of the Campaigns and Communications Department to use red as the main colour for Unite campaign merchandise.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “To accept the reports in line with the preamble to this Minute.”

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Minute
No.206**

27.1 Hotels

A member of the Council referred to a resolution from the LGBT National Committee discussed at the last Council meeting regarding the choice of hotels and requested an update. In response, the Chief of Staff reported that concerns had been raised in relation to one of the London hotels and this hotel would now be removed from the list of hotels.

At the close of consideration, the Council

RESOLVED: “That the report be accepted.”

**Minute
No.207**

Documentation

The Executive Council noted that all documents specified within the Minutes had been circulated to all members of the Council and were filed on the records of the Council.

**The Meeting of the Council
thereupon terminated**

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SEPTEMBER 2011

Dear Colleagues,

In this report I focus on listing the main activities I have undertaken since we last met, as well as drawing the Council's attention to a number of matters of importance not otherwise included on the agenda.

Industrial Matters

Amongst various industrial relations matters, I have been involved in the following:

- Meeting at Bombardier Derby with members & management concerning proposed loss of train building contract.
- Further meeting with Bombardier management concerning strategy to reverse govt decision on train contract
- Meeting with Philip Hammond MP, Secretary of State for Transport, re-Bombardier trains contract.
- Continuing discussions with colleagues and stewards regarding tanker drivers' dispute
- Meeting with Honda UK senior management following continuing industrial problems at Swindon factory
- Discussions with Doug Nicholls NO on Youth & Community Sector membership
- Meeting & discussions with reps of BA Cabin Crew, Gatwick
- Continuing discussions With British Airways senior management ref dispute resolution
- Discussions with Colette Cork-Hurst NO concerning proposals for development of Unite Youth programme.
- Meeting with senior colleagues, TUC, & USDAW leadership re- DHL & Sainsburys.
- Meeting with Unite rep Lisa Mannion to discuss proposals for schools liaison programme

Public meetings and events:

- Attendance at, and speech to, the Durham Miners Gala
- Attendance at, and speech to, Tolpuddle Festival
- Attendance at Liverpool Pride
- Attendance at, and speech to, Show Racism the Red Card 15th Anniversary & magazine launch, House of Commons
- Press event at Westminster in support of Bombardier Derby/Train Contract

Political, International & Inter-Trade Union Matters

- Meeting with John Denham MP
- Meeting with Mary-Kay Henry, President of the SEIU
- Meeting of Workers Uniting Steering Committee
- Attendance at, and speech to, USW International Convention
- Meeting & discussion with Paul Kenny & Dave Prentis on campaigning and political matters
- Meeting with Ed Miliband MP.

Principal Media Appearances

- Interview with Nick Robinson, BBC News, Durham Miners Gala
- Interview with The Guardian
- Interview with The Observer
- Interview with The New Statesman
- Interview with Socialist Lawyer magazine

TUC

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

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

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

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

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

ADMINISTRATIVE & ORGANISATION ISSUES

Amongst the issues I have dealt with since are last meeting are the following:

- Continuing discussions with officers & staff representatives concerning new Unite employee terms & conditions
- Discussions with officers & senior lay members re- Retired Members Section

- Meetings and discussions with colleagues concerning progress of introduction of new membership system, arising from discussion at FGPC
- Roundtable meeting with senior colleagues concerning introduction of new Community Membership

Constitutional Structures In Unite

A separate paper on the subject of constitutional structures in Unite has been circulated for your consideration.

Membership of the Executive Council Members

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

Proposed Timetable

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

New Rule Book

Following on from discussions at the July Executive Council the revisions requested have been incorporated into the rule book and the EC guidance on various rules has been attached at the end. This is being re-circulated for your consideration, however, should the paper on constitutional structures in Unite be agreed by the council further revisions will of course be required before the book is published.

Equalities Conferences 2012

A separate paper on arrangements for the Equalities Conferences 2012 has been circulated for your consideration.

Policy Conference 2012

The timetable of dates for next year included in my July report contained a typographical error in relation to the dates for the Policy Conference in 2012. This should have read 25th to 28th June 2012. The Conference will take place in the Brighton Centre. Taking into account the schedule of constitutional committee meetings for 2012 the timetable proposed as follows will allow for the submission of motions by all constitutional committees and branches and of amendments by many constitutional committees and all branches.

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

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

PERSONNEL & DEVELOPMENT***Standard Terms & Conditions***

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

Unite Personnel Policies and Procedures

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

Bargaining Units

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

Organisational Integration

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

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

Job Evaluation

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

Recruitment

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

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

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

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

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

This report covers the last two months and reflects the wide range of activities undertaken within the department supporting campaigns, negotiations and general policy work for the union.

