

# **TUC Disabled Workers' Conference 2023**

**Preliminary Agenda**

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# Motions

## **P1 Together we Rise**

Conference notes that the Conservatives have trashed our economy and disabled workers are paying the price. Disabled people face added expenditure due to the cost of specialised equipment and higher use of energy and fuel.

Recent ONS and Resolution Foundation data found disabled people are more likely to be economically inactive, pay more for energy and food, and have 44% less money to spend than non-disabled people. 41% can't afford to heat their homes, compared to 23% of non-disabled people.

Conference welcomes:

- i) UNISON's Together We Rise campaign and similar trade union campaigns for fair pay
- ii) Labour announcing it will scrap work capability assessments and invest in tailored employment support for disabled people.

Conference resolves to:

- a) Campaign for fair pay that highlights the disproportionate impact of the cost-of-living crisis on disabled people
- b) Lobby for mandatory disability pay gap reporting to drive sustained improvement in disabled workers' incomes
- c) Lobby the Labour Party for a commitment to disability benefits and employment support that have disabled people's needs and independence at their heart
- d) Call for the Labour Party to implement all actions in the Disability Employment Charter

## **UNISON**

### **P2 Disabled people are being failed**

The UK government is failing Disabled people. In 2016, the United Nations concluded that the UK government was guilty of grave and systematic violations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The UN recommended the government carried out a cumulative impact assessment of how welfare reforms affect Disabled people's right to support. Despite intense pressure from Disability rights organisations, the government has still failed to address this.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Disabled people have been failed during the pandemic, failed in their ability to access workplace reasonable adjustments, failed in being refused disability benefits, failed in the cost-of-living crisis.

We recognise and appreciate the TUC Disabled Workers Committee in championing the rights of those living with an impairment.

We call on the TUC to lobby government to:

- i) Carry out a cumulative impact assessment of all the cuts and reforms made to Disabled people's support since 2010
- ii) Ensure Disabled people have proper and timely access to reasonable adjustments and employers are aware of their duty to do so
- iii) Prevent attacks on Disabled people as being negatively portrayed as dependent, lazy or a burden on taxpayers.

### ***Chartered Society of Physiotherapy***

### **P3 Pay negotiations and the disability pay gap**

Conference acknowledges the critically important work being undertaken across the trade union movement to ensure that workers do not suffer financially as a result of the cost of living crisis;

Conference notes the prevailing extent of the disability pay gap, established by the TUC in November 2022 as 17.2%, and 35% for women;

Conference is particularly concerned that workers who are deaf, disabled and neurodivergent, be they employee, worker status or self employed, should be recognised as facing a greater financial disadvantage should pay awards not reflect inflation;

Conference, therefore, calls upon the incoming Disabled Workers Committee to:

- i) Encourage trade unions to ensure that pay negotiations include an advocate for deaf, disabled and neurodivergent workers;
- ii) Ensure that pay negotiations include a focus on the established disability pay gap and underline the extent to which deaf, disabled and neurodivergent workers will be doubly disadvantaged if pay awards do not reflect inflation;
- iii) Adopt, by the time of next conference, a clear framework for unions to address the disability pay gap in company or sectoral bargaining, as part of this strategic embedding of the needs of deaf, disabled and neurodivergent workers as part of pay negotiations.

### ***Equity***

### **P4 Cost of Living**

We know the proportion of the UK population reporting a disability has risen over the last decade. Reporting of mental health conditions underlies the increasing prevalence of disability. Even so physical impairments remain the most common form of disability.

We are aware that people with impairments are less likely to be employed and when employed are typically paid less.

Disabled people face extra costs in their daily lives to mitigate the impact of their impairments.

Because of rising costs of food, energy bills and transport it is estimated that one in five people with impairments face an increased cost of more than £1000 a month.

Any additional support given has been nowhere near enough to cover these costs.

People with impairments can't turn off nebulisers or dialysis machines but they still have to pay the normal tariff.

