



Scotland *in* UNISON

NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE • BRIGHTON 2009

Conference Delegates' Handbook

SCOTLAND POLICY GUIDE ON ALL THE MAIN ISSUES

WHO'S WHO?

BRIEFINGS SERVICE AND OTHER CONTACTS

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

PROCEDURES GUIDE

PUBLIC WORKS:



www.unison-scotland.org.uk/conf2009

NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE BRIEFINGS. PRODUCED BY SCOTTISH COMMUNICATIONS & CAMPAIGNS COMMITTEE IN CONJUNCTION WITH REGIONAL DELEGATES

Welcome to Conference

BRIGHTON 2009



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**Don't forget the meeting of Scottish Branches on:
MONDAY 15 JUNE 5.30PM - Details to follow.**

**Local Government Branches will also meet
at 5.30 on Saturday 13 June.**

Who's who, or handy folk to know



Mike Kirby



Lilian Macer

Mike and Lilian, Scottish Region Delegates

Mike Kirby and **Lilian Macer** are Scotland's delegates to Conference, elected by the Scottish Council of branches earlier this year. They are an essential source of information and fulfil a key organisational role. They can help you liaise with other branches and regions throughout the week.

They are very approachable and will keep you right if you need any advice. They will know how debates are being organised, who to speak to and, more importantly, how to get to speak. They will advise on Scottish policy and will speak for the Region in debates.



Matt Smith

Matt Smith, Scottish Secretary

Matt Smith is Scotland's top full time official, leading the union in Scotland in partnership with Mike Kirby, the elected lay convenor. Matt has a long and distinguished history in the trade union movement in Scotland. He is treasurer of the Scottish Trade Union Congress and is a past president of the STUC. Matt was appointed to the Calman Commission on Scottish Devolution.



Sue Highton

Sue Highton, National President

Sue Highton is the current president of UNISON, the highest lay member position. She will chair Conference throughout the week.

Sue is a nurse and lives in Sheffield. Sue started in the NHS in 1975 as a domestic at Grenoside General Hospital and, following her father's advice, sought out her union rep as soon as she got there. She became a NUPE member three hours after her first shift began.



Dave Prentis

Dave Prentis, General Secretary

Dave Prentis was elected general secretary of UNISON in 2000, took up the post on 1 January, 2001 and was re-elected in 2006.

Dave was born and brought up in Leeds and went to the University of London where he took a BA in history. This was followed by an MA in industrial relations at the University of Warwick.

He is a member of the TUC General Council, the TUC Executive and the Trade Union Labour Party Liaison Committee.



Bob Revie



John Stevenson

Bob Revie, Standing Orders Committee Rep

Bob Revie is Scotland's rep on the Standing Orders Committee which sets out the business for the week. Bob is the source of information on what's going on and whether your motion has any chance!

John Stevenson, Briefings Team Leader

John Stevenson leads the the Scottish Communications and Campaigning Committee team who will issue daily briefings. They will also be updating the website with most of what goes out in print so you can get easy access. Approach John if you need to use any of the newsheet facilities.

Scotland policy guide on all the main issues

Regional Delegates to National Delegate Conference, Convener Mike Kirby and Depute Convener Lilian Macer, preview the main debates at National Delegate Conference.

Branches, Regions, Self Organized Groups, Retired and Young members and the National Executive Council (NEC), submitted over 130 motions and associated amendments to the conference agenda.

The experience of recent years is that conference will manage to discuss no more than thirty or so of these motions, many of which will find themselves in composites agreed by the bodies submitting the original motions.

If your favourite is not discussed below, it is unlikely to be debated first time around and the only alternative will be in the reprioritisation exercise. This will take place on Wednesday evening/Thursday morning, for Friday afternoon business.

The Standing Orders Committee (SOC) has balloted Regions, the NEC, Self Organised Groups, National Young Members' Forum and the National Retired Members' Committee on what motions should be prioritised for debate at the Conference.

The Scottish Council meeting in April agreed Scotland's priorities. All but three of Scotland's priorities are likely to be debated.



Mike Kirby surrounded by balloons. *Make up your own jokes about that!*



Lilian Macer makes a serious point as, after a long day, Dave Prentis chats to his teddy for comfort

Recruiting & Organising

Comp A (1,4) 2

Motions 1 & 4 (Composite A) welcome the recent growth in membership, look for a coherent and coordinated plan to market the benefits of trade union membership, and seek to dispel the myths surrounding migrant workers. As we are in a period of economic recession when public services will come under attack, the time to organize is now.

Motion 2 recognises the importance of supportive training for activists.

Improved Representation - 5

The important place of young members in the organization, for now and the future is discussed in Motion 5, submitted by the young members' forum.

Lay Structures

Conference in 2005 and 2007 overwhelmingly approved reports which recognized the need to make UNISON structures, the product of merger negotiations in 1993, more fit for purpose

in the changing face of public services.

