



Unite Executive Council Report September 2017

Previous Executive Council Minutes from June 2017: Read and Adopted

FGPC minutes from 13th July: Read and Adopted

General Secretary's Report

Activities of the General Secretary for the period since the Executive Council meeting of June 2017:

Political, International and Inter-Trade Union Matters

- TUC General Council and TUC Executive meetings.
- TULO GS meetings.
- Meeting with Anneliese Midgley PD regarding LP NEC.
- Main speaker at the International Brigade annual commemoration at the International Brigade Memorial at London Southbank on 1 July 2017.
- Speaker at People's Assembly Rally in Parliament Square on 1 July 2017.
- Telephone call with Greg Clark SoS for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
- Speaker at 133rd Durham Miners Gala on 8 July 2017.
- Signatory to inter-regional agreement in Gibraltar with First Minister and Spanish unions which sets an agreed structure in place with regard to Brexit.
- Trade Union reception at Westminster to welcome Labour's newest MPs.
- Meeting with Keir Starmer, Shadow Brexit Secretary.
- Telephone call with the Teamsters General President, James P Hoffa.
- Attended GMB president Mary Turner's funeral in North West London.
- Telephone call with Bruce Raynor, former Unite-Here president.
- Speaker at the Burston Rally on 3 September 2017.

Administrative and Organisational Issues

- Various meetings with Assistant General Secretaries and Directors.
- Meeting with Sharon Graham, EO.
- Quarterly Management Meeting with Andrew Murray CoS; Barbara Kielim HRD and all Regional Secretaries.
- Meeting with Keith Ewing.
- Meeting with Geoff Shears and John Hendy QC regarding ICTU.
- Meeting with Ian Waddell NO regarding the CSEU.
- Meeting with Matt Draper NO regarding Argos.
- Back to work interview with Tony Murphy NO.



- Meeting with Peter Kavanagh RS and Jim Kelly L&E Chair regarding issues at Heathrow.
- Meeting with Harish Patel NO regarding BAEM national officers meeting.
- Meeting with Hugh Scullion regarding CSEU.

Constitutional Committees and Industrial Matters

- Various meetings with reps and NOs regarding the BA Mixed Fleet dispute.
- Conference Call with Roger Maddison NO; Andy Richards RS; Bryan Godsell RCO regarding Ford Engine Plant, Bridgend.
- Meeting with Theresa Maloney to discuss the political situation in the ROI.
- Meeting with senior CAT colleagues regarding concerns at Heathrow.
- Meeting with Andrew Murray, Ed Sabisky, Howard Beckett and HSBC colleagues to discuss Brexit, Industry and Manufacturing.
- F&GP Committee.
- Meeting with Matt Draper NO regarding DHL.
- Meeting with Wayne King RCO and Mixed Fleet reps.
- Meeting with Gail Cartmail AGS; Howard Beckett AGS and Jim Kennedy CDO to discuss Construction Blacklisting – Independent Inquiry into Union Complicity.
- Meeting with Martin Gwynn, CEO GIST.

Principal Media Appearances

- Interview: Westminster Hour – pre-recorded 22 June 2017
- Interview: Morning Star – 27 June 2017
- Interview: Alex Nunns – 18 July 2017

Organising Report

During the period since the last EC in June, the Department has focussed on the following:

- The Broad Industrial Strategy (including Work, Voice & Pay)
- Automation
- Collation and Co-ordination of Industrial Data
- 100% Unite – Next Steps and preparing for 2018
- Construction

Broad Industrial Strategy

Automation

‘Strategy for growth’ next steps

Pay and Anniversary information – co-ordination of industrial data



100% UNITE

Automation

Since the last EC, the Department has continued to drive forward its work on the critical issue of Automation. The relevance of Automation to our Shop Stewards / Reps has been proven by the positive engagement to date. The potential threat to jobs cannot be underestimated, nor the need for wholesale dissemination and examination of Unite's industrial, organising and political response to this issue.

The Executive Officer has:

- Began detailed dissemination of the substantive automation report to; constitutional committees, combines, Unite National and Regional officers.
- Began to break down automation by Sectors and clusters, to identify specific areas of threat and opportunity. They will be ready by the Sector Conferences.
- Began to finalise the draft New Technology Agreement.
- Develop key questions for sectors to gather key data.

The bespoke briefing for each cluster, is grouping the Automation technologies from 'established' to 'far future'. For example, in the future it is expected that cheap 3D printers will be capable of making complex consumer products on demand in the home. However, it is not expected to overtake traditional manufacturing markets for many years.

As stated we will be doing a specific report for each cluster and are currently drafting the briefing for Manufacturing. Each report will contain:

- Key areas of automation by Sector – breaking down the 11 areas already identified
- Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis
- Key questions for data collection
- Bespoke New Technology Agreement – Unite standard

Examples, from the Manufacturing SWOT include:

Strengths

- In all sectors there is an existing skilled and adaptable workforce, familiar with a level of Automation.
- The Automotive and the Aerospace & Shipbuilding sectors are both well organised and have strong historical agreements that Shop Stewards / Reps can use and/or adapt to deal with the introduction Automation in their workplaces.

Weaknesses



- Only 1 sector in this cluster – Aerospace and Shipbuilding – is not deemed to be at high risk of Automation.
- Many production line tasks are repetitive and well placed for automation/robot production.

Opportunities

- Potential for greater bargaining power due to smaller bargaining groups.
- All 5 high risk sectors in the manufacturing cluster face automotive threats that are very similar – providing the opportunity for sectors to share information and experiences as part of the Unite response.

Threats

- Fragmentation of collective bargaining through large scale loss of key roles in the workplace.
- GKN Aerospace has embarked on a project to automate the assembly of aircraft structures. The goal is to create wing structures 30% quicker than through manual production processes.

A number of workshops will be delivered by the Executive Officer, key questions will include:

- Where does Automation already exist in your industry?
- What are the key threats posed by new technology in your sector?
- What are the risk indicators?
- What is the current bargaining position?
- Who are the pace setters?
- Who are the under-cutters?
- What should our industrial and political demands be?

Analysis for each sector should be underpinned by basic ‘risk registers’ at the workplace. To plan and respond effectively we must look at the Union’s bargaining position. For example, identifying and tackling under-cutters will be key to what influence we have and how Automation shapes the future of work.

In addition, the ‘gig economy’ has been raised and the Executive Officer has committed to looking into producing a paper on the issue. It is important to note that whilst Automation is an issue of jobs being taken by robots, that the ‘gig economy’ is an example of casualisation - an important but arguably distinct issue.

‘Strategy for Growth’ next steps



The Union is now approaching the 5th full year of 100% UNITE. We started with the objective of growing our level of organisation in recognised areas and making workplaces 'strike ready' as we moved forward. The strategy has clearly been successful:

- 100% campaign workplaces better retain members
- 89% of new members pay full time subscriptions

It is clear that to grow, the Union needs now to extend the 100% campaigns to the whole allocation of each Officer. To that end, the Executive Officer has begun working with Regions to develop individual industrial plans and move all Officer allocations to the 100% system. This will be achieved by the 1st January 2018.

AS we work with the Regions on the plan for 2018. Underpinned by effective monitoring and management, this will be an important period of development for 100% UNITE. Within the 100% strategy we are looking at a number of steps going forward:

Step 1

All allocations on the system, including relevant non-recognised workplaces

- Workplaces with 5 members plus by Region on the system
- Workplaces controlled by an employer with 10 members plus nationally on the system

Step 2

Analysis of all allocations regionally by:

- Joiners, Leavers, % of non-recognised workplaces, Anniversary dates, Pay increases, Disputes, Agreements

Step 3

Establish growth plans for each allocation, to include:

- Pay campaigns around anniversary dates
- Moving non-recognised workplaces to recognition
- Strikes – building membership in disputes
- Hot targets – where are people naturally joining / leaving
- Legal wins
- Individual representation – is any issue really individual?
- Full complement of Shop Stewards
- Improved Facilities Agreements
- Workplace visits / Shop Stewards contact – usual business



Step 4

Setting industrial benchmarks, including:

- Growth
- Number of new Recognition Agreements
- Number of workplaces with a full complement of Shop Stewards
- Number of pay agreements above RPI
- Number of workplaces with improved Terms and Conditions I.E. Minimum Standards Agreement
- Number of improved Facilities Agreements
- Regular workplace visits and contact with Shop Stewards

2017 / 2018 is the first time that 100% UNITE and Sector Organising will be operating simultaneously. 'Strategy for Growth' is now underpinned by the 'Broad Industrial Strategy', including the co-ordination of industrial data and model guides and templates.

MANUFACTURING REPORT

Unites' manufacturing sectors face continued uncertainty and while a boom in exports is continuing to push historic levels of growth in some industries (due to the strength of the pound), others are recording early signs of a slowdown with the latest figures showing production is falling and the massive over reliance on the service sector continues unabated.

Similarly, while profits for large manufactures continue to rise, this prosperity is not being shared by the workforce. Pay deals which are not keeping up with RPI inflation remain common, despite 'Brexit Busting' deals where Unite is well organised.

Investor confidence is still split. The Purchasing Manager's Index, used to measure manufacturing confidence, rose to 55.1 in July. Any reading over 50 indicates growth.

A survey by the Engineering Employers Federation shows that manufacturing confidence has risen in comparison to the immediate months following the 'Brexit' referendum. In contrast the Bank of England has forecast that investment in some sectors will not return or surpass 2016 levels until after 2020.

Overall manufacturing output fell by 0.4% in 2017 Q2, contributing to lower than expected growth of overall UK GDP (0.3%).The fact that GDP growth was higher in



the service, finance and film industries betrays the fact that our economy remains structurally unbalanced.