We are asking for The TUC Disabled Workers Committee to campaign for

- i) A Social Energy Tariff for disabled customers to be implemented immediately to ensure that people with impairments are not excluded from the Warm Home Discount.
- ii) To demand a change in the process for uprating benefits so people with impairments can never miss out on hundreds of pounds again.

## **TSSA**

### **P5 Defending the rights of disabled workers, post-COVID**

Conference recognises that society in general and workplaces in particular are still greatly affected by COVID-19 and Long Covid. Disabled workers have been especially affected by the pandemic and Government's inadequate measures.

Workers who had and are still shielding face particular issues especially, if they cannot work from home.

Historical discriminatory attitudes mean that employers believe that disabled workers are less productive than non-disabled workers leading to disabled workers being more likely to lose their jobs.

These issues continue to affect the employment prospects of disabled workers.

Conference therefore calls on the TUC Disabled Workers Committee to campaign for:

- i) Mandatory disability pay gap reporting with action plans and monitoring for all employers with more than 50 employees
- ii) A legal duty on employers to consider all disabled workers suitability to work from home, rewrite jobs descriptions to fit this purpose and have flexible working as a default for all jobs
- iii) Reform of Access to Work fund making it easier for disabled workers to work from home

- iv) The right to a phased return to work for those who have suffered from COVID-19 and/or are affected by Long Covid
- v) A strengthened EHRC Statutory Code of Practice on Employment

## **Unite**

### **P6 Disability Rights – A Better Deal for Disabled Workers**

Conference condemns the Government's programme of deregulation, erosion of employment rights and trivialisation of equality legislation which allows workplace discrimination to flourish and leaves disabled workers and others with protected characteristics particularly vulnerable.

Conference further condemns the Westminster Government's attacks on workers' rights, including its aim to repeal all EU-derived rights and protections on which disabled workers rely.

Conference is deeply concerned that the legacy of the Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has left disabled workers more exposed to discrimination and unfair employer practices, including through the misuse of sickness absence and capability procedures, and with reduced access to jobs, promotion and career development.

Conference is further concerned that the high rate of Long COVID amongst teachers and other education professionals is driving teachers out of the profession.

Conference calls upon the TUC to:

- i) work with affiliates on strengthening the campaign for statutory recognition of Long COVID within the definition of 'disability' in the Equality Act 2020;
- ii) hold the Government to account for its treatment of and failure to protect disabled workers during the pandemic;
- iii) step up campaigning against the Government's attacks on the employment and equality rights and entitlements of disabled workers.

## **NASUWT**

### **P7 Discriminatory Balloting Laws**

This conference is well aware that the 2016 Trade Union Act, and its predecessors, restricts the way in which Industrial Action ballots are conducted, to postal only voting.

Many disabled people may struggle to get to a post box or to reach a post box, due to their height.

Likewise alternative formats for ballot papers such as large print or braille, may not always be available. Getting assistance to complete an Industrial Action Ballot, despite an impairment, is technically illegal and could invalidate the entire ballot, if challenged in court.

This conference therefore instructs the incoming TUC DWC to

- i) Seek legal advice as to whether the Trade Union Act 2016 and previous laws governing ballots could be a discriminatory Policy, Criterion or Practice under the Equalities Act 2010
- ii) Work with the TUC and wider Disabled People's movement to campaign for changes in balloting laws
- iii) Consider taking legal action, up to and including a Judicial Review, against the TU Act 2016 and predecessors, if legal advice is favourable

## **PCS**

### **P8 Neurodiversity in the Workplace**

Conference recognises the struggles faced by neurodiverse staff in the workplace. Neurodiversity is a wide-ranging, often misunderstood term which simply put refers to the different ways a person's brain processes information, and people who are neurodiverse may think or learn differently. This can be a huge asset to employers. Unfortunately, due to stigma, it is often not recognised.

In the UK nearly 1 in 7 people are neurodiverse. The term is applicable to a wide range of conditions, which are covered by the Equality Act 2010.