Public services

Not surprisingly the department has been heavily engaged in work related to the union's campaigning work on behalf of public sector members. This has included the following:

- Research work has been undertaken on the public services campaign and the analysis required to determine appropriate industrial action strategy;
- Preparation of a Public Services Resistance Roadmap;
- Further work on the mapping of public service sectors;
- Briefing on the 'Open Public Services' government paper
- Presentation on Open Public Services White Paper to Unite Public Services Summit;
- Production of a guide on Social enterprises, Mutuals and Co-operatives in the context of the privatisation of public services;
- Briefing and summary of Unite facilities agreements across the public sector in particular

- Written the Unite response to Part 2 of the Winsor Review of pay, terms and conditions of police officers and staff;
- Undertaken a Freedom of Information survey to all local authorities on youth service cuts.
- Drafting the Unite evidence to the NHS Pay Review Body and contributing to the joint staff side evidence
- Briefing on social insurance schemes and health systems in different countries.

Work has also been undertaken in support of the union's campaigns in the Third Sector including support for the Unite for our Society campaign; drafting and updating resources on rights for volunteer workers and a mapping exercise on charities and Remploy and preparing the Unite response to the Sayce review.

Manufacturing

The Bombardier Campaign has also involved significant work from the department including preparation of evidence to present to the Transport Select Committee enquiry into the decision to award the Thameslink Contract to Siemens rather than Bombardier. As well as drafting written evidence to the Select Committee, the researcher has prepared a list of over 1,000 suppliers listed in an excel spreadsheet to identify genuine suppliers, removing duplicates and identifying who the local MPs are for each supplier site.

The department has been working on an updated manufacturing policy document which will be launched at the National Sector Conferences in November as well as producing a set of manufacturing fact sheets soon to be placed on the website.

Work has been done on major pay claims in the VBA sector along with the development of a VBA Policy document and briefings and other work connected with the Fujitsu campaign.

The department has also been working with Education on its apprentices project.

Finance

In the Finance sector the researcher has gathered information from across the sector on the history of the finance sector and has now produced a chronology which includes key events in the predecessor unions' history. This is now available to access on the website.

A policy paper and shorter leaflet on key issues in the finance sector has been produced and research carried out into the possibility of a National Investment Bank including identifying comparators in Japan, Brazil and Germany.

The department has produced a job losses database using Excel which identifies geographical 'hot spots' for job losses in finance sector in order to inform regional campaigns.

Transport

In the Transport sectors a report has been prepared for the national officer to brief General Secretary and Oil Tanker Drivers Committee on the 'Enough is Enough' campaign.

Also in conjunction with TSSA, ASLEF and the RMT, we have been working to commission a piece of work by two external independent researchers to put together a study into rail industry policy for the Labour party. The research looks at the possible advantages and disadvantages of renationalising the rail network or retaining the current status quo.

The department has prepared a briefing on the McNulty review and the negative effects it will have on the rail network.

Energy and construction

We have been supporting the National Officers and Communications Dept on the Campaign for Electrical and Mechanical workers.

The department has also been working on the issue of smart metering, specifically on the labour relations consequences of the governments decision to mandate for the installation of smart meters in all UK domestic properties by the end of 2019. This has included participating in a range of discussions and submitting position papers to stakeholders in the process including; the Department for Energy & Climate Change, OFGEM, the Energy Retailers Association, The National Skills Academy for Power, Energy & Utility Skills, Consumer Focus and Which?.

As usual the department has drafted a range of submissions to government departments and agencies which include:

- Air Passenger Duty
- Trust port sale criteria
- High speed rail: investing in Britain's future
- Department for Transport aviation scoping document
- UK Space Agency consultation
- Response to the Joint committee on the draft Financial Services Bill
- Health Committee consultation into Public Health
- Health Committee consultation into Public Expenditure on Health and Social Care
- Health and Social Care Bill Committee –Health and Social Care (Re-committed) Bill: Government Amendments
- Unite Submission to the LPC Review of the NMW 2011
- Response to a Social Dialogue Questionnaire on Markets in Financial Instruments Directive
- Response to the Independent Commission on Banking Interim Report consultation
- Response to Lofstedt Review of health and safety regulations
- Response to the HSE Manufacturing Strategy

General work

During the past two months the department has provided Annual Reports and Analysis on over 44 companies to assist union negotiators in their dealings with employers.