This is also true of manufacturing itself. Large exporters such as BMW, Rolls-Royce (aerospace) and Nissan are experiencing a boom due to a weaker Pound, resulting in new investment.

Manufacturers more reliant on the UK internal market are unable to mitigate the rising cost of component imports and the role of inflation which is suppressing consumer demand. This is reflected, for example, in the decrease in new vehicle registrations in the automotive sector, a bellwether industry.

It is clear that manufacturing's historical levels of growth are now almost solely reliant on exports. For this growth to be sustainable substantial new investment must be unlocked. This raises the need for an ambitious Industrial Strategy which Unite continues to argue and campaign for.

Brexit

In addition to a report from the International Director, Simon Dubbins, on Brexit, the EC should be aware of our continuing campaign to ensure that manufacturing is defended during and following the conclusion of Brexit negotiations.

The uncertainty being caused by Brexit is creating the circumstances where companies are beginning to think twice about investment in new equipment and in their UK businesses which is also affecting our members employed in the supply chains.

Our key goals of continuing to have access to the Single Market, a Customs Union, access to skills, continuing investment, a robust industrial strategy along with protection of employment rights continue to be pursued at every opportunity.

We continue to meet with a number of Trade Associations who agree with our overall aims. These include the Engineering Employers Federation, Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, Chemical Industries Association, ADS (Aerospace Defence and Shipbuilding) and other smaller trade associations. At recent meetings some employers have expressed their exacerbation with the Government on Brexit.

During the conference season it is intended to launch a booklet jointly with a number of Trade Associations including Aerospace, Chemicals, Glass, print and



others, calling for our key demands to be met, protection of jobs and the UK's manufacturing sector.

In addition Unite has recently arranged meetings with Labour's Keir Starmer and his officials with representatives of the Aerospace industry and in the Automotive sector.

In addition the AGS has met a number of international unions including the Nordic IN, IF Metal in Sweden and our colleagues in Industri Energi in Norway to discuss the implications for our members of Brexit.

One other key development has been the creation of a group of Unions and Trade Associations to deal with the question of "Trade Remedies" once we leave the EU. We are currently working on a robust Trade Remedies policy which has now been presented to the Department of International Trade setting out a policy to protect manufacturing industries such as steel, tyres, chemicals, glass, ceramics, paper etc. from dumping, particularly from China and other countries.

The Trade Remedies policy and we are proposed strong employment rights clauses and opposition to granting Market Economy Status to non market economy countries such as China.

At the time of writing the Government have announced that they will be creating 300 new jobs in the Department of International Trade just to deal with the issue of Trade Remedies.

Automotives

The Executive Council will be aware our members within the BMW business in the UK voted to reject proposals from the company for the move from a DB to a DC Pension Scheme. Following further discussions at which a number of improvements were made, our members voted to accept a new DC Scheme.

BMW have also announced their intention to build the new electronic version of the Mini in the UK at Cowley and Swindon with an initial production figure of 30,000 cars which we anticipate will grow pending sales.

We are working on developing a campaign to ensure that new electric and autonomous vehicles are manufactured here in the UK along with the relevant infrastructure such as battery production, recycling and technology for charging stations etc.



A number of companies have indicated that they are looking to build electric versions of their models, particularly now as the Government have announced that by 2040 cessation of the manufacture of combustion engines. This announcement by Minister for the Environment, Michael Gove, caused considerable concern in the industry and among our members and was seen as a diversion from Brexit - for 24 hours. The announcement of a scrappage scheme for diesel cars was made without consultation which has created major difficulties for the industry but no further information on the scheme has been published so far.

At the time of writing this report we have also had the announcement of the closure over a 3 year period of the Delphi diesel injection plant at Sudbury, Suffolk with a loss of over 500 jobs in the locality.

Meetings are taking place with the company and with the DIT (AIO) along with the involvement of Syndex to look at alternatives to closure and job losses in a rural area. The news reports that the decision was related to the production of diesel parts were inaccurate and the decision revolves around moving the work to Romania and paying a redundancy package which is so far in surplus.

Peugeot have also announced its formal takeover of General Motors in Europe. Discussions with the new company will commence in the next few months. In an announcement the company said "in 100 days they will publish a strategic plan".

Production members at Ford Engine Plant, Bridgend have voted for industrial action including strikes and action short of a strike in the recent ballot. The General Secretary will wish to comment on this issue.

Offshore

As reported at the last EC Unite and GMB balloted members for industrial action who work under the Offshore Contractors Agreement. It is disappointing to report that of 10 ballots conducted over 106 platforms we failed to reach the 50%+1 return despite efforts to get a good return by our Officers and staff in Scotland. In addition the RMT who are not party to the OCA agreement supported us by conducting their own ballot which also fell short of the 50% mark.

However following an informal meeting with the OCA at senior level they made an improved offer which is being recommended to Unite, GMB, along with the RMT but as always happens with offshore, the ballot process may take some time.



In addition we have had a separate meeting with the RMT to look at ways of including them in the OCA agreement.

It is disappointing to report that the Civil Aviation Authority having grounded all Super Puma helicopters following last years disaster off Bergen, Norway have agreed the helicopters can now fly. This is causing considerable concern amongst our members and Industri Energi members in Norway and both Unions are working together on this issue and the AGS will report further at the Executive Committee.

Manufacturing Combine

The Manufacturing Combine has now signed off the updated Unite strategic plan “Shaping the Future of UK Manufacturing” which will be published shortly. In addition the Manufacturing Combine has met with Sharon Graham to discuss automation in manufacturing and the draft new technology agreement.

SERVICE SECTOR

During the period covered by this report various sectors have begun confronting the impact of Brexit exacerbated by the Government’s total disarray.

In Higher Education the sector is facing the double whammy of a ‘brain drain’ and reduced numbers of overseas students that is creating job insecurity and pension disinvestment, among other things.

Members in Local Authority Sector have received a briefing on Brexit highlighting concerns for the sector which include EU funding, public procurement, workers’ rights, environmental and health and safety regulations and EU workers in the sector. The latter being an issue of public concern as the care sector, especially for older citizens, spirals into decline.

The same applies to the NHS as highly skilled EU professionals exit the UK with no comparable inflow to plug the gaps. Additionally the hard Brexit stance threatens the UK’s membership of Euratom, with implications for nuclear physics in the NHS and the entire UK nuclear sector.

Whilst not immediately a threat to the UK’s banking sector the forecast relocation of investment banking will inevitably impact on a sector already beleaguered by job cuts.



Ironically in construction where posted-workers have been outrageously exploited by under-cutters elements in the industry are voicing support for retaining the supply of workers, for example the House Building Federation's top pre-election demand.

Despite the uncertainty of Brexit Unite members are challenging employers most conspicuously across East London NHS, striking against SERCO and at the Bank of England. In both cases Unite members believe the employer has the ability to pay. Unite will highlight to the TUC Congress the 'contamination' of the government's 1 % pay cap.

Unite congratulated PCS on their legal victory against the Cabinet Office who cut PCS and Unite out of negotiations due to our shared objection of having to agree to the predetermined outcome of the exit payment so called "negotiations". In a similar move Sellafield Nuclear Plant have imposed a pay award despite Unite and a sister union's rejection. Any successful challenge to the government's public sector pay policy will rely on a coalition of the willing and Unite's Public Sector Combine has given authority to maximise tactical action and the further development of strike funds.

Construction

The last quarter we have seen an increase in the number of major disasters across the Construction sector involving loss of life.

In relation to the Grenfell Towers fire disaster, as a Trade Union we are actively supporting those who were affected by the disaster in the community. It's important we are involved in highlighting the shortcomings in the current Building Regulations as we to present the case for stronger Building Regulations, especially in the section covering Materials and Workmanship at a future Public Inquiry;

- All Construction companies must be licenced in future who undertake these contracts
- Registration of all construction workers who work in the industry
- All workers must be directly employed under a recognised collective agreement
- All electrical work must be undertaken by Electricians holding a Licence to Practice

As a sector we support London & Eastern Region's lobbying of the Mayor of London following his recent announcement to establish a "Skills for London Taskforce" comprising business leaders and employers, skills and education experts and London government representatives. The Taskforce terms of reference are to develop a city-



wide strategic approach so that Londoners and businesses can access the skills they need for the future, presently there is no Trade Union voice. In addition the mayor is also proposing to establish a Construction Skills Academy later this year, in partnership with the housebuilding industry, yet again there seems to be no involvement or voice for Unite in the Academy to contribute as the true voice of the industry workforce especially on Skills and training the next generation of the industry workforce.

TRANSPORT & FOOD SECTOR

BREXIT – UNITE DEMANDS PROTECTIONS FOR WORKERS IN FOOD, DRINK & AGRICULTURE - “Safe, healthy food and high-quality jobs”

The Unite campaign message was launched at this year’s record Tolpuddle rally by our NISC and Executive members for FDA. Speakers at the event included Jeremy Corbyn and Frances O’Grady.

Our message :

“Unite is the union representing workers all along the food chain. The impact of Brexit on our sector is mostly being ignored by the government, even though millions of jobs depend on it. The union is demanding that the collective voices of our members in FDA are central to Brexit negotiations as the food chain is so exposed to the changes that Brexit may bring. Our members and consumers shouldn’t pay the price for Brexit in lost jobs, worse pay and conditions, and less safe food imports.”