This report on implementing previous decisions is a preface for a number of rule changes.

It seeks to make the rule book less proscriptive, more enabling in the face of constant change, to facilitate different ways of organising, while safeguarding lay oversight and control of the bargaining machinery.

The Scottish Committee has supported the general direction of travel, and the specific changes, while recognizing the need to fine-tune to the particular circumstances in Scotland.



As you can see, some debates are totally rivetting

Collective Bargaining

14, Comp B

In time of economic recession, it is important to lay foundations for future growth. Developing our commitment to

Continued on page 4

From Page 3

apprenticeships (Motion 14) must be done in a properly negotiated framework, within the scope of the National Minimum Wage.

Hundreds of thousands of UNISON members will come within the scope of the Independent Safeguarding Authority in England & Wales, and the corresponding legislation in Scotland. Vulnerable people must have confidence in the services and those who provide them, and must be protected from those who may seek to



Sofi Taylor: "C'moan, if ye think yer hard enough!"

exploit the relationship. However, many of these services are already regulated and members pay significant fees. There are clear bargaining objectives, training and organizational objectives identified in motions 15 & 16 (Composite B).

Pensions - 21, 22, 23 Comp D

Public sector pensions have been defended successfully in recent years, but will come under ever-increasing pressure in recession.

Aberdeenshire branch motion 23 is part of a likely Composite D with motions 21 & 22.

The Retired Members' Committee keeps before us the campaigning objective of restoring the link between the basic state pension and earnings in motion 64.

Reorganisation, Restructuring, Privatisation

26, Comp E (32, 49) Comp G (39, 40)

In motion 26, Northern Ireland asks beyond PFI, what is the next scam? While NEC, in motion 31, states that the current recession, caused by the greed and "irresponsibility of speculators", demonstrates once again the importance of public services.

With a higher proportion of the economy in Scotland appropriately settled in public expenditure, as provider of services and an economic lever, it is right that Scotland has a high profile in the public services debates.

In Composite F (32, 49 and amendment), Yorkshire & Humberside and Scotland join forces in declaring our opposition to cuts in public services employment. In motion 37 we outline the challenges of the procurement model.

The growing shortage of affordable housing, the links of housing policy to the economic collapse, the important place of council housing and the potential regenerative effect of building new council housing at this time are set out in Composite F (35, 36).

The identification of bargaining resources and advice to address the challenges of the Shared Services agenda are highlighted in composite G (39, 40).

Economy - Comp I, Comp H and 52

Composite I of motions 50, 54 and 55 and amendments will challenge any reader but represents a comprehensive analysis of what faces public services in the next few years and how the union should meet the challenge.

Composite H (51, 53) and motion 52 warn us that a time of economic recession the most vulnerable can be at risk of discrimination and attack.

Employment Rights - 67

Legal protection for trade unionists acting as whistleblowers in expressing concern at apparent corruption or malpractice in motion 67, takes on an unusually topical air.

International - Comp J and 82

NEC member Fiona Smith and Convener Mike Kirby were members of the recent STUC delegation to the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel. The reports are on the STUC website and a film is on FBtube.

Their experience has informed the motion 72 and amendment on Justice for the Palestinians. This motion will form part of a composite J (72, 74, 77, 78, 79) in expressing solidarity, condemning the incursion and slaughter in Gaza, progressing the policy of Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions and seeking to review our relations with Histadrut.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution, the initial perspective of the Obama administration offers the prospect of change in relations. Motion 82 seeks an end to the economic blockade and for the UK Government to normalize relations with Cuba.

Europe - 87

Motion 87 from Cymru/Wales seeks to defend social Europe, extend workers' rights and oppose exploitation of foreign workers, evident in some recent judgments and actions by employers.

Racism - 89, 90

The racism and fascism of the far right BNP has found itself on the streets of Scotland's cities in the European election campaign. They will seek to exploit the economic recession with their xenophobia. UNISON activists have a key role to play in countering their myths and lies (89, 90).

Asylum & Immigration - 94

Many asylum seekers are highly skilled and educated people. The asylum process must be speeded up and the rights of asylum seekers to work should be extended, argue East Midlands in motion 94.

Equalities - 96, 97, 98, 105

The current human rights framework and legislation must be developed, if we are to fully promote the awareness of discrimination on grounds of gender, faith, religion, race, age or sexuality or orientation or disability in the workplace and in UNISON (motions 96, 97, 98, 105).

Social Policy

106, 108, Comp K, 113

Motion 106 from the NEC argues that public services provide an important welfare safety net at a time of economic recession.

The UK has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the industrialised world and the

government is losing touch with its own targets to combat child poverty. Motion 108

sets out some campaigning priorities and objectives for the union.