GMB has launched a neurodiversity toolkit which reps are encouraged to take into workplaces in the same way that the Reasonable Adjustments Passport has been. We are encouraging reps to raise awareness of workplace neurodiversity concerns with employers and members.

We call upon conference to mandate the committee to formulate a campaign on this issue which impacts so many members and potential members. The campaign should highlight not only the stigma that neurodiverse staff battle daily but raise awareness of what unions can do to support members facing these issues and of employers' obligations to staff under the Equality Act 2010. It should also raise awareness of the equalities training available to reps.

## **GMB**

### **P9 Respect Reasonable Adjustments**

The CWU has had one of its longest running industrial action disputes with over 1150,000 postal workers fighting to protect their pay, terms and conditions since August 2022. Workers with a disability having long-term reasonable adjustments arbitrarily taken away has caused them significant anxieties at work.

Retaliating to industrial action by targeting disabled workers is unacceptable. The treatment of workers with disabilities in Royal Mail Group (RMG) has been nothing short of scandalous. Royal Mail is in clear breach of their status as a Disability Confident Employer

(Level 2) and must make changes to accommodate their disabled employees in accordance with the law.

Conference instructs the incoming TUC Disabled Workers Committee to work with the CWU to:

- (i) Demand that workers with reasonable adjustments in place shall not be unduly disadvantaged.
- (ii) Support a call for the EHRC to investigate Royal Mail for their systematic attacks on disabled workers.
- (iii) Demand Royal Mail Group applies due Corporate Social Responsibility, dignity and respect towards employees on this issue.
- (iv) If no immediate improvements are seen in the treatment of disabled Royal Mail workers, campaign for the Disability Confident Employer status to be stripped from the company.

## **CWU**

### **P10 The Importance of Reasonable Adjustment Passports**

Research conducted by the TUC in November 2022 revealed disabled workers are twice as likely as non-disabled workers to be unemployed. A significant factor relates to not having the reasonable adjustments needed.

When reasonable adjustments are implemented, they help to remove barriers disabled workers face in their daily lives and gives them the confidence and opportunity to flourish.

Nevertheless, when changes are introduced in the workplace, such as a new line manager or restructure, disabled workers face the threat and stress of their reasonable adjustments being ended.

Reasonable adjustment passports provide a simple and effective solution by acting as a live record to capture all adjustments that a disabled worker may require. By design, their portability avoids the need to renegotiate adjustments every time changes take place in the workplace or a disabled worker moves to another role. This is a much better use of resources and allows disabled workers to equally participate by removing unnecessary barriers.

Conference calls on the TUC to continue with their vital campaigning on reasonable adjustment passport so they become mandatory in all workplaces. This will help promote a more inclusive working environment and give disabled workers more confidence by reducing the risk of discrimination.

## **Royal College of Podiatry**

## **P11 Funding for reasonable adjustments for NHS staff**

There is no source of central funding for reasonable adjustments for staff within NHS trusts.

Funding for reasonable adjustments often comes from divisions funds, so many staff find themselves competing for support against the need to use those funds to provide patient care.

Some NHS Trusts provide a central fund, but they are the minority. In most NHS trusts, therefore, staff are prevented from accessing the support that they require.

In the 2021 NHS Staff Survey, just 71.8% of NHS England staff with a long-term health condition said their employer had made adequate adjustments to enable them to carry out their work. In other words, more than one in four disabled staff in the NHS do not feel that they are getting the support they need.

This must be addressed as a matter of urgency, to ensure the NHS meets its obligation as an employer to make sure disabled workers are not disadvantaged at work. A central fund should be established to ensure all NHS staff are able to access the reasonable adjustments they need at work.

### ***Royal College of Midwives***

## **P12 Accessible Railways**

The 'Access for All Program' launched in 2006 was intended to make the railways accessible for all passengers however we have seen slow progress in the network becoming truly accessible. Conference is concerned that there are threats to the current levels of accessibility on the railways with the proposed cuts to station staff and closures of ticket offices.