Key issues for us include :

- More than 100,000 Unite members work in the FDA sector with thousands more in the supply chain eg logistics
- 70% of UK food and drink imports come from the EU and more than two-thirds of food exports are to the EU
- farming receives more than £3 billion a year in subsidies from the EU
- around 80% FDA businesses are SMEs with fewer than 250 employees, so every community has businesses and jobs at stake;
- as well as workers rights, EU regulations cover food safety, hygiene, health and safety, animal welfare and the environment;
- just under a third of the food and drink manufacturing workforce are non-UK EU nationals, including eg 90% of vets in the meat hygiene sector, and Unite’s FDA membership includes many migrant workers.



- Unite's campaign strategy "From Plough to Plate" continues to be implemented.

TWO SISTERS FOOD GROUP

Two Sisters Food Group is the UK's largest food company by turnover. In view of our concerns in relation to FDA and Brexit, I have been in direct communication with Ranjit Singh CEO, and a meeting took place between Nigel Perry group HR and Unite Officers to discuss these concerns, European Works Council developments and serious issues in relation to the Midlands sites. It has been agreed that such national meetings will take place on a regular basis going forward.

CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT AND EU EXIT – Freedom to Fly in Europe

Following news that easyJet is to open a new European headquarters in Austria to operate flights in the EU after Brexit, and a warning from IAG the group that owns British Airways that it may be at risk of being broken up after Brexit if there is no deal on ownership requirements. General Secretary Len McCluskey issued a strong statement headed "Government urged to urgently secure freedom to fly in Europe to ease growing uncertainty" which included the demand "Government ministers need to secure the freedom for UK airlines to fly in Europe as a matter of urgency to ease job fears and stabilise confidence in our airline industry."

"Post-Brexit Employment Rights and Trade Deals" – INSTITUTE OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS CONFERENCE

AGS Diana Holland spoke at the conference on "Trade and Employment Rights post-Brexit : setting standards in UK industries" drawing on Unite priorities for Labour's manifesto and for an Industrial Strategy including collective bargaining, sector bargaining, union rights, Modern Slavery Act supply chain reporting, as well as the role of the union in achieving the Petroleum Driver Passport, the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, as well as in the Agricultural Wages Board and Low Pay Commission for example. The conference was chaired by Unite's Adrian Weir, and other speakers included Professor Keith Ewing IER President.

LOW PAY COMMISSION EVIDENCE AND DIRECTOR OF LABOUR MARKET ENFORCEMENT

Unite had a strong delegation to give evidence from our submission to the 2017 Low Pay Commission evidence sessions.

URBAN TRANSPORT GROUP BUS SERVICES ACT 2017 & TAXIS UPDATE

A helpful update meeting was held between Unite and the UTG covering implementation of the Bus Services Act 2017, Mayors and action in Scotland and



Wales. The ongoing concern over the ban on local authorities setting up municipal bus companies was raised, as well as implementation of the new right for the union (Unite) to be consulted before any franchising is introduced, and the protections on TUPE and pensions. Additionally, we discussed taxis and serious concerns around the 'Uber' model in particular. A Unite Parliamentary briefing was prepared for the Westminster hall debate on "The Future of the Taxi Trade" held in July and Unite submitted evidence to TfL on suspending Uber's licence in London on the basis it currently operates which undermines standards throughout the country as well as in London.

INTER-UNION ISSUES

- **Flybe – Prospect** : following a generally helpful Unite / Prospect meeting, while some important progress was made, action continuing to be taken by Prospect in the company means that in view of the overwhelming evidence of breaking TUC principles and procedures, we are likely to move to the next stage in TUC procedures
- **Stobarts – GMB** : following the meeting between Diana Holland AGS and the GMB General Secretary, a follow-up meeting took place between Unite and URTU, where we were assured that activities were stopped by the GMB after our discussions. Both unions have undertaken to follow up on specific points and a further meeting will take place early September
- **Arriva rail – RMT** : this issue continues to be discussed between Unite and RMT
- **URTU** following a meeting between Unite and URTU in relation to some concerns raised by General Secretary Bob Monks regarding Unite activity, we asked the TUC to assist in terms of a follow-up meeting, which took place in early August. Both unions have undertaken to carry out some further checks and the TUC will circulate points from our discussion to assist next stages.

EQUALITIES REPORT

The launch of **Show Racism the Red Card Wear Red Day 2017**, took place on Monday 4th September in Unite House, London. The majority of the Executive Council attended the launch. John Barnes, Perry Groves, Curtis Fleming and Laura Pidcock MP helped launch the event.

TRIBUNAL FEES ABOLITION IS A VICTORY FOR WORKERS AND A VICTORY FOR EQUALITY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The shocking impact of the introduction of tribunal fees on access to justice has been clear for years, including the terrible adverse impact on equality and antidiscrimination cases. The legal victory achieved by Unison is one that we all gain



from. The campaigning on legal aid and other austerity measures that have cut back these rights will continue.

MILLIONS OF WOMEN LOSE OUT OVER STATE PENSION

The Labour Research Department has provided the key facts from the Institute for fiscal Studies report. Between 2010 and 2016, the state pension age for women rose from 60-63 - 1.1 million fewer women receiving a state pension, and £4.2 billion less provided through state pensions and other benefits. The IFS says "Since both rich and poor women are losing out by on average similar amounts, the reform increases income poverty rates." The government said the policy is "fair and sustainable." Our union is organising with others on these and other vital issues of pensions injustice for women.

UNITE NATIONAL EQUALITIES CONFERENCES 2017

The conferences, which had to be postponed because of the 'snap' General Election are being rearranged for early 2018.

LGBT PRIDE EVENTS AND COMMEMORATION OF THE 1967 ACT

A huge tribute to all involved in an incredible number of Pride events with Unite involvement across the country, particularly 50 years on from the 1967 Sexual Offences Act which partially decriminalised homosexuality in England and Wales. A very important milestone I was honoured to commemorate at a special event organised by the L&E LGBT committee in Gay's the Word Bookshop in London. There was a showing at Unite Diskus Centre of "Convicted for Love" a Channel 4 documentary featuring Unite Branch secretary and gay rights activist Terry Stewart calling for the Alan Turing 'pardon' to be extended to all – an estimated 15,000 people could benefit. Unite has been circulating the updated ILGA map on laws on sexual orientation in the world, and launched a postcard campaign on what is happening in Chechnya "Stop the Killings". While progress has been great, the shocking extent of criminalisation across our world must unite us to support justice.

UNITE MIGRANT WORKERS – 'OUR INDUSTRIAL VOICE'

Following on from the positive conference held earlier in the year, steps are being taken with Harish Patel to build on the discussions that took place, a stall in being arranged for the National Industrial Sector Conferences and a follow-up conference on the same industrial approach and basis is being planned for 2018.

MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS CAMPAIGN RELAUNCH



On 22 July 2017, Unite's Holborn office brought together hundreds of migrant domestic workers who have been campaigning for justice over the last 30 years, jointly with our union and as members. I was honoured to chair the relaunch meeting and overwhelmed by the incredible support from migrant domestic workers themselves and those who showed their solidarity, a very powerful alliance. Following a joint creative presentation by J4DW and Waling-Waling migrant domestic workers bringing together the 3 phases of the campaign – 1982- 1998 "Out of the Shadows", 1998-2012 "Workers' Rights" and "Fighting for Justice" 2012-today, speakers included 6 migrant domestic workers who spoke out about their experiences as the UK rights have been won and then cut back, Brid Brennan from the European campaign, Maureen Byrne on why all should join and how the union made a difference in the 1990s and can again today, Kalayaan's Avril Sharp on the lack of rights today and why we need to campaign. We also launched the new campaigning leaflet and booklet "Better off With us : Voices of Migrant domestic workers in the UK". We know from experience this is a campaign we can win. It is a campaign we must win!

UNITE EDUCATION AND EQUALITY WORKING GROUP

A positive meeting took place and following equality-proofing of education materials, changes are now being made. We are also working on the equality courses called for at the last Policy Conference.

WOMEN'S NIGHT SAFETY SUMMIT

A positive initiative from the London Mayor organised by the Mayor of London's Night Czar was attended by Susan Murray and raised a number of important matters for our members who work and drive or travel for work at night.

LABOUR PARTY – BAME Labour and Labour Women's Conference

BAME Labour – congratulations to Susan Matthews on her re-election as BAME Labour secretary and to Harish Patel on his election as an Executive Member

Labour Women's Conference – Diana Holland is part of the interim Conference arrangements Committee, and plans are underway for the first stage of implementing the conference decision to reinstate a policy-making conference. Voting is taking place on issues to debate and a new CAC will be elected at conference. There will still be workshops sessions open to any Labour woman, but the delegate structure for the formal sessions ensures that decisions reflect democracy and accountability as well. Siobhan Endean with our NWC and the Political Dept are ensuring full Unite participation



Labour Work, Pensions & Equality Policy Commission Report – has been prepared for Conference.

General Election

The snap general election on 8th June resulted in a number of key unite activists being elected to parliament as Labour MPs. We lobbied the Labour Party NEC ahead of the manifesto launch to ensure the issues facing were included in the Labour manifesto. We encouraged our members to get involved in the campaign. It is now even more important to continue the building of a sustained grass roots movement that challenges austerity and that holds the government to account. Austerity has a major impact on our jobs, on our communities and it hurts the people that we in the not for profit sector work tirelessly to support. Austerity must not be allowed to continue. Equality monitoring of all Labour's 631 shows improvement in tackling under-representation: Men 59%, Women 41%, BAME 9.4%, Disabled 4.6%, LGBT 7.1%. There are now 119 Labour women MPs.

TUC Race Relations Committee: One of the ongoing activities is the *"Racism at Work Project"* and its purpose are to:

- raise awareness of racial discrimination and harassment as a workplace issue
- reach out to BME workers - in particular to young BME workers by validating their experience of racism in the workplace.
- use the information that emerges from the project to assist affiliates to tackle problems of racism in the workplace through collective bargaining.

