

GMB

CONGRESS 2017

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SIS. MARY TURNER MBE
(President)
(In the Chair)

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Held in:

Plymouth Pavilions,
Plymouth

on:

Sunday, 4th June 2017
Monday, 5th June 2017
and
Tuesday, 6th June 2017

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PROCEEDINGS
DAY ONE
(Sunday, 4th June 2017)

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FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS
SUNDAY, 3RD JUNE 2017
MORNING SESSION
(Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER

THE PRESIDENT: Will Congress please come to order? Please will Congress come to order? I will be asking our General Secretary to make a special announcement. Tim.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good morning, Congress. This week we will be celebrating our 100th Congress. I did not want nor anticipated this being the opening of Congress and it seems that we say the words too often in our times but I want to offer our thoughts and condolences to those murdered or injured in London last night and to all those who died and continue to suffer in the aftermath of the Manchester attack, and the Westminster attack before that. As a dad, a husband, a brother, a son, a friend and a colleague, I cannot imagine the grief and loss of such a tragedy. I am angry. I see such needless violence and, as so many of us do, ask why, why do people do it? Why were those poor people in the wrong place at the wrong time? Why is this ever seen as a solution? It is at times like this no matter our differences we remember that we are all one race, the human race. As a Londoner born and bred, who knows the streets where those attacks happened last night, it was bloody close to home but, as always, we go on. We thank those people who run into danger when the rest of us rightly run away, our members, our fantastic emergency services; we go on because that is how we win in the end. For our friends in North West & Irish Region, London, Southern, we send our solidarity and offer of help to everyone who needs it. While we remember those killed on our shores, we also send our thoughts to those killed in Kabul this week in the holy month of Ramadan. No innocent life is worth more than another. Could I ask Congress, please, to stand for a minute's silence?

(Congress stood in silent tribute)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I call Congress to order. Please switch your devices off or make sure they are on silent, because if I hear them you will be paying £10 to our dementia cause, Mary's own special. So, beware!

NATIONAL BANNER CEREMONY

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now have the National Banner Ceremony which is the traditional opening of Congress. This year Yorkshire Region is forming the banner party. Please stand to greet the National Banner. Thank you.

(The National Banner Ceremony proceeded)

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't they do well! Well done, Yorkshire. *(Applause/Cheers)*

OPENING VIDEO

THE PRESIDENT: We will now have a short video, starring Tim, to be shown on the screen.

(Video played to Congress)

WELCOME, SAFETY PROCEDURES, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE PRESIDENT: Okay. Well done. We are all joining Equity! Can I ask you to indulge me for just two minutes while Mary sorts things out. Thank you. Now, can I ask all delegates, including you, Mary Turner, to make sure that all your credentials are on at all times because of security. It is extremely important. I know that you will abide by it.

Congress, together with my Vice President, Malcolm Sage, and my General Secretary, Tim Roache, we would like to welcome you all to our 100th GMB Congress. Welcome to Warren Kenny, London Regional Secretary, and I would like to wish Dougie Henry and Steve Pella a speedy recovery. On the Pellacraft stall there will be a card for Steve. He is a good friend of the GMB. I would like you all to sign it and give him some hope. We will miss him, and his wife, this week.

We would like to welcome some special guests and visitors who have joined us: Paul Kenny, our ex-General Secretary. Welcome, Paul; still playing ruddy tricks. *(Applause)* He has become Obama now; still playing tricks when he rings me. Allan Garley, it is good to see you, Allan. I hope you have your phone to your ear. Eddie Warrilow and Richard Ascough, and of course a warm welcome to our verbatim shorthand writers, Phyllis Hilder and Michael Thear. How the hell they understand everybody I just do not know; there we are, they do.

You will find details of the fire and evacuation procedures on page 6 in the Congress Guide. Please take time to look at these and familiarise yourself with the nearest exit. Just think you are on a plane – that one *there* and that one *there*. This is very, very important. If a venue manager comes onto the stage, it will be to announce evacuation procedure and please, please, listen carefully.

Congress falls during Ramadan so we have allocated a dressing room behind the stage for use as a prayer room.

We have not had any request for signers this year. I should have put mine in. If you require any assistance, please go to the information desk.