In the government's attack on rail workers, we have seen the attempt to impose driver only operation (DOO) alongside cuts to station staff. We know from leaked documents in 2022 that DOO has led to six operators running trains which are actually in contravention of the Equalities Act as DOO and a lack of station staff discriminate against disabled people.

Conference calls on the TUC Disabled Workers Committee to:

- i) Lobby the government to speed up the delivery of the 'Access for All Program'
- ii) Write to the DfT to oppose the expansion of DOO
- iii) Write to train operators and the Office for Road and Rail to raise concerns around current DOO services which are in contravention of the equalities act
- iv) Support ASLEF's 'Invest in Rail' campaign which calls for a truly accessible network with step free access across the network

### ***ASLEF***

### **P13 Accessible Public Transport**

Conference is concerned that decisions by the Conservative government to cut £4 billion of funding from our transport systems are leaving disabled people unable to fully participate in society. Cutting thousands of jobs and eroding the pay and conditions of frontline staff is leaving the railways understaffed, inaccessible and unsafe.

A 2019 Department for Transport survey found that 31% of disabled passengers had experienced antisocial or discriminatory behaviour, including receiving aggressive responses after asking to sit in a priority seat. Understaffed stations and trains have a disproportionate impact on disabled passengers and night-time workers – like our members - who rely on station staff and guards on trains to help them feel safe and offer assistance.

Staff at stations and on trains are a vital first point of contact for disabled passengers who require assistance. An accessible transport system is a key pillar in the journey to independent living.

The MU reaffirms our solidarity with RMT and all campaigns to oppose these cuts and calls on the TUC to:

- i) Campaign for fully staffed public transport networks.
- ii) Campaign for investment to ensure transport fully meets the needs of disabled people.
- iii) Continue to oppose Government cuts that leave the railways inaccessible and unsafe.

### ***Musicians Union***

#### **P14 More Disabled workers in education**

Conference is concerned about the crisis in the recruitment and retention of teachers and support staff in education, which affects the workload and morale of workers and the quality of support and mental health of students.

Conference believes that the government should be actively campaigning to recruit more disabled workers into the education sector which would increase worker numbers and bring new skills and experience into education. Disabled young people feel empowered by seeing themselves reflected in the educators working with them.

Conference is deeply concerned that the growing disability pay gap is a reflection of the ongoing discrimination that disabled workers face, and which is increasing following the pandemic. More people have become disabled due to Long Covid and others at greater risk from covid have been excluded from the workplace.

Conference notes that the disability pay gap (ONS 2021) has increased from 11.7% in 2014 to 13.8% in 2021 with 33.5% the non-adjusted pay gap for Autistic people.

Conference calls on the TUC to:

- i) Lobby the government to actively campaign to recruit more disabled workers into the education sector
- ii) Continue to support education and public sector worker unions pay campaigns
- iii) Highlight the growing disability pay and employment gaps

### ***National Education Union***

#### **P15 Assessment processes**

Conference notes the increased use of assessment centres and other forms of testing during recruitment and promotion processes.

For example, in the civil service, candidates are often required to undergo a series of numerical, verbal and 'judgement' tests. Candidates have also had to undertake 'personality'/'psychometric' testing as well as 'practical' assessments.

Conference is concerned about the use of new technology when 'sifting' applications and whether proper equality impact assessments are being undertaken to ensure that outcomes are not discriminatory.

Selection methods using AI software, and similar processes, disproportionately impact disabled people, including candidates who are neurodivergent, and not enough is done to explore reasonable adjustments and alternative selection methods.

Conference believes that assessment processes should be based on the social model approach that removes barriers. However, we are concerned that this is often not standard.

This motion instructs conference to:

- i) undertake research to understand the extent to which electronic sifting and assessment tests are used;
- ii) campaign to ensure that employers conduct equality impact assessments before implementing assessment processes and keep these under review;
- iii) produce best practice guidance to include steps that can be taken to remove barriers to recruitment/promotion for disabled people.