The project launched an online survey of over 5000 union members and non-union members to capture the experiences of racism and discrimination and the Polling was conducted by ICM who surveyed over 1000 BME workers. The Project concluded that:

1. Racial harassment still occurs in many workplaces
2. BME workers experience significant discrimination at work
3. A high number of BME workers do not feel confident in reporting their experience of racism and discrimination formally
4. Racism has a huge impact on BME workers well-being
5. BME women have no confidence in reporting racism or discrimination to their employer and many women have had to leave their jobs due to their experience or are trapped in their jobs.
6. Young workers experience detrimental racism and discrimination at work



Next steps is to report further on the qualitative findings of the on line survey and publish a Negotiators guide to support union reps at work which we will look to brand with our name and logo.

Race Forward Campaign – Updates – Focus on BAEM Women

How we can encourage better participation of BAEM women within the union and address

under representation? Way forward:

- Mentoring/shadowing programme/Pairing up
- Networking
- Education courses including Leadership, confidence building, public speaking
- Skills – e.g. filling application forms, preparing for interviews
- Identifying issues and Breaking Barriers:
- Tackling lack of progression
- Identifying BAEM women
- Encouraging BAEM women's involvement
- Ensuring minimum proportionality by encouraging BAEM women to participate on all constitutional committees

A plan will be drawn up following discussions with Education and Regions.

Unite LGBT Pride Campaign 2017

We estimate that Unite LGBT members have organised a presence at 30 UK pride events taking our campaign out to our communities and building union membership among LGBT workers.

We are running a "LGBT Rights Post Brexit - no return to the 1950s" Brexit campaign slogan for pride 2017. We have a banner which will travel the regions from pride to pride event, badges and a campaign leaflet to complement the existing Pride materials that are available. Our campaign sets out how LGBT employment and civil rights and services must be protected in a post Brexit settlement. They are currently underpinned by the European convention of Human rights and the equal treatment directive and we want a permanent equal treatment protection in the Brexit negotiations. In 1533 the first state enacted law banning homosexual acts came into being in the UK. It took over 400 years until 1967 and the passing of the Sexual Offences Act for homosexuality to be *partially* decriminalised. This year marks a significant milestone here in the UK and we are celebrating, with pride, the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the 1967 Act. However, whilst it is only right that we celebrate and cherish the advances we have made in the last 50 years we have to be conscious that there is still a way to go. Especially as we face the realities of a hard



Brexit and the influence that Trump could have on future developments in our country. In the 50 years since the passing of the Sexual Offences Act we have gained so much more. Having come so far since 1967 we now face what could be some of our biggest challenge yet!

Brexit carries so many implications for the protection of rights and freedoms in the UK. Strong rights protections will be critical to our future and we must ensure that our hard-won victories for LGBT+ rights in UK law is central to any settlement negotiated by this Tory government.

Furthermore, there has been a huge surge in hostility and hate crime against so many minorities in the UK, including migrants, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and members of our LGBT+ community. This is still ongoing twelve months later and attitudes have not returned to pre-referendum levels. This is having far reaching consequences for social cohesion, affecting the day to day work of many organisations providing help and support to communities across the country. It has also led to increased abuse, violence and stress for both service users as well as service providers. At the same time the Conservative party is undermining our protections through plans to withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights (which is not even an EU convention) and continued attacks on the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission.

The Government must ensure that all protections gained through our membership of the EU and the ECHR – including equality, labour law and privacy protections – are maintained through the proposed 'Great Repeal Bill'. As we withdraw from the EU, important victories for human rights from which the UK has benefited during its membership must be retained, and given pride of place within our new settlement. ***Unite is calling for the Government to guarantee the same or better regulations as we currently operate under the European Union.*** We are aware that regional LGBT committees will have additional priorities and may determine different approaches to each pride event as well.

POLITICAL REPORT

Since the General Election the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn's Leadership has advanced.

Polling carried out in the last quarter is neck and neck. New voting intention polls conducted



in the week beginning 28th August by YouGov and ICM topline figures demonstrate this:

YouGov – CON 41%, LAB 42%, LDEM 8%, UKIP 4%

ICM – CON 42%, LAB 42%, LDEM 7%, UKIP 3%

A lesson learnt from the last two General Elections and the Referendum on the EU is that polls are not to be taken as read. However, whichever way the cake is cut this can only be seen as a major increase in public opinion for Labour, from polls conducted pre and during the General Election campaign. The rise of Labour in the polls increased from when the “For the Many, Not the few” manifesto was launched. This is good news.

There are a few things to note in relation to the latest polls that are of interest.

- 71% of current Labour voters, voted to stay in the EU. This is the lowest percentage ever of Labour voters who voted Remain. This shows that Labour have succeeded in attracting UKIP voters.
- Jeremy Corbyn's personal ratings are improving. YouGov has Theresa May on 37% preferred PM compared to 33% for Jeremy Corbyn. However, Labour has retrenched a bit on the issues and for example by a 15% margin the voters think the Conservatives will handle Britain's exit better.
- In terms of issues, voters list the EU as the most important issue, this hasn't changed.

65% of all voters polled said that leaving the EU was the top issue. This compares fairly equally to remain and leave voters both concerned about it from their own perspective. The figures being 80% of Tory voters were concerned about, 58% Labour, 73% Liberal

- Health is by far the most important issue to Labour and Lib Dem voters. Figures – Tory 34%, Labour 51%, Lib Dem 52%
- Immigration is more important to Tories. Figures - Tory 56%, Labour 24%, Lib Dem 23
- According to the polls there has been a shift in public opinion on Brexit. A majority of people now think it was a mistake to leave the EU and that we should stay in. 41% compared to 26% think that Britain will be economically worse off once we leave the EU. 36% to 17% think our position in the world is damaged. 25 % think it will be good for jobs, 35% think it will be bad for jobs.



If we were to use the polls as a barometer of how Labour can make further gains this would indicate that the intervention made on Brexit by Keir Starmer in the Observer on 27th August which called for a longer transition period was a shrewd move. Unite welcomed this with General Secretary, Len McCluskey issuing the line:

“Workers will be relieved that one party at least has got their backs, the Labour party. Access to the single market and the customs union is vital to secure tens of thousands of jobs across the country, particularly in our manufacturing heartlands where the Tories’ hard Brexit could have catastrophic consequences. Jobs and living standards are on the line here, something that seems to have escaped the hard Brexit bunch. Labour’s approach will ensure that these concerns are centre stage as a new relationship with the EU is sought.”

Now that there is clarity on the position work can be done in the lead up to conference to go into further detail on this. Labour's position on Brexit links through that to the manifesto pledges and priorities in general – job protection, the economy, workers rights etc.. Jeremy's poll revival was due to policy. He has an opportunity to open a commanding lead in the polls by taking advantage of the Tory chaos and showing the public that it is Labour under his Leadership that can be trusted to deliver the best deal for the country on Brexit.

Scotland

Kezia Dugdale has resigned as the Leader of the Scottish Labour Party. At the time of writing no candidates have declared. The speculation is that Richard Leonard MSP and Anas Sawar MSP will be running. Alex Rowley – Deputy Leader of the Labour Party has taken over as interim Leader. The Scottish Executive Committee will be agreeing the procedures and the timetable on 9th September.

Pat Rafferty – Scottish Secretary said:

“We thank Kezia for the work she has done to contribute to the Scottish labour movement and the party in Scotland, and wish her very well in all she does in the future. The party is now rebuilding in Scotland and is rightly seen as the opponent of the mindless austerity of the Conservative party.

We urge the party to reflect upon this turn in fortunes and consolidate, not to act in undue haste on any succession plan. There is no need to rush to a leadership election. Under Alec Rowley's interim leadership we are confident that the voices of Scotland's working people will be heard loud and clear at Holyrood.

This is not about the next four weeks. It is about the next four years. This is an opportunity



to reflect upon what the Scottish Labour Party stands for. Let's seize it and build for the future."

Northern Ireland

The political impasse in Northern Ireland, which has persisted since the collapse of the power-sharing institutions in March, shows no immediate sign of being resolved. Having laid down strong red lines for a return to Stormont – for the immediate resignation of DUP leader Arlene Foster and an inquiry into the RHI scandal; for an Irish language act; for marriage equality legislation; and a deal on mechanisms for dealing with the legacy of the Troubles – Sinn Féin, it now appears, may accept a hybrid language act (including Ulster Scots) as a sufficient condition for the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Irish language is the only issue of the four on which the DUP has shown any movement, with Arlene Foster meeting Irish language advocacy groups and softening her party's position over the past few months. In recent days, however, Foster has called for an immediate return to Stormont without resolution of the main issues, suggesting that the parties should take their positions in government in parallel with negotiations. She has warned that the only alternative is a period of direct rule, a position that was enthusiastically endorsed by a number of senior DUP figures.

For her part, Sinn Féin leader Michelle O'Neill has rejected the DUP's plan and said that the institutions should only be restored when the main issues – i.e. provision for an Irish language act – is resolved. There is a suspicion in some quarters of the commentariat that Sinn Féin is reluctant to be at the wheel while further cuts are being implemented and the conditions of Brexit are being negotiated, while the DUP's agreement with the Tories means that they are quite comfortable with the prospect of a period of direct rule. Sinn Féin's urgency to have the institutions restored might depend on whether the conditions present themselves for a coalition deal with Fianna Fáil in the Republic of Ireland, in which case they would be keen to have a de facto all-Ireland government in place.

In the meantime, Unite will continue to oppose public spending cuts being proposed – the latest being a £70 million cut to health – and call for the establishment of a sustainable and credible Executive.