The growing problem of **fuel poverty**, when at least 10% of disposable income is spent on fuel, is highlighted in motions 109, 111 (Composite K).

Domestic violence counts for one in six of violent incidents, and that will include UNISON members who will need support at work, states motion 113.

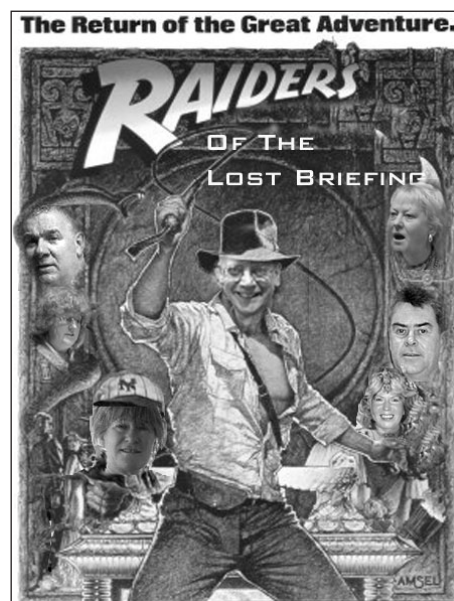
Environment

Comp L (116, 117)

City of Edinburgh branch motion 117 contributes to a review of our policy and organising objectives called for in Composite L (116, 117)

Funding the Equal Pay Challenge - 125

Scotland was instrumental in motion 116 passed at 2008 conference, which set in place the union's financial plan for resourcing the strategy to pursue equal pay and to resist the challenges from the parasitical fee-claiming lawyers. Motion 125 presents the annual review called for at that time.



We like a theme in the Conference Briefings and last year it was Indiana John. - Clockwise from left: Kate Ramsden, Pat Rowland, Bob Revie, Jane Carolan, Mike Kirby, Jane Aitchison and centre John Stevenson.

What could be the theme this year? Now let's see. Matt Smith is UNISON's Scottish Secretary - oh, and Matt Smith is the new Dr Who. Wonder if we can do anything with that?

After all the speeches, listening to lively debates(!) and getting tennis elbow with all the voting, have some fun at....

Celtic Night
(Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)

Thursday 18 June

See bulletin at Conference for more details

Tickets from Pat Rowland
Remember to bring a prize for the raffle

Did I just miss something?

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CONFERENCE MYSTERIES

After years of being caught out by jargon and sneaky procedural wheezes, your *SiU* scoop brings you a rough guide to help you out.

Standing Orders Committee (SOC)

Comprises reps elected by each Region (ours is Bob Revie and he's really helpful) and three from the NEC who organise the order of business, composites and so on.

A report will be issued each morning on the day's business and probably future business - this is really important to understanding what is going on. Sometimes their rulings are challenged but it rarely makes sense to do so since the committee reflects regions' priorities.



hall. Get to the toilet have a bog standard pee and get half the way back

As the palanytpe shows, the standard of some debates is higher than others....

NEC Positions

Most motions haven't got a chance of being heard and will be referred to the NEC, or somewhere. So it is worth looking to see what position the NEC has taken on your motion.

Agenda and Priorities

The running order (you'll get one at Conference) is set after consultation with regions on priorities. Motions are grouped into 'themes' to avoid duplication and the risk of voting against what we'd voted for earlier (yes we've done that before!).

Friday priorities

Come Friday (oh, come, come Friday), there is a chance to re-prioritise your pet motion that was not reached. On Thursday, we will circulate branches with a form to pick their priorities for Friday afternoon. These will be collated and go to the SOC which will set out a Friday pm agenda that reflects Conference's wishes. That can be an eye-opener!

Emergency motions

Conference has to vote to hear emergency motions in the first place (after the SOC has

decided it is an emergency and is relevant and competent). To qualify for an emergency, it must have been impossible to submit the motion before the deadline.

Composite

An amalgam of similar motions drawn together into one motion that nobody likes! Not fair really, because many composites do succeed in combining areas of agreement through negotiation. You will get a composites booklet before Conference and probably new ones issued throughout the week.

Suspending Standing Orders

A super wheeze (needing a two thirds majority) to get an outside speaker up or do something that's not on the agenda. To be avoided in most cases because it cuts across agreed priorities.

Grouped Debates

Where a pile of similar motions and amendments are all moved one after the other, there is an all-in debate and we vote on them one after the other at the end.

Reference Back

Reports, such as the annual report or standing orders report, are presented to conference for approval. If someone is unhappy with part of the report they can ask for "reference back", meaning that committee or working group that prepared the report should reconsider that section.

Remittance

When the NEC asks for a motion to be referred to them for further clarification, elaboration, or investigation.

Scottish delegates

Mike Kirby and Lilian Macer are this year's Scottish Regional delegates. They are there to help, especially if you want to get into a debate - they'll tell you how, who to see, and if you're not careful (or lucky), what to say! Sincerely folks, they are an essential source of advice, information and help.