### ***Prospect***

#### **P16 Accessible Communications**

This Conference commends the RMT Disabled Members' Advisory Committee for producing the RMT Disabled Transport Workers' Charter which is firmly based on the social model of disability.

This Conference notes that a key request in this Charter is the call for accessible workplace communications which would include:

- i) dyslexia-friendly print layout
- ii) clear information
- iii) communications in various format, including large print, audio etc
- iv) assistive technology and software.

Conference notes that thousands of companies belong to be Disability Confident Scheme and yet do not show even a basic awareness of how to support disabled employees through accessible methods of communication. It is also imperative that unions too make sure that their members' information access needs are met.

Conference therefore calls on the TUC Disabled Workers Committee to promote via the affiliated trade unions, guidance that can used by both unions and employers, to ensure all communication is accessible to everyone.

## ***RMT***

### **P17 Young Disabled workers Entering Work**

Conference believes it is too difficult for young disabled workers to begin their working lives. Conference notes that many disabled young workers choose self-employment because employment is not appropriately adapted to their needs— leading to disabled people being disproportionately likely to be self-employed. However, conference further notes that there are difficulties in accessing self-employment that affected young disabled people.

Conference believes it is essential that perceptions are changed so employers are more likely to recognise and value the contributions disabled workers play in the world of work.

Conference believes trade unions play an essential role in supporting disabled young people whether they are employees or self-employed.

Conference calls upon the TUC to:

- i) Campaign for increased access to education, training, and apprenticeships for young disabled people through targeted funding and support.
- ii) Commission an up-to-date research project into the policy changes, including to the welfare system, required to support the needs of disabled people, particularly young disabled people entering work
- iii) Campaign to remove the barriers for self-employed disabled people receiving appropriate government support and benefit
- iv) Encourage unions to provide advice and guidance to employers supporting them to hire disabled workers, and to give opportunities to young disabled workers to begin their careers

## ***Community***

## **P18 Hybrid working and disability.**

Conference notes the TUC study into the experiences of disabled workers during the pandemic showed that – with the right support, reasonable adjustments and control over their working hours – disabled workers were likely to experience an improvement in their mental health as a result of working from home. Disabled workers who worked from home during the pandemic were overwhelmingly likely to want to continue doing so, with 90% expressing a desire to carry on working either remotely or in a hybrid arrangement.

Polling for the FDA shows that hybrid working has largely had a positive impact on employees' mental health and wellbeing. There are differences in opinion between those that work from home and those that do not – as is to be expected – but most importantly, nearly half of those who do work from home cite improvements in their mental health and in managing their impairment as an advantage, compared to a quarter of those who do not work from home.

Conference calls on the TUC to keep their guidance updated;

- i) on hybrid working and disabled people.
- ii) Ensuring employers provide accessible workplaces to enable true hybrid working for disabled people

## **FDA**

## **P19 Inclusive and accessible workplaces**

Conference believes that all workplaces should be inclusive, intersectional and accessible for all, as should all trade unions.

Conference notes:

- i) This year's TUC Disabled Workers' Conference is an in-person conference only event, rather than a hybrid conference
- ii) last year's online Conference was very successful
- iii) hybrid conferences ensure that all Disabled members can participate
- iv) holding an exclusively in-person Conference potentially excludes disabled trade unionists from participating.

Conference believes:

- a) all trade union meetings, conferences, workplaces and events should be inclusive
- b) the trade union movement should be the strongest advocates for disabled workers and lead by example.

Conference calls on the trade union movement to:

- 1) undertake audits of their offices, workplaces, meeting and conference venues to ensure that they are inclusive and accessible by 2028

- 2) install adaptations and technology necessary to achieve this aim
- 3) encourage all employers to follow the example set by trade unions, to make their offices, workplaces and meeting venues fully accessible and inclusive.

Conference calls on the Disabled Workers' Committee to:

- i) uphold its commitment to inclusion, ensuring that all future conferences, congresses and other meetings are hybrid
- ii) report back on the progress of this motion's implementation to all TUC Equalities Conference.