Firstly, could I extend a warm welcome to all delegates, and visitors, for the first time. If you are due to speak, we have some changes this year. Please show your credentials when you come to the desk in front of the rostrum so that your name can be shown on the screen. Also give your name and your region for the verbatim record. Mention if you are a first time speaker. Could I also remind all delegates that all Congresses are transmitted live on GMB Congress TV. This means that your speech will be shown live over the internet, through the GMB national website. Please do not use any inappropriate language – I am exempt! *(Laughter)* - or verbal

attacks, and I mean this sincerely, on our GMB staff who do not have the right of reply at Congress.

Finally, you will be aware that Congress has had to be shortened this year. Please listen carefully to my announcements, or Malcolm's, and where changes are expected I will try to give delegates advance warning. Could I say there is one change, I was finishing, as you agreed, at lunchtime but I am afraid I will be staying on for the first debate where I have to award our delegates their President's Award. I think that is only right I give them the respect they deserve.

OBITUARIES

THE PRESIDENT: Those of you able to stand, please rise as a mark of respect for our departed GMB colleagues. Names will be shown on the screen and listed in the Congress Guide. Additional names not on the printed list are shown on the screen. Congress, we also include all those who have been murdered through London and around the world and their families injured.

(Congress stood in silent tribute)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress.

TELLERS AND STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The names of all regional tellers are on the screen. All tellers must remain in the hall while Congress is in session and delegates must be in their allotted seats when a vote is taken. I welcome the general member auditor, who will be supervising the counting of votes, John Swainson, of the Northern Region. To see if you are eligible to vote, please look down at your Congress credentials. If it says the word "delegate" on it then you can vote. All others in the hall are not eligible to vote.

THE PRESIDENT: Before I do call Malcolm, it is only right that we add someone who has been a very great friend but also not mentioned in the list, Steve Pickering, who was our previous or last Deputy General Secretary. Steve and I worked together very closely in the Labour Party so we were extremely sorry to hear of his sudden death on his longboat/narrow boat.

The other person is Jo Cox. Jo was murdered in an attack doing her job in the surgery. Jo's husband will be here this afternoon and we welcome him and will show our respect. They were included in the obituaries. I thank you all.

Now, Malcolm, it is over to you. Oh, Helen, are you here? You are, good! I congratulate Helen Johnson on her election as Chair of the Standing Orders Committee for the 10th year. Well done, Helen. *(Applause)*

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO.1

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Thank you, Mary. President, Congress, you will find a copy of the SOC Report No.1 in your Final

Agenda, starting at page 20. This is revised due to the time constraints this year. I formally move the adoption of that report and in doing so the SOC would like to thank the delegates and their regional secretaries for agreeing the 26 composite motions, which also appear in your Final Agenda, starting at page 98.

Would colleagues also please note the longstanding guidelines for Congress business on page 16 of your Final Agenda. This will help all of you, especially new delegates, in understanding the procedures and the guidelines that the President and the SOC work to.

Colleagues, we have been advised that the only nominations received for the President and Vice President were for the incumbent Mary Turner as President and Malcolm Sage as Vice President. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to announce that they are elected unopposed and there is no need for an election procedure as set out in our report. I am sure that delegates will join me in congratulating Mary and Malcolm. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleagues. We do really appreciate it, Malcolm and I, and we will do all we can to make sure all our issues are raised wherever we are. Thank you.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Thank you, Mary. Withdrawn motions: The SOC has been informed of 22 motions and two rule amendments that have been withdrawn. I will go through these region by region.

London Region has withdrawn Motion 18, 115, 274, and Rule Amendments 397 and 401.

Midland & East Coast Region has withdrawn 147, 252, and 316.

Northern Region has withdrawn 110, 148, 166, 167, 251, 255, 257, 260, 262, 266, and 267.

GMB Scotland has withdrawn 256.

Southern has withdrawn 113.

Wales & South West has withdrawn 108 and 249.

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire has withdrawn 120.

Existing Policy Motions: President, Congress, in accordance with Congress decisions adopted since 2008 the SOC is recommending that motions which are existing policy are endorsed by Congress without the need for debate, following advice from the CEC on the particular motions in question. The existing policy motions are listed in the SOC report No.1 at page 21 of your Final Agenda. You may also find it helpful to refer to the detailed report from the CEC, which is at page 117 of the Final Agenda. The letters EP appear by the side of each such motion in the Final Agenda.

Motions out of order: The SOC has ruled that there are four motions dealing with GMB contributions that are out of order for debate. This is because amendments would be required to the relevant rules to achieve their objectives and none have been submitted. These motions are Motion 40, Family Membership Discount, Motion 41, GMB Family Membership for Foster Carers, Motion 42, Community Membership, and Motion 44, Contribution Rates.