Parliamentary Report

Unite have maintained a strong Parliamentary presence.



BA Mixed Fleet dispute

Our ongoing dispute with our Mixed Fleet members at British Airways has been a priority. We held a photo opp at Parliament with our members and there was a good turnout of Labour MPs, including Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell. There were also SNP MPs in attendance which was good to show our members that their case had cross-party support.

We have been engaging with the Shadow Frontbench on this issue, in particular, Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Andy McDonald and Karl Turner, the Shadow Aviation Minister. Our activity culminated just before recess in a big push by Labour and SNP MPs on this issue and BA's wet leasing of Qatar Airways during Transport Questions. As BA Mixed Fleet workers have been banned from having a yellow pen in their pocket by BA because our members use this as a symbol that they are a trade union member – we distributed yellow pens to the Opposition At Durham Miners' Gala, we also had some of our Mixed Fleet members from Heathrow, as well as the North West and North East who marched with their banner in the parade. We arranged photos Jeremy Corbyn, Angela Rayner, Ian Lavery, Ian Mearns, Grahame Morris, Dan Carden and Ken Loach.

Industrial disputes

We have also produced many EDMs and parliamentary questions on issues ranging from nuclear pensions to redundancies at Nestle and from members' concerns around the MoD tendering process, to toxic air.

We have also held meetings with MPs on these issues including Jonathan Reynolds, Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury who we met to discuss support for our strike at the Bank of England, we met Ipswich MP Sandy Martin to discuss the closure of Delphi Diesel Systems in Sudbury and have been in constant contact with Gill Furniss, Shadow Minister for Steel and Anna Turley, Chair of the APPG on Steel to discuss developments concerning our members in this industry.

We have also been organising MPs to join us on our various picket lines across the country, including John McDonnell, who attending picket lines at the Bank of England, St. Bart's Hospital and BA Heathrow, where he was joined by Andy McDonnell, Clive Lewis and Jeremy Corbyn to name but a few.

Brexit

During summer recess, we have kept an open dialogue between the Labour Party Leadership and Frontbench on the general impact of Brexit on workers' rights, international



trade, emphasising the importance of access to the single market and customs union, as well as directing MPs and MEPs to the union's Brexit Check site, which many have said is an invaluable resource to them.

We will continue to keep up the pressure on this when Parliament returns as the Repeal Bill will be debated imminently.

Fair Tips

As well as encouraging MPs to submit questions and sign our EDM to support our fair tips campaign, we are also working on a plan to engage members of the PLP in our campaign – particularly supportive MPs in constituencies where local political pressure is required.

Unite Group of MPs

Following the increase in Labour MPs at the general election, the Unite Group has also increased in size and is the biggest union group in Parliament. We now have 150 MPs in the Unite Group. As a result, following the election, we held a successful “welcome/ welcome back” meeting for MPs with Len McCluskey as the principal speaker. There was a huge turnout for this event with 45 MPs in attendance and an interesting discussion of the main issues of the day including Brexit, our industrial disputes and industrial strategy.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Before the report was given **Huber Ballesteros** addressed the Executive Council. Huber is the Vice-president of the agricultural workers' union FENSUAGRO, but was imprisoned in 2013 for leading the National Agrarian Strike in Columbia. Huber spent 40 months imprisoned on trumped up charges. Huber thanked Unite for campaigning for his release but reported that Trade Unionists are still being murdered in Columbia especially in the mining, banana and palm oil industries.

Executive Summary:

Since the last meeting of the UNITE Executive Council the key points to note in relation to international work are the following:

- The international situation remains very volatile with the Trump presidency clearly displaying a much more belligerent approach in many areas, including Cuba, Venezuela, China and North Korea. Although Europe remains preoccupied with the



Brexit issue it is important to note that the refugee crisis continues to be a major source of difficulties for a number of EU countries and the EU as a whole

- In relation to the European and Global union federations UNITE has remained active and has hosted the IndustriAll Europe executive in London, played a full role in the activities of UNI, participated and shaped activities in the transport federations (ITF &ETF) and contributed to building global union networks in a number of companies in other federations
- The relationship with the USW via Workers Uniting remains strong and plans are underway for the next Steering Committee to take place in October in London. The fourth educational course for senior reps of both unions was held and industrial activities and solidarity projects continue to take place
- A full range of effective support to reps and members in multinational companies continues to be given and progress made in many areas, however the uncertainty of Brexit and legal status post Brexit is clearly beginning to have an impact on UNITE reps in some EWCs
- UNITE solidarity work in relation to key areas including Colombia, the Kurds, Turkey and the Middle East and Palestine has continued and as always remains vitally important or those who need our political and practical support. However the situation in Venezuela is deteriorating rapidly and is of cause for serious concern

Global and European Trade Union Federations

IndustriALL Europe Executive Committee: UNITE hosted a successful meeting of the Executive Committee of IndustriALL Europe in London. The first morning of the meeting was dedicated to debate and discussion on the implications of Brexit, not just for industrial workers in the UK but also the implications for workers across Europe. Unfortunately the snap general Election meant that a number of speakers that had accepted invitations were unable to attend. However, all of the participants were extremely grateful for the effort that Unite had put into hosting the meeting. During the Executive IndustriALL Europe formally adopted its position paper “For a Brexit that protects jobs, rights and a social Europe for All”.

UNI-Europa Graphical: A key meeting of the DS Smith trade union alliance was held in Berlin during June. The meeting brought together representatives from across Europe and agreed a strategy to move towards a global framework agreement. Progress continues to be made in the other target companies such as Westrock, Sofidel and Amcor and the path breaking work of the organising project in Poland continues to bring positive results.



ETF Congress: The ETF 5th Congress took place in Barcelona 23-25 May. Frank Moreels, President of BTB (Belgium) was elected President of the ETF. The conference discussed a number of issues including Workers and Labour rights and Sustainable transport, with emergency motions on Greek seafarers, TISA, Argos dispute and the posted workers directive amongst others. The Industrial Hubs Project reported to the congress on the work it has achieved so far and plans for the upcoming year – Full report available.

ITF Working Group on Automation and Digitalisation: UNITE researcher John Neal attended this working group in Stockholm, which discussed the introduction of new technologies and how it challenges workers, allowing more work to be done with less workers, therefore increasing unemployment and reducing workers' power relative to capital. The group discussed incorporating technology into the broader context of global international affairs and economic processes and the ways in which unions can use technology to aid our struggle.

Workers Uniting

Building Power Internationally: The second leg of the 4th cohort of this exchange took place in London and Brussels at the beginning of June. The program has given participants a strong understanding of the trade union cultures and practices within UNITE and USW; an appreciation of what led to the formation of Workers Uniting; and a greater knowledge of the international industrial, political, social and economic issues that require a global response from trade unions if we are going to fight back on behalf of our members and their communities. With this part of the course being held in the UK and in Europe, the course program was designed to also ensure that participants gained an understanding of the specific political and industrial issues facing the UK especially in regards to Brexit and the Trump presidency. The group had meetings with members of the shadow cabinet and visited the Luton Vauxhall plant and met with the solidarity groups of Cuba, Palestine, Colombia and Africa that Workers Uniting has supported and is looking to support. In Brussels the group met with MEP Judith Kirton-Darling who gave an overview of the European parliament and led a discussion on the work of MEPs and Brexit, and they also met with representatives of the IndustriALL and UNI federations that Workers Uniting affiliates to on a global level.

Solidarity Work

Turkey/Kurds/Middle East: The situation in Turkey remains critical with a new wave of arrests of opposition and Kurdish activists. President Erdogan has also ordered new military



manoveres in Syria that are clearly aimed at attacking the Kurds and not at defeating ISIS. At the same time a planned referendum on the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan is causing further instability and tensions across the region. UNITE has consistently recognised the crucial implications of the situation in Turkey for all progressive forces in the entire region and in this respect has continued its solidarity work with progressive forces and the Kurdish political movement including submitting motions and organising fringes at the TUC and Labour Party conferences. UNITE was also represented in a recent delegation to Iraqi Kurdistan in order to gain a better first hand understanding of the situation. A full report is available.

Cuba: On 16 June, President Trump unveiled his new Cuba policy with the release of the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba. The new policy is a significant setback for the Cuban people and any hopes of ending the blockade or normalising relations between the two countries. The measures include stricter enforcement of some blockade legislation, more restrictions on US citizens' ability to travel to Cuba, specifically, those visiting on independent 'people to people' licenses, and a ban on financial transactions with certain Cuban state run companies.

This tightening of the blockade seeks to cause economic damage and disincentives for investment and will put banks and international companies off working with the island because of fears of sanctions and fines from the US Treasury Department.

The policy also extends the list of Cubans not able to apply for a visa to visit the US. This will now include trade union leaders. So the recent visit of Arturo Rodriguez, General Secretary of Cuba's Light Industry union would not be able to take place in the future. The Trump administration has also announced it will resume opposition to the annual UN motion condemning the US blockade, which it historically abstained from in 2016.

Palestine: In June PSC won a vital judicial review against the UK Government's attempt to restrict local pension schemes from divesting from companies complicit in Israel's occupation and apartheid. The government was trying to stop local council pension schemes divesting from companies complicit in Israel's human rights violations. Administrative Court judge Sir Ross Cranston granted the judicial review on 22 June, determining that the Government had acted for an improper purpose.

A major exhibition to highlight the plight of the Palestinian people was held at the QEII centre at the start of July. UNITE fully supported the event which was a huge success despite



attempts to stop it taking place. UNITE continues to support efforts during this critical year and will help mobilise for the national demonstration planned for the 4th November in London.