### ***University and College Union (UCU)***

#### **P20 Making data visualisations accessible**

'Data visualisation' – the visual representation of data through charts and infographics – has become an integral part of how newsrooms and publishers, including trade unions, communicate information to many audiences. Hard data adds value by quickly and easily illustrating what's really going on.

However, accessibility for visually impaired people is too often neglected in data visualisation. Compliance with the Web Accessibility Guidelines provides the bare minimum for accessibility. Alternative text, which makes images accessible for people who use screen readers to navigate the web, is often missing from online data visualisations. When it is included, alt-text is frequently uninformative or incorrect.

Limited diversity at decision-making levels in the media means that disabled people's lived experience isn't taken into consideration and accessibility of visual data journalism isn't prioritised.

Newsrooms are waking up to the need to make their visual data journalism more accessible. Trade union publishing has a role to play too.

Conference calls on the TUC to

- i) ensure accessibility of visual data across its own publications and communications
- ii) work with disabled people to provide guidance for affiliates on accessible visual data
- iii) support campaigns to highlight the issue and the detrimental impact a lack of accessibility has on audiences.

### ***National Union of Journalists***

## **P21 Building a Movement of Protest**

Conference condemns this Government's shameful record on disability equality.

The number of disabled people living in poverty has increased by almost 50% since 2010. Conference rejects any suggestion that this is inevitable and asserts that poverty and the failure to tackle inequality are political decisions.

Yet again cuts to social security and the bolstering of punitive sanctions are being couched in a debate about rights and responsibilities and the need to help disabled people into work. Conference notes that millions of disabled people are in paid work and where they are not, this is in large part a result of structural discrimination, a widespread resistance amongst employers to implement reasonable adjustments and a failure to embed the social model of disability into decision and policy making procedures.

Conference welcomes the important role the Disabled Workers Committee play setting the record straight and asks the TUC to:

Support the efforts of Unions and DPOs to tackle discrimination and change the way disabled people are viewed, valued and included in society.

Continue to build a movement of protest against the political response to the current crisis that highlights the specific impact on disabled people and puts their voices centre stage.

*USDAW*

# Constitution

## 1 Title and purpose of the conference

The title of the Conference is the TUC Disabled Workers' Conference and its purposes are to encourage disabled people to play a full and active role in the trade union movement. The conference seeks to allow both debate on motions and wider capacity building work and workshop-based engagement for delegates.

## 2 Date of conference

The Conference shall meet annually for two consecutive days. In general, there will be two sessions focused on motions-based business and two focused on more interactive sessions.

## 3 Basis of representation

All affiliated unions are entitled to be represented by a minimum of two delegates, provided always that they have paid the fee prescribed in Rule 3 of the Rules and Standing Orders of the Trades Union Congress. For affiliates with 10,000 or more members, the following entitlements also apply:

- i. Affiliated organisations with between 10,000 and 20,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 5 delegates.
- ii. Affiliated organisations with between 20,001 and 50,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 10 delegates.
- iii. Affiliated organisations with between 50,001 and 100,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 15 delegates.
- iv. Affiliated organisations with between 100,001 and 500,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 20 delegates.
- v. Affiliated organisations with between 500,001 and 1,000,000 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 25 delegates.
- vi. Affiliated organisations with over 1,000,001 members shall be entitled to be represented by a total of 30 delegates.

It is the TUC's strong expectation that conference delegates put forward by unions should as far as possible be disabled. There is also an expectation that

union delegations reflect the full diversity of their wider union membership (ensuring, for example, appropriate representation of black workers, women workers, LGBT+ workers and young workers).

## **4 Elections**

### **i) General Council representation**

General Council members of the Disabled Workers' Committee shall be appointed by the General Council of the TUC.

### **ii) Elected members**

There shall be eighteen elected members of the Disabled Workers Committee. Each affiliated union is entitled to nominate one candidate for each Section. One nomination shall be for Section A (fourteen places) one for Section B (one place for Black members), one for Section C (one place for LGBT+ members), one place for Section D (one place for women members) and one for Section E (one place for young members). Each affiliated union is entitled to nominate one candidate for each Section. Affiliated unions with over 1.5 million members have the right to make two nominations for election to Section A, one of whom must be a woman.