The SOC has also ruled that there are two Rule Amendments dealing with the creation of new branch officer positions that are also out of order for debate because they require additional amendments to the relevant rules in order to give effect to them. None of these Rule Amendments have been submitted. These are Rule Amendments 391 and 392.

Finally, Congress, I turn to our recommendations for speakers' time as set out in SOC Report No.1, at page 20 of your final Agenda. Colleagues, because the Standing Orders Committee appreciates the problems that delegates will face in squeezing their speeches into the shorter available time at this Congress, I do stress that these times are for this Congress only.

We have been told that there will be no outside speakers which will free up time for delegates. We have also had a helpful discussion with the President and Vice President and in the light of this we are moving our first report subject to a qualification. As printed in the Final Agenda, our report proposes that there should be no seconder or other speaker in support of a motion that the CEC is supporting without qualification. However, as regards to the composites, the SOC recognises that in agreeing the 26 composites regions have given up their ability to move and to second their own motion as a stand-alone. In the interests of fairness the SOC proposes that each of the regions involved in each of the composites should still have the opportunity to second or speak to the composite motion, if they so wish. The SOC respectfully asks that the regions concerned speak only once to each composite and adhere to the time limits of up to three minutes for the mover, and up to two minutes for any other speaker. President, Congress, with this qualification I have outlined regarding composite motions, I formally move adoption of SOC Report No.1.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen, very much. (*Applause*) I have not said a word yet so whose hand is up? Show me the rogue! Okay, I will deal with you later. Is there any delegate who wishes to speak on any of the SOC recommendations? Speak now or forever hold your peace. Good morning.

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): President, Congress, I would like to make a point on a withdrawn motion, 184. The motion was around using precepts, councils using local government precepts to fund social care. The branch did in good faith withdraw this motion in March. It withdrew it on the basis that the CEC deemed it existing policy quoting two motions of 2013 and one of 2016. I just want to make a point that the two motions in 2013 preceded the introduction of precepts which came into force in 2015. I have also checked the motion in 2016 and again that motion does not mention anything to do with precepts whatsoever. Therefore, I would like the SOC to have a look at that. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Jan.

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Congress, I am asking the SOC to re-look at Rule Amendment 391 President, Congress, I ask you where do consequential Rule Amendments come from? I have been coming to this Congress for many years and on Rule Amendments I have never ever heard where we had from branches to refer to what is now known as consequential other rules within the Rule Book. Are we as branches expected when we make an amendment or move to make a further

amendment to our rule to go through every rule in the Rule Book to see whether that is reflected? No, we are not. Congress, I ask Standing Orders to re-look at this and that Rule Amendment 391 goes forward asking for an additional clause to rule 38 whereby we ask for a retired members' officer within the branches to promote retired members. We need those people to promote the GMB. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. Anyone else? Helen.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, in relation to Rule Amendment 392, this Rule Amendment seeks to establish the position of a retired members' officer by amending Rule 38. It would also require consequential amendments to Rules 18.2, 18.5, and 35.3 to give effect to its provision. There are no consequential Rule Amendments so it is out of order at this Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Helen.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): With regards to the gentleman who came up, all we can say on that point is we have been advised by the regional delegation that that motion has been withdrawn.

THE PRESIDENT: Martin, is that factual?

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): President, I am just making the point that it was only withdrawn because the CEC classed it as existing policy. (*Inaudible – speaking from the floor*) ----

THE PRESIDENT: Martin, you have made that point. Do you agree that the branch and the region have withdrawn that resolution?

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): Yes, I do.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Thank you very much, Martin, much appreciated. Jan, do you wish to challenge the SOC ruling?

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Come down here, then, Jan, but I do not want a speech. I do not want a speech. I want the point.

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Congress, I wish to challenge – and I did say 391; sorry, it is 392 – that this motion goes ahead. No way in any other years have we had to refer to other rules within the Rule Book. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Jan, do you wish me to take a separate vote on that issue in the Standing Orders Report?

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Okay. Thank you.

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President, Congress, in reply I ask you to support the Standing Orders Report No.1 on the grounds that we have mentioned it, Rule Amendment 392, and whilst fully appreciating what our colleague has said that has always been the case. Therefore, I ask you to support Standing Orders Report No.1.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Helen. I will put that part of the report to Congress. All those in favour of London Region's, and Jan's, proposal that she challenges the SOC Standing Orders Report – no, we do have to have a Rule Amendment to go with any changes to our Congress. Those in favour please show. Those against. That is lost. Congress accept that decision? (*Agreed*)

Challenge to SOC Report No.1 was LOST.