Venezuela: The situation in Venezuela has continued to deteriorate and UNITE and other unions have been attacked in the media for their support of VSC and the historical position on Venezuela. VSC issued a statement on the current situation that has been reproduced below and VSC communications head Francisco Dominguez will attend the international committee in order to explain the current situation. There is no doubt that the US and right wing opposition forces are trying to topple the government of Nicolas Maduro.

Statement of Venezuela Solidarity Campaign in relation to current situation in Venezuela – 4th August 2017

"Venezuela's current difficulties are best resolved by dialogue as a way to peacefully address the problems the nation faces, where all forces renounce violence as a way to achieve political ends. The means for a regional dialogue under the auspices of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) exist, with the participation of the former Presidents of numerous countries. The Venezuelan government and much of civil society have indicated a willingness to take part in such talks.

Governments internationally, including Britain and the EU, should do all they can to facilitate and support such a dialogue process, constructively engaging with Venezuela, and respecting the democratic decisions of the Venezuelan people. Instead Trump is introducing unilateral US sanctions against Venezuela, and Rex Tillerson, US Secretary of State, has made it clear that he is seeking to oust president Maduro from office. These sanctions will not help the Venezuelan people, or to facilitate dialogue, but exacerbate the country's difficulties."

Brazil: UNITE continues to be involved with the work of the No Coup in Brazil initiative along with the Brazilian community in London, other trade unions, the Labour Friends of Progressive Latin America group and others.

August 31st marks one year since the undemocratic removal of Brazil's elected President Dilma Rousseff and the coup government continues to implement hardline austerity and is facing regular protests from trade unions and others.

Colombia - Peace Process: The situation in Colombia remains very complex and extremely



fragile with decommissioning of weapons taking place according to schedule but the delivery of the associated training, housing and full reintegration projects either hugely delayed or completely non-existent. However the UN has now agreed the terms of a new oversight mission which will mean UN oversight of the reintegration programs which the government had been strongly resisting on the basis that UN oversight was only needed for the laying down of arms by the FARC. The FARC has now established a new political party to begin the next phase of transition and a hunger strike to push for the agreed release of former combatants from prison has been ended on the basis of commitments given to speed up the process. The number of killings of human rights activists remains very high despite the peace process and paramilitary activity is increasing, however on 16th June 2017 the creation of the Elite Unit of the Colombian police to tackle paramilitaries did finally take place. The unit will consist of 1,088 police, 120 investigators, 40 analysts, and 150 people in a rapid response team. 2018 will be a critical year with presidential and congressional elections taking place and with the progressive forces in the country not yet clear as to how they will approach the elections.

UNITE Brexit Coordination Team Report

1. Key Brexit developments since the last Executive Council

Since the last Executive council there have been a number of extremely important developments in relation to Brexit, namely:

- **More clarity on Labour Party Brexit position** was undoubtedly created over the August bank holiday weekend when Shadow Brexit Minister Keir Starmer, with the backing of Jeremy Corbyn, made it clear that the Labour Party favoured an approach that would include a transition deal with full single market and customs unions membership. It was made clear that this would include acceptance of all necessary rules to make it possible as well as leaving the whole possibility of single market and customs union membership on the table for any final deal.
- **Formal Brexit negotiations began** on 19th June 2017. The negotiations are being led, on behalf of the European Commission, by Michel Barnier and there have been a number of press reports contrasting the more diverse make up and professionalism of the EU side as compared to their UK counterparts led by David Davis. There have so far been two formal rounds of negotiation. As reported previously a two stage negotiation process was agreed between the UK and their EU counterparts with the key issues needing to be resolved before any discussions on the post Brexit relationship could begin. The three key issues are: the size of the UK's future liabilities that must be paid (the divorce bill); the issue of the Irish border and the rights of EU citizens in the UK and vice versa. It is expected that the October meeting of the European Council will decide that not enough progress on these issues has



been made for talks on the post-Brexit relationship to begin.

- **Internal Conservative Party Battles:** The summer has continued to show that there are ongoing battles within the Conservative party between so called hard and soft Brexiteers, with the Chancellor Phillip Hammond pushing for a softer Brexit as compared to his more hard line colleagues such as Liam Fox. This is particularly concerning as what appears to be happening is that the UK Government's negotiating strategy is being shaped more by attempts to reconcile competing factions within the Conservative party than what is in the best interests of the UK.
- **Customs Union:** These internal Tory party arguments were clearly visible in the first position paper put out by the Department for Exiting the EU on the UK's potential future relationship with the EU's customs union. The paper, and policies within it, were widely criticised as being unrealistic and the paper itself admitted that what was proposed was an 'untested approach' and that they were 'keen to explore ... the practical complexities involved'.
- **Transition Period:** One significant indication within the Customs Union paper was that for the first time it was explicitly recognised that there would need to be some form of transition period in relation to the customs union as the process to leave the EU began. The paper was very unclear about how this would actually work in practice but this may be the first indication that the Government is finally beginning to understand the enormous complexity that is involved and that we cannot simply switch from being a member of the EU to being outside, even if a negotiated agreement has been reached.
- **Irish Border:** Both sides of the negotiation have made it clear that there is no desire to return to a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, with the EU making it a key issue to make progress on before any discussion of trade etc. In mid-August the UK Government finally produced a position paper however, this paper contained no concrete solutions to the problems that Brexit will bring but seemed to only repeat the aspirations that, in effect, Brexit will not change anything on the ground, that the Government have set out previously.

2. UNITE political input:

UNITE has continued to have a strong political input in its attempts to shape the Brexit process;

- **General Secretary Len McCluskey** discussed Unite's Brexit work during a meeting in parliament with the Unite group of MPs. A number of MPs expressed an interest in working closely with Unite on our Brexit work.
- **Trade Remedies:** Unite, together with a number of manufacturing trade federations, has formed the Manufacturing Trade Remedies Alliance, to make the case for a robust and effective trade defence policy for the UK post Brexit. Numerous meetings have taken place with senior officials from the Department of International



Trade and Unite also facilitated a briefing for Labour's Shadow minister for Trade, Barry Gardiner.

- **Trade policy:** Unite has also engaged with Department for International Trade officials as they seek to set forward their proposals for a trade policy for the UK post Brexit. Unite will be participating in a CLASS research project seeking to identify the key aspects of what might be termed a 'progressive trade policy'. I.e. the type of trade policy that we would want to see implemented post-Brexit.
- **Swedish Parliament:** Unite will host a visiting delegation of Swedish parliamentarians from across the political spectrum on 3rd September. The group, who are members of the Swedish Parliament's Committee of the Labour Market (similar to a UK parliament select committee), are visiting the UK to look into the potential impact of Brexit on the UK labour market and UK workers.

3. UNITE industrial input:

Dealing with Brexit as an industrial issue was identified as a key matter and important actions and issues in this respect have continued:

- **Sister Unions:** There is continued interest in and support for Unite's Brexit strategy from sister unions across Europe and there continue to be a regular series of meetings with sister unions to update them on the situation in the UK and on the work we are doing. Since the last executive we have welcomed delegations from IG Metall and the Swedish graphical union GS-Facket. This is also an important part of the strategy of attempting to influence the negotiation process from both sides, with sister unions putting pressure on their own Governments on issues of importance to workers across Europe, such as employment rights.
- **European Agencies:** Work is ongoing in identifying key European agencies that ending our involvement in after Brexit will cause significant problems for Unite sectors. EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency), EURATOM and the European Medicines Agency are among those that have received most public attention, but there are a significant number of others whose role will either have to be entirely replicated in the UK, or a mechanism to allow our continued involvement will have to be found.
- **Manufacturing and Public Sector Combines:** Updates on Unite's Brexit work were given to both the manufacturing and public sector combines in recent weeks. These updates focused on the current state of the Brexit negotiations, Unite priorities, improving communication to shop stewards and members and highlighted the work of the research department in analysing Brexit impacts at the workplace level.
- **Engaging with industry federations:** A joint position paper has been agreed with a number of manufacturing trade associations that puts forward the priorities for both employers and workers in these industries for the Brexit negotiations. A meeting was



also arranged with the CBI to discuss Brexit issues and issues related to international trade.

4. Documents and Communications:

- **Brexit Check Workplace Report:** The second wave of the Brexit Check survey emails was sent to reps on 18th June. This is being sent out in four groups, divided by sector. The questions focus on trying to identify concrete impacts of Brexit at the workplace level, as well as situations where employers are opportunistically using Brexit to attack pay and terms and conditions.
- **Website:** The UNITE Brexit check website is now up and running and being updated regularly with articles, news and details of relevant events, etc. With the process now underway the website will without doubt become an important tool going forward and it is credit to UNITE that we have managed to get it up and running so quickly. The Brexit team is also working with the communications department to put in place a more strategic focus for the website that will involve an ongoing focus on specific sectors and guest contributions from sister unions and politicians. A twitter account is also to be set up in association with the Brexit Check website.
- **Press and publications:** Unite have continued to publically make the case that workers should not pay the price of Brexit and continued to produce excellent sector documents in order to defend our members specific interests in each sector. Unite has also made public statements in relation to both of the Government's recently published position papers on the customs union and Irish border.

6. Next Steps

UNITE will continue to push its political and industrial agendas in relation to the Brexit process, and will, given the dynamic and rapidly moving situation, be ready to adapt and

change its inputs at short notice to accommodate any key changes. However, for the foreseeable period in front of us the anticipated next key steps are:

- **UNITE Regional conferences on Brexit:** Following the calling of the election the regional conferences proposed for May/June had to be postponed. It is now intended to reschedule the conferences to take place in early 2018
- **Sector Conferences:** Discussions are ongoing with the AGSs and National officers to facilitate debate on Brexit issues during the forthcoming sector conferences.