Candidates shall be given the opportunity to submit a nomination statement of no more than 150 words that will appear in the nomination document that will be circulated to delegates. The statement should contain biographical details and relevant details of work carried out in the trade union movement but should not be in any way an election address.

No candidate shall be eligible for election unless they are a delegate to Conference from their union. If a nominee is unable to attend the Conference, the nomination will only stand if the reason for non-attendance is acceptable to the Committee.

Voting shall be by ballot. Each trade union delegate attending the Conference has fourteen votes for Section A and not more than one votes for Sections B, C, D and E with not more than one vote being given to any one nominee.

Any elected member of the Committee who during the year ceases to be the official representative of their nominating union will cease to be a member of the Committee.

Should a vacancy occur during the year among the elected seats, the runner-up in the election at the previous conference will be invited to fill it. If there is no

runner up, or the runner up does not wish to take the seat, the Committee may decide to invite co-options to the Committee. Co-opted members do not have voting rights on the Committee.

If the Committee decide to appoint co-optees, this must be done in accordance with the existing process for electing members, in line with the rest of the processes set out in rule ii.

### **iii) Conference Arrangements Committee**

The Disabled Workers' Committee will act as the Conference Arrangements Committee.

## **5 Motions**

- i. Motions for the Conference agenda must be signed by the General Secretary of the union sending them and must reach the General Secretary of the TUC at least ten weeks before the date fixed for the Conference. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- ii. Each affiliated union is allowed one motion, of not more than 200 words. Each motion should deal with one subject only, relate to issues of disabled worker and specifically mention disabled workers. The Disabled Workers' Committee, acting in their capacity as the Conference Arrangements Committee, shall consider whether motions are competent for inclusion in the agenda. The decision of the Committee shall be final.
- iii. The motions included in the preliminary agenda will be sent to each union as soon as possible after the closing date for their submission. The order in which subjects will be discussed is decided by the Disabled Workers' Committee acting as the Conference Arrangements Committee.
- iv. Each affiliated union is allowed one amendment of not more than 60 words. All amendments to the motions submitted by affiliated unions must reach the general secretary of the TUC by a date to be decided by the Disabled Workers' Committee. Amendments must be signed by the general secretaries of the organisations submitting them. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- v. Affiliated unions that have had an amendment submitted to their motion will be asked if their union accepts the amendment(s). Affiliated Unions decisions on acceptance or rejection of amendment(s) must be signed by the General Secretary. Electronic signatures are acceptable.

- vi. In making arrangements for the conference, the Disabled Workers' Committee shall have authority to take any steps they consider necessary to co-operate with the unions submitting motions and amendments, in order that composite motions may be obtained wherever practicable. Additionally, where affiliated unions have accepted amendments, the motions and amendment(s) will appear on the final agenda as composites. Failure to comply with the Disabled Workers' Committee's arrangements may involve a union's motion being deleted from the Final Agenda.
- vii. Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Disabled Workers' Committee may submit statements on issues that are on the agenda or emergency issues that are relevant to the conference that have arisen after the closing date for motions. Additionally, any affiliated union shall, subject to the approval of the Disabled Workers' Committee, be permitted to submit an emergency motion for consideration of the delegates to the conference. No such permission shall, however, be granted unless:
  - such an emergency motion is received from the Secretary of the affiliated organisation by the General Secretary of the TUC not later than the morning of the day two days prior to the opening of the conference
  - and at least two-thirds of the delegates to the particular conference agree to its inclusion in the agenda of that conference.
- viii. Delegates will select, by secret ballot, one resolution of the Conference to go forward onto the agenda of the succeeding TUC Congress.