THE PRESIDENT: I now put to the vote, or I will take the vote on the SOC Report No.1. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? That is carried. Thank you, Helen. Thank you, Barry.

Standing Orders Committee Report No.1 was ADOPTED.

THE PRESIDENT: Remember, these are the rules you have adopted for the conduct of Congress for the coming week. Can I now ask my Vice President to take the chair. Malcolm.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS – MARY TURNER

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, President. Congress, it gives me great pleasure to call on our President, Mary Turner, to address Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to try and walk to that rostrum! (*Applause*) Congress, I cannot tell you how delighted I am to be here. As many of you may know, it has not been an easy year. I have been like a cat with nine lives, although I only have five left now!

First, can I thank my region, Warren Kenny, and all the support staff have given me through my long illness, and all those who have taken the time to ring me and ask me how I am, plus all those who decided to find my number and insult me but then that goes with the trade. I would like to give a special thank you to Tim. Tim, thank you for all the support you have given me and for visiting me in hospital, at my home, and special thanks to Malcolm, my Vice President, for holding the fort. You know, he is one great guy. I do thank you sincerely. (*Applause*)

I know it will be remiss of me if I did not thank the region, every single one of them, who have enquired. I have had calls from people that I have disagreed with on this platform, but they have rung me. I do appreciate all that I have been given and while I might not be a steady on my feet today you can bet your bottom dollar I will be steady in keeping Congress moving, so you had better all behave yourselves.

You all know that if you cut me I bleed GMB. Our union runs through me like a stick of rock. I am so proud to be welcoming you all to our 100th Congress and before

anyone says it, no, I was not there at the first one. We have come a hell of a long way as a union. There have been good times and tough times but our GMB family will always stick together.

We are meeting this week at a shortened Congress because there is a general election and this is the second time since I have been involved with the union that it has happened. It is sad for the new delegates, they have been looking forward to coming, but now is the time, more than ever, to stick together because we need a Labour government on Thursday. No one but us will deliver that to support our movement, and our colleagues and members deserve that right. Go out on the doorsteps and speak to people. In our branches we owe it to our members. The Tories who told you to buy your house on right-to-buy now want to take it away if you care for people with dementia. How disgraceful can you get?

Congress, they want to sell our NHS and saddle our young people with debt. They want to take food from our kids' bellies and lay off thousands of hard-working school catering staff, and support staff, this year. I was a dinner lady and this union fought to get healthy free school meals. Well, Mrs. May, we will fight you again. We fought Thatcher on the milk and we will fight you. (*Applause*) There are 13 weeks that those who are rightly on free school meals do not get fed at all. This is worrying so we will be adding that. This union raised this and were the first to do so. I cannot believe how you treat those who live on the minimum wage and zero hours, and landlords raising rents that we cannot afford. It is the landlords who should be stopping. How dare you insult those who use food banks, who have to decide to feed their children and they go without. What a dilemma.

Congress, I used to say that they would rob the eyes out of your head and then come back for the lashes. Well, they have just come, setting the young against our senior citizens. This union has a view of our young members and we have never lost it. This we raise for the first time. If you do the same work as anyone else irrespective of your age, you should get the rate for the job. (*Applause*) And we need a living wage, not what is paid now. Why should you be penalised because of your age. I give you a promise that this union will fight until we achieve that goal for you.

Now I come to not a few insults but a few rights, the public service workers whose pay increases have been blocked at 1%. Well, Mrs. May, we do not want your praise. We work delivering services to the most vulnerable because we care, so stick your fine words where the sun doesn't shine, in other words, up your arse. (*Applause*) Give us what we deserve, respect and a decent pay rise. Now the attack on carers who look after their loved ones saving you millions over the years, caring for those with dementia and Alzheimer's is a 24-hour not an 8-hour day. Remember that. I have a great deal of feeling for anyone, irrespective of who they are, getting this terrible, terrible disease. You intend to rob them of their homes and leave them without. How generous of you. I am praising her now. Oh, god, what will happen! Congress, they have told us they will give us £100,000 but will take the rest.