As we approach the conference season the department has been involved in the preparation work for TUC Congress and will be supporting delegates at the Congress with a speech writing service. The department is also engaged in collating the progress report of policy decisions taken at the Unite Policy Conference in June 2010 for the EC

Health and safety

Since the last Executive report the health and safety unit has now moved to the research department. The work undertaken by the unit in the last two months includes the following:

Launch of Health and Safety Guide 5 August 2011

Work on a new HIV/AIDS pack

Regular email updates

Liaising with colleagues to keep the H&S pages of the website updated

Providing responses to H&S queries from Safety Reps and Regional Offices

Campaigns

Working with food sector on a campaign to help prevent musculoskeletal disorders in Sainsbury's checkout worker members. This involved producing a body mapping survey form and supporting materials and collating and compiling a report on the results which was presented to Sainsbury's management.

Continuing development of Unite response to Behavioural H&S, including draft training course for Crown shop stewards and safety reps

Internal Unite meetings

The unit has attended a large number of the NISCs during this period and has contributed to training sessions at Eastbourne

External Meetings

Amongst a large number of external meetings with H&S bodies, the unit was present at the Hazards Conference - organising and attending the Unite stand and running 2 workshops on shift work.

Unite is involved in a meeting at the House of Commons regarding the Bakers' Union and a joint campaign for a legal maximum workplace temperature.

The Unit also makes regular visits to workplaces to support activists in dealings with their employers.

CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNICATIONS

This has been a busy summer for the C&C team. We have been supporting the union's anti-cuts and industrial actions across the country, from Bristol Homecare Services to the strikes by youth workers in Oxford and Lincolnshire. We have also continued to lend support to the workers in Southampton as they fight against wage cuts, and support members at Unilever defending their pensions, at Remploy fighting to save jobs and at Sainsbury's where workers managed to overturn a wage freeze. A major campaign is in underway in construction to prevent the leading employers from ripping up collective agreements. Unless we do so, then the race to the bottom seen in this sector in recent years will accelerate. Two polls by Unite set summer headlines, both on Bombardier. One showed that the Tory MP for the area looks set to lose her seat at the next election as the people of Derby hold the government to account for the failure to award the contract to Bombardier. The other, ahead of the Select Committee hearing at the beginning of September, showed that hundreds of manufacturers in the supply chain are preparing to lay workers off. The constancy of the campaign is having an impact at Westminster with ministers now trying to present a view that there is other work to be had.

In addition, Unite has played a leading role in NHS Alert, the campaign bringing together health unions to defend the health service against the government's plans to break up the service in England. Over the bank holiday weekend, Unite members participated in over 100 different local actions working with their local Labour constituency and Unison to take the message about the threat to the NHS directly into communities. Worryingly, the government is determined to force through the changes at breakneck speed; we are now working to persuade peers to use their powers to slow down the changes and dilute the extent of them, again mobilising members for the fight.

Unite was lone among the unions in issuing a statement on the riots that engulfed English cities this summer. While condemning those who brought fear to working class communities, the union pressed for greater understanding of the backdrop - a country whose institutions were failing to offer leadership and hope, and where cuts hurt those on the margins most. These themes were picked up at a Unite fringe meeting at the TUC, which was extremely well-attended and saw powerful presentations from a diverse panel of the general secretary, Tom Watson MP, social commentator and author Owen Jones and Unite EC member and Lambeth councillor Kingsley Abrams. C&C also organised two other successful fringe meetings, on access to justice and on the campaign to save rail work at Bombardier.

Unite led the debate on workers rights at Congress, pushing the point that a "feral ruling class" was pressing for oppressive changes to the laws that help working people defend themselves. The general secretary was interviewed on the leading political magazine programme, BBC 1's Andrew Marr Show on this and his calls for action to resist cuts to all aspects of our lives. Throughout the week, the GS reiterated these points in the many media interviews he did for the BBC's main new programmes, Sky and the BBC's general news service which takes Unite into millions of homes up and down the country.

C&C is continuing with plans to develop and implement Unite's first digital media strategy. This is an enormous undertaking but vitally important in the continued modernisation of our union. Focus groups are being set up across the union, bringing together officers and members to help them understand why e-comms is so important to our success in the future and the key part they have to play in developing our digital strength. A full report on this will be presented to the Executive in December with Exec members also asked to participate in the consultation before then.

C&C will also be playing a lead role in supporting the public sector pensions campaign. We are working with colleagues across the union on materials, a communications and media strategy and an events plan to ensure our members get the best information and the best hearing in the public domain.

ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

Campaigns and Communications

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