# Standing orders

## 1 Hours of conference

The Conference assembles no earlier than 10.00 on the opening day and closes at 18.00; opening at 09.30 and closing at 17.30 on the final day with a break. Lunch breaks will be no less than 75 minutes. Lunch times on both days shall be from 12.45 and 14.15 each day.

## 2 Conference chairs

The chairs of the Disabled Workers' Conference will be selected by the Disabled Workers' Committee.

## 3 Business of the conference

Included in the business of the annual conference shall be the consideration of the annual Report of the Disabled Workers' Committee and of motions and amendments. The Report and the Agenda for the conference will be sent to delegates not later than two weeks before the Conference.

The Disabled Workers' Committee as the Standing Orders Committee for conference will prepare an order of business that indicates the Committees attitude to each motion as follows:

- Support: In order to allow more time for delegates the Committee usually (but not always) waive their right to speak in a debate on a motion or amendment they support.
- Support with Reservations: If necessary, a Committee member will explain to Conference any reservations they may have on a motion or amendment they otherwise support. The union concerned is notified in advance of the Committee's reservations.
- Support with Comment: If necessary, a Committee member will explain to conference any procedural issues they may have on a motion.
- Remit/Oppose: The Committee may ask remission of a motion before Conference. If the union will not agree to remit the motion a Committee member will speak in opposition to it. The union remitting the motion is allowed to speak to their motion but there is no debate or vote.

- Seek withdrawal: The committee may seek withdrawal of a motion from the submitting union. If the motion is not withdrawn, the motion will be opposed by the Committee. The union will not speak to the motion if the request to withdraw is accepted.
- Oppose: A Committee member will speak on any motion or amendment opposed by the Committee
- Leave to conference: The Committee do not take an attitude and conference votes on the motion.

#### **4 Appointment of scrutineers and tellers**

Four ballot scrutineers and four tellers will be appointed by delegates at the start of the conference.

#### **5 TUC regional and trades council observers**

TUC Regions and Trades Council can send one Observer to conference respectively. The TUC Regional or Trades Council observer may speak on motions at the discretion of the Chair. In limited circumstances, and at the TUC Regional and Trades Council discretion, a visitor without speaking rights, can attend conference with the designated Observer as a reasonable adjustment.

#### **6 Limitation of speakers**

Five minutes are allowed for the mover of a motion and three minutes for each subsequent speaker. Speeches on behalf of the Disabled Workers' Committee will be limited to five minutes unless otherwise agreed by the Conference, with the exception of the chair's address which shall be no longer than 15 minutes. Other guest speakers will not exceed the length of the chair's address.

Additional time can be given as a reasonable adjustment at the chair's discretion. The Chair's ruling shall be final.

A delegate shall not speak more than once on any question unless permission to do so, on a point of order or explanation, is given by the chair.

The mover may be allowed three minutes to reply to discussion on the motion concerned but no new matter may be introduced into such reply.

Movers of amendments do not have the right of reply. Delegates shall vote on the motion immediately the mover has replied.

## **7 Closure**

Delegates may request that a debate is closed by moving any one of the following procedural motions.

- That the previous question be put: This motion can be moved during an amendment debate. All debate on the amendment will cease and the original motion will be put to the vote. The amendment will be abandoned.
- Move next business: All debate on the current business will cease and that item of business will be abandoned.
- Closure of the debate: All debate on the current business will cease but a vote will be taken. Should the closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply in accordance with Standing Order 6.

Procedural motions in this instance must be seconded and can only be moved by delegates who have not previously spoken during the debate. There shall be no speeches on such motions.

## **8 Voting**

The method of voting at the Conference on all matters except the election of representatives to serve on the Disabled Workers' Committee, and the selection of one resolution to go forward onto the agenda of congress, shall be by voice or show of hands.

## **9 Conference reception**

The TUC General Council shall support a delegate reception at the close of the first day of the conference.

## **10 Suspension of standing orders**

Standing Orders may be suspended only if agreed by at least two- thirds of delegates to the Annual Conference who are present and voting.

## **11 Chair's ruling**

The Chair's ruling shall be final.