What's happening?

GUIDE FOR NEW DELEGATES (AND OLD ONES WHO WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

With up to 2,500 delegates and visitors, Conference can be a daunting prospect, especially if you don't know what's happening. But now you will, thanks to *SiU's* handy guide.

Scotland Meeting

Monday's Scotland delegates' meeting gives last minute information and discusses Scottish input. It is also your chance to push your issues (see p1).

Seating Plan

There should be a seating plan in this pack. We traditionally get at least one seat wrong - so if you find yourself sitting on someone's knee, it's likely to be a mistake.

Credentials Bar Code

No this is not a secret sign to get a drink. Your credential card has a bar code which will scan you in. You must wear the card at all times. Wearing it at your waist is not helpful to the scrutineers, will lead to delays and may end up with more than you expected being scanned!

Conference Guide

This details all motions submitted. It also has more detailed useful information. You will also get a booklet with composite motions, listed by letters of the alphabet (usually with the numbers of the motions in brackets).

Speaking, speakers lists, timings

Seats for speakers FOR and AGAINST are labelled at the front. If in doubt, staff at the Rostrum Control will help.

In any case it is best to tell them you want to speak because they will have a list - and with amendments it is not always clear which seat you should be in. It also helps to speak to the Scottish Regional Delegates first!

Speakers can speak *only once* in a debate (except for the right of reply). Movers get five minutes. However, Conference sometimes reduces this. You will get warning to chainsaw all those bits you loved dearly out of your speech. Subsequent speakers get three minutes.

Always start your speech by giving your name and your branch.

Right of Reply

The mover of a motion is allowed a Right of Reply at the end of the debate or before voting on an amendment (but not both). This is a reply to points raised in the debate and cannot be abused by introducing new stuff (although many try it).

Voting

Normally votes are taken by holding up bright coloured cards and the President will decide



NEC members anxiously study the first UNISON Scotland briefing of the week.

whether a count is needed.

If it is close, or a major issue is involved, the chair can call for a branch card vote. Delegates can also call for a card vote but only if 10% of us shout out with voting cards up immediately. If this is on an amendment, the debate is suspended until the result is known.

Branch card votes are stamped with the voting entitlement of your branch and with either FOR or AGAINST.

The correct number must be used for the particular vote.

Procedure

Like any other formal meeting, Conference is run by a series of rules. This often seems very bureaucratic but the system ensures some semblance of order is kept. The President chairs Conference and their ruling on any issue is final.

See page 8 for rostrum lights, points of order and handy hints...

Conference briefings and website service



The Briefings Team's Jane Aitchison and Kate Ramsden with.... aye right!

The Scottish Communications and Campaigns Committee, along with the Regional delegates, will issue daily briefings during Conference week.

It is not a 'News'

service after the event (after all you were there), it is for briefing delegates *before* the event. However, we will issue some special reports as a basis for branch magazine reports back home. We will also be updating the website with most of what goes out in print

so you can get easy access at www.unison-scotland.org.uk/conf2009.

The service is also there to be used by branches to promote motions within Scottish policy.

In special circumstances we can also help with typing and communications with branches, press etc back home.

Your contact is *SiU* editor **John Stevenson** who leads the team with **Jane Aitchison** and **Kate Ramsden**, with other committee members helping out too.

You will find the team in the Newsheet area but please do not visit in numbers, it is very busy.

Blinkin' lights and points of order

AND A RANGE OF OTHER HANDY HINTS

Timing for speeches is shown by lights on the rostrum....

... but even if you don't notice the light, there is always some bright spark who will shout 'time', usually when they're not agreeing with you.



No Jane, the lights still work even if you shut your eyes.

It can be useful to have an 'escape clause' in your speech to cut to so you can finish on a good note..

The lights mean....

Yellow: means the speaker has a minute to go.

Red: means 'zip the lip' now, not after you've made ten more points.

Green: means a point of order has been raised and will be heard before the next speaker.

Points of Order

You can move 'next business', 'adjournment' or 'private session' but the most used is 'that the question be put'.

The President must put this to Conference and, if carried, we go straight to the right of reply, and the vote on the motion or amendment. (The chair can caution there has not been enough debate.)

You can only move most points of order if you haven't already spoken in the debate.

Handy Hints

Card Votes

- If you split your vote, make sure the figures add up.
- make sure you've SIGNED your card
- and that the branch name is on it.

Credentials

- Get your photo in advance. Photo booths are few and far between.

Consideration

- We hope the Scottish Briefings will be of some use to you. But for safety, do not leave papers on the floor.
- Don't leave mobile phones on.
- Don't walk in front of the signers.
- Lots of people will be pushing papers and leaflets at you as you come to Conference. Not taking one does not make you a bad person! If you took them all, you would be like a walking rain-forest anyway.