TUC and Labour Party Conferences: Brexit will undoubtedly be a key issue at both the forthcoming TUC and Labour party conferences. Unite submitted a motion on Brexit to the TUC (see attached). A number of other motions on the issue were also;



- submitted and this is likely to result in a composite and additionally a possible General Council Statement. Unite will be holding a fringe meeting on Brexit during the Labour Party Conference.
- **Political input:** UNITE will continue to make strong political inputs at both the national and European level as has already been the case until now. The importance and opportunities for making effective political interventions has obviously increased dramatically now that the general election outcome has effectively destroyed any mandate for a hard Brexit;

Unite Motion to the TUC

P18 Brexit, the Single Market and rights at work

Congress agrees that the minority Tory government has no mandate for a hard Brexit, understood to mean the severing of all ties with the commercial, political, judicial and regulatory institutions of the European Union without first establishing a new relationship.

Congress believes the economic fallout of hard Brexit would be disastrous for working people and that nobody voted to be made poorer by the Tories' disastrous mishandling of the negotiations.

Congress calls for a new approach to the Brexit negotiations with the aim of achieving a just settlement, including barrier-free access to European markets as an alternative to EU membership, and the protection of jobs, investment and workplace rights alongside environmental and consumer protections. Further, any settlement must include UK participation in all mutually beneficial cross-border agencies and agreements such as Euratom and Erasmus.

Congress notes that full access to European markets can only be achieved if the UK government abandons its ideological approach to a hard Brexit.

Congress notes that the trade union movement can play a vital role in ensuring such an outcome to the mutual benefit of all workers through our unique relationships with sister trade unions and governments in Europe.

Congress notes that negotiations for the UK's new trading relationship with the EU will be held in succession to the Brexit negotiations and calls for an agreement covering both a transitional period and future UK-EU trading relationship.

Congress commits the TUC to vigorously defend workers' rights under attack with the government's European Union (Withdrawal) Bill.



UNITE approach to Brexit:

The basis of the UNITE approach was established in the Executive Council statement that was carried at the UNITE Policy Conference in July 2016. Although the policy and approach

must clearly adapt as the circumstances change and develop, the Executive Council statement did identify the key issues at that stage, they were:

1. Defence of UNITE members' jobs which might be threatened by the UK leaving the EU;
2. Protection of employment rights that depend on legislation from the EU;
3. Opposing the racist backlash unleashed by the leave vote;

In addition to these three core issues the statement also made it clear that:

- There should be no rush to trigger Article 50;
- UNITE would oppose a Brexit that reduces trade union rights, excludes the UK from the Single Market and fails to deal fairly with the issue of free movement of labour;
- UNITE would support the people of Scotland, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar in addressing specific issues given these countries and regions voted by a majority to remain;

The need for a full debate around the difficult issue of immigration was also part of the EC statement carried at Policy conference. In relation to this General Secretary Len McCluskey made a well-publicised intervention at a CLASS conference in which the need for trade union safeguards to prevent undercutting and exploitation of migrant labour was stressed as part of a new approach to immigration policy.

CENTRAL OFFICE DEPARTMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION REPORT

ADMINISTRATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

GENERAL SECRETAR ELECTION 2017

A report of the independent Election Commissioner, Prof. Keith Ewing, was tabled. In conclusion it stated that the complaints relating to Mr McCluskey and Mr Coyne, in the view of the Election Commissioner did not affect the outcome of the final result. A number of complaints related to the use and access of union data.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Gerard Coyne, former West Midlands Regional Secretary, was dismissed from the service of the union, and this decision was unanimously upheld by an Appeals Panel



formed of members of the Executive Council in accordance with procedure. The matter is still subject to legal proceedings.

Rule 27: Member Discipline

Paperwork was given to the Executive Council concerning an EC Appeal Panel that had been convened on 30 August to hear the appeal from four members from Heathrow Airport about certain actions that were undertaken in connection with the LE/562 Branch. In short, the use of branch money by branch officials to seek legal advice to stop the region dismantling and reorganising the LE/562 Branch. The members had already been disciplined by the London and Eastern Region.

After disciplinary was taken by the London and Eastern Region, the General Secretary had sought legal advice from eminent employment and human rights barrister, John Hendy QC. **The advice stated that no Rule had been broken by the branch officers and members.**

The EC Appeal Panel was provided with written legal advice from John Hendy QC. The advice clearly stated the likely outcome of legal proceedings and liability of the union if the decision taken by London & Eastern was not dismissed by the unions EC. In spite of the strong legal advice the panel upheld the decision of the London and Eastern Region but reduced the penalty imposed.

The Executive Council were provided in writing the legal advice from John Jendy QC by the General Secretary after which the EC had a robust debate about dismissing or upholding the decision of the EC Panel.

At the end of the debate in spite of the overwhelming legal advice given to the EC a majority of the EC decided to uphold the decision of the EC Panel. Unfortunately if this case now goes to a tribunal, as stated by the GS, "Unite will probably lose it". It should be said that the majority of independents on the Executive voted against endorsing the actions of the panel but the United Left group voted unanimously in favour of upholding the decision of the panel (for reasons of their own) which has placed the union into a precarious legal position.

NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCES

National Industrial Sector Conferences 2017

As previously reported the National Industrial Sector Conferences will be held in the Brighton Centre, Kings Road, Brighton this 12 – 15 November. We have written to regions and national officers inviting motions and to Regions advising them of the



number of delegates for each conference from their region, elections are being conducted at the moment.

National Retired Members Conference 2017

Similarly to the NIS conferences, we have written to regions and the national officer inviting motions and advising regions about the number of delegates for each conference from their region, elections are being conducted at the moment. As previously reported this conference will take place in the Brighton Centre on Sunday 12th November.

National Equalities Conferences 2018

These conferences were due to be held earlier in 2017 but were postponed due to their proximity to the snap general election. We have now been able to re-arranged these conferences i.e. Women's, BAEM, Disabled members and LGBT members to be held at the Hilton Metropole Blackpool from 31st January to 2nd February 2018. Delegates to the conference have already been elected and we will write to delegates advising them of the new dates and asking them to confirm whether they are still available to attend. If they are not we will ask regions to elect substitute delegates.

National Policy Conference 2018

The 5th National Policy Conference will take place in the Brighton Centre from 2nd to 6th July. Arrangements for allocation and election of delegates will be put to your December meeting. The deadline for submission of motions will be 9th February 2018 and we will write to branches and committees at the beginning of November to tell them how to submit motions for consideration. The detailed timetable for compilation of the agenda for conference will be brought forward to your December meeting.

ELECTIONS OF WORKPLACE REPS AND BRANCH OFFICIALS

We have written to all regions advising them of the rule change introduced following the Rules Conference in 2015 which means that elections for Workplace Representatives and

Branch Officials will be required to take place for the next electoral period between 1st January and 31st March 2018. Following on from the success of the booklet produced before the EC elections earlier in the year explaining the role and responsibilities of the Council, we have prepared two leaflets setting out the roles of the both workplace representatives and branch officials for distribution by regions.



Once these elections have taken place training will be provided to new representatives including on financial management for branch secretaries.

SECTOR NAMES

At the June meeting of the Council it was recognised that the names of a small number of sections of the union were causing some degree of confusion to members and employees alike. It was agreed that a short consultation should be held with a view to changing names where appropriate and agreed.

The sections involved were:

- Community, Youth Workers & Not for Profit
- Unite Community and
- General Engineering, Manufacturing & Servicing
- Service Industries.

The partial outcome of the consultation is:

- GEMS to be known as **Engineering & Manufacturing**
- Service Industries, no change

Consultations are continuing with the other two groups; a final report will be brought to the Council in December.

6 YEAR CONSTITUTIONAL TIMETABLE – UPDATE

The previous six year constitutional timetable was issued in March 2016, the following updates take up us to 2023 and includes some timing amendments resulting from the General Secretary election this year and the snap General Election in June 2017.

Current Year - 2017:

Election for General Secretary
Unite Executive Council elections
Young Members National Conference
Retired Members National Conference
Irish Policy Conference
Scottish Policy Conference
Regional Political Conferences – 4th quarter (change due to general election in June)
Unite National Industrial Sector Conferences – 4th quarter

2018:



Election of Workplace representatives and branch officials 1st January to 31st March
Unite National Equalities Conferences 31st January – 2 February (change due to
general election in
June 2017)

Unite Policy Conference – 2 – 6 July - Brighton

Regional Industrial Sector Conferences/Regional Equalities Conferences/Area
Activists Meetings –

3rd quarter

First meetings of triennial period Regional Committees/National Industrial Sector
Committees/National Equalities Committees - Oct/Nov

2019:

Unite National Equalities Conferences – 1st quarter

Rules Conference – June/July

Young Members National Conference

Retired Members National Conference

Unite National Industrial Sector Conferences – 4th quarter

Irish Policy Conference

Scottish Policy Conference

2020:

Regional Political Conferences – 1st quarter

Unite Executive Council elections

Policy Conference June/July

2021:

Elections for Branch Officers and Work Place Representatives – by end March

Unite National Equalities Conferences – 1st Quarter

Young Members National Conference

Retired Members National Conference

Regional Industrial Sector Conferences/Regional Equalities Conferences/Area

Activists Meetings –

3rd quarter

First meetings of triennial period Regional Committees/National Industrial Sector
Committees/National Equalities Committees - Oct/Nov

Unite National Industrial Sector Conferences – 4th quarter

Irish Policy Conference

Scottish Policy Conference

2022:



Election of General Secretary required

Unite Policy Conference – June/July

2023:

Unite Executive Council elections

Regional Political Conferences – 1st quarter

Rules Conference – June/July

National Equalities Conferences

Young Members National Conference

Retired Members National Conference

Irish Policy Conference

Scottish Policy Conference

Unite National Industrial Sector Conferences – 4th quarter

Irish Policy Conference

Scottish Policy Conference

2022:

Election of General Secretary required

Unite Policy Conference – June/July

2023:

Unite Executive Council elections

Regional Political Conferences – 1st quarter

Rules Conference – June/July

National Equalities Conferences

Young Members National Conference

Retired Members National Conference

Irish Policy Conference

Scottish Policy Conference

Unite National Industrial Sector Conferences – 4th quarter

Finance Report

2nd Quarter 2017 Results

The 2nd Quarter 2017 deficit of £2.0 million is, at first sight a little alarming, this was driven predominantly by two one-off factors – the General Election and the EC/GS election. Dispute costs are also extraordinarily high. Nevertheless, the year to date figures show a surplus of £1.7 million and, while that is £3.2 million worse than last year, it is still a surplus which means that overall the financial results of Unite are satisfactory.



More specifically, Total Income amounted to £87.3 million in the 1st Half of 2017, up £3.0 million versus the same period a year ago. Contribution Income increased by £3.5 million in the 1st Half of 2017 versus 2016 reflecting the impact of the UCATT amalgamation, the increase of Enhanced and Part-time membership subscriptions effected September 2016 and the growing proportion of Enhanced Members (versus a shrinkage in the number of Basic Members). As anticipated, due to the Jackson legislation, Legal Income has continued to fall, down £0.7 million year on year or by 25%. Driver Care income also declined.

Total Recurring Expenditure totalled £78.8 million in the 1st Half of 2017 which was £7.6 million higher than last year. This increase was primarily due to: (1) Political Grants & Affiliations totalling £4.6 million (up £3.4 million versus 2016) owing to the General Election; (2) Employment Costs excluding Organising of £31.3 million (up £3.4 million versus 2016) owing to the employees taken on as consequence of the UCATT amalgamation plus the general wage increase awarded to Unite employees; and (3) Employer Disputes costs of £3.7 million (up £1.9 million versus 2016). Membership Activity was negatively impacted by a once every three year cost of the EC/GS of £1.6 million but this does not show as a negative year to year variance due to the higher spending on in the 1st Half of 2016 on Member Conferences. These elements of higher spending were partially offset by a decline in the cost of Members' Legal Representation to £1.0 million (down £0.8 million versus 2016). Taken together, Employment Costs excluding Organising and the National Organising Department amounted to 40.0% of Income in the 1st Half of 2017 above last year's comparative figure of 38.7% but down from 40.8% in Q1.

As a consequence, Unite recorded a surplus before Investment Income and Non-Recurring Items of £8.4 million in the 1st Half of 2017 – a deterioration of £4.6 million versus last year.

Investment Income amounted to £1.5 million in the 1st Half of 2017 – up 0.7 million versus last year owing to the strength of the global stock markets. Non-Recurring Items (excluding Pension Deficit Reduction payments) amounted to a net expenditure of £1.9 million in the 1st Half of 2017 comprised principally of the write-off of VAT on property refurbishment (£1.5 million) and employee severance (£0.7 million).

Pension deficit recovery contributions totalled £6.3 million in the 1st Half of 2017 – up slightly owing to the new payments to the UCATT pension scheme.



Taking everything in account, Unite posted an overall surplus of £1.7 million for the 1st Half of 2017 – a result which was £3.2 million worse than last year.

2017/18 Outlook – Members Subscriptions

The Executive Officers plan to prioritise membership growth and recruitment in 2018 and, in that context, recognise the sensitivity of membership subscription rates. It is important to remember that the last general increase took place September 2015 and that it is EC policy to increase membership subscriptions each year by no more than average earnings/inflation. It is also EC policy not to run the Union in deficit, including the pension deficit reduction payments.

If the Union is successful in growing (or at minimum stopping the decline) in paying membership, then the need for a general subscription increase can be avoided in 2018 (preprogrammed increases for former UCATT members, part time members and Driver Care members would still occur).

Assuming Dispute Benefits reduce to something like a normal level and there is not a General Election, then Unite can break even in 2018 if its paying membership remains static and can record a surplus of £2+ million if it would succeed in growing paying membership by 1.5% (approximately the level of the declines of the last several years). While some level of efficiencies are planned within these numbers, there is also potential scope to reduce costs further without jeopardising frontline services. In addition, Unite's balance sheet and finances generally are as strong as they have ever been, so, if there ever was a year to take a small risk and really focus the organisation on the necessity of membership growth (without the safety net of a general subscription increase), then 2018 would be the year. Nevertheless, it is important to say that, as the figures above demonstrate, the EC will have to monitor progress of the membership growth initiative and take remedial action if necessary to ensure that the Union does not fall into the position of running unsustainable ongoing deficits.

For the record, as noted above, membership rates for former UCATT members will increase in line with the amalgamation agreement (which brings membership rates for former UCATT members up to Unite levels over five years), part-time rates will increase by 10p per week (in line with the phase out of the part time membership scale over five years) and Driver Care rates will increase by 5p per week. It is proposed that all these increases be effected from 1st January 2018. It should be noted that a package is being constructed (to be reviewed the RTC and Passenger Sectors) to put Driver Care subscriptions up further as part of a package of further



substantial benefit improvements. Should this be “a go-er”, then the package and the consequent further increase in Driver Care subscription rates would be brought to the December EC for approval.

Unity Trust Bank matters

As the EC will recall, Unite is the largest shareholder (owning 14.6% of the shares currently valued at £5.5 million) in Unity Trust Bank (UTB) – a bank that the trade union movement established more than 30 years ago. Since escaping from the control of The Co-operative Bank (now owned by US hedge funds) at the end of 2015, UTB has moved forward on all fronts to finally start to achieve the objectives of its founding – i.e., to be a significant “force for good” in the UK banking sector by being run in a different manner than banks in general. UTB has always operated differently – it only lends to organisations who also have a genuine social purpose, it pays no bonuses to its employees, it is the only UK bank who is an accredited Living Wage employer and it is the only UK bank holding the Fair Tax mark – and it continues to uphold and promote these principles. However, what it historically was not

was being of sufficient size to be of any significance with the UK banking sector. It became clear that it was not even of sufficient size to be viable in light of the very significant rise in the cost of regulatory compliance which has come in since the start of the recession which started in 2008/9.

The good news is, while keeping to its founding principles, UTB is now growing rapidly (and safely and profitably). It grew its loan book by 25% in 2016 and is on track to achieve similar growth in 2017. It made a profit in 2016 of £3.42 million and is on track to do better in 2017. Most importantly, it now also has the right management in place to be successful and sustainable for the longer term (prior to 2016, UTB’s management consisted to Co-op Bank re-treads and/or people being put out to pasture). Having raised £11.1 million at the end of 2015/early 2016 to buy out the Co-op Bank and to start its growth drive, UTB now requires a further £10-12 million to enable it to continue to grow in 2018/19. The plan is to reach a loan book size by 2020 which would be self sustaining (triple the size at the end of 2015). As part of this fund raising and more generally, the following is proposed:

1. That Unite invest to maintain its approximate 15% ownership (so investing circa £1.5 million) in this capital raising round. These funds would come from the £145.7 million of liquid assets noted above.
2. Along with Unison and the GMB, commit to ensuring that the UTB employees receive the pension benefits (as the scheme is closed these are all pensioners or deferred members and virtually all are Unite members) that they were promised



should UTB fail. This commitment is necessary to allow UTB to transfer the assets and liabilities of these members out of the Cooperative Group pension scheme where the shareholders of UTB are subject to “last man standing” risk. Under the current situation, all existing shareholders of UTB and any new ones could lose their entire shareholding should the Co-operative Group go into administration at any time in the next 40-50 years as UTB could be called upon to make good the benefits of all Unite Financial Report – 2nd Quarter 2017 members of the scheme not just its own (currently UTB employees represent only 0.3% of the total liabilities of the scheme) which it obviously could not afford to do. Unite would receive a market-based annual fee for making this commitment. For information, the current deficit for UTB employees is less than £1 million as the Co-op Group Scheme is 98% funded. This arrangement is essential to securing the future of UTB and protecting and securing the value of Unite’s £5.5 and any future investment as proposed in 1 above.

3. I have engaged with Unity re the £2.50 per month charge on current accounts and they say that £2.50 is as low as they can go, especially in light of the new interest bearing deposit accounts that the bank agreed to introduce for Unite Branches with deposits of more than £20,000 (this interest would have exceeded the charges across all of Unite at the time it was negotiated when the Base Rate was at 0.5%). Recognising the burden that the charges have on small Branches with little income, the Executive Officers propose that Unite pay the charges for one bank account for constituted Retired and Community Branches.

4. That the EC approve the administrative matters as detailed in Appendix 3.

Proposed Minor Benefit Improvement

Currently, members only become eligible to receive Enhanced Scale benefits when the incident for which they are claiming occurs after the member has paid at least six months of Enhanced contributions. While this “waiting” period has always been the case, it seems a bit unfair when the incident from which the claim arises is due to an accident which can occur at any time. Members have, for instance, been denied the £25,000 fatal accident benefit who have died within the six month “waiting” period. It is therefore proposed that the waiting period for the Enhanced benefits which are related to an accident -- Fatal Accident Benefit, Permanent Disability Benefit (total and equivalent occupation) from an accident, Accidental Loss of Limb, Eye or Digit – be reduced from the current six months to four weeks as long as the member has made at least one subscription payment at the Enhanced level prior to the accident occurring. It is further proposed that this change be made retroactive to accidents occurring on or after 1st September 2016.