Congress, we celebrate 100 Congresses today and I am proud to be in Plymouth. We have achieved a lot over the years, an 8-hour day, minimum wage, fighting to save our NHS, we were the first to raise issues on the misselling of pensions, the crisis in care homes, and the first to highlight those who have raided company pension

schemes. Congress, we were the first to raise the issue on the thieving landlords who have robbed so many people. We have now finally a commitment to have an inquiry on the justice of Cammell Laird. For 34 years we have fought this issue. *(Applause)* Can I thank sincerely, and I was there, the Liverpool, North West and Irish Region, you have done well. We will make sure that that inquiry, irrespective, takes place. Well done to you, and this union. May I give a special thank you to Kathleen Walker Shaw, who runs our Brussels Office and has done a great deal to help. Kathleen and I between us have moved that. It is in the manifesto of the Labour Party.

I want to thank each and every one of you for everything you do, and all staff in the regions. It is people like you who built our union. It is you who keeps it growing today. We truly have a past to hold dear and we are proud of how we have a great future ahead.

Last but not least I want to thank my family for the time and effort they have given up to look after me, and especially one here today, my granddaughter, Lisa, who has given her unstinting support to look after her Nan. Lisa, thank you. *(Applause)* I could not do without all the support, just as you cannot do without the support of your family. Sometimes it gets a bit rough but, you know, we stick it out and we are still there.

I say to you, welcome to Congress, have a great few days, and let's go out there and fight for a Labour government. Thatcher never broke us and I am bloody sure May won't either. *(Standing ovation)*

Congress, at half past one in the morning I was still trying to put this together. If you saw my eyes closing you wouldn't believe it. Congress, don't be fooled. Listen to her words. I have had plenty of time to do that. A message to you and your party, Mrs. May, don't insult our bloody intelligence. *(Applause)* When one thinks about it, they could teach the bank robbers a thing or two about robbing but they do it with their eyes open. This is nothing but a dementia tax. Well, you can stick your £100,000. We will fight for what is rightfully ours. We will support our NHS staff and we will fight you all the way. As I said, Thatcher never ruined us and she tried very hard during the miners' strike. You ain't gonna do the bleeding same, I can assure you of that. Thank you all, Congress. Thank you. *(Standing ovation)*

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: President, colleagues, could I now call on Penny Robinson, CEC member from the London Region, to give a vote of thanks to the President.

SIS. P. ROBINSON (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I am delighted to be moving the vote of thanks to Mary Turner, our GMB National President. Congress, it is a testament to Mary's fighting spirit that she is here in Plymouth today. Mary, it is great to see you here at Congress leading the union you have given so much to over the years. We can all name many inspirational trade union leaders through our lifetime but, Mary, you come top of this list as far as we are concerned. There is no one who has given as much time and passion in the Trades Union movement as you. You are the shoulders we all stand on today. Your knowledge of the trades union and

labour movement is second to none. I have personally learned so much from knowing you over the years.

Colleagues, you may not be aware that Mary and her family not only had to deal with the loss of her beloved husband, their father, Denny, but while coming to terms with this loss Mary has had to deal with the A-Z of health problems with the same determination and fighting spirit she has demonstrated over the years. Most ordinary people would have given in with the amount of health issues not only that she has had to endure but she has also had the worry of her grandson's ill health. Fortunately, he is now back to good health and, like Mary, he is on the road to recovery.

Colleagues, Mary is no ordinary woman. She may have started life in an ordinary family, working in an ordinary workplace, and she may have had an ordinary job, but our Mary has done many extraordinary things: women's rights are now at the top of the GMB's agenda. However, when Mary was elected as our first woman international president this was not the case. There are so many people I have met and admire within the GMB, too many to name, people that started at grassroots level and have spent all their lives fighting for the rights of the working men and women of our great union.

Then, of course, there is you. If this is your first Congress, believe me, Mary will have noticed you and will make sure she has reassuring and encouraging words for you. If you struggle at the rostrum do not worry, Mary will be right next to you encouraging and helping you, something delegates who have been here before will have seen on many occasions. It does not stop once Congress is over. I can tell you from personal experience if you have your own work or health issues, Mary will be the first on the phone offering support and encouragement, always looking out for others. That is her nature.

Congress, one of the first issues that Mary had to deal with as a trade unionist was a local rent strike. However, she forgot to tell her husband, Denny. Denny was shocked and surprised to open the pages of his local paper to see Mary's picture holding up a banner demonstrating about the rent strike. He was even more surprised when he got a summons from the council telling him he was in rent arrears and was about to be evicted. There are many other stories I am sure but I am going to leave Mary to tell them.

Mary, you have sacrificed so much throughout your lifetime and we all love and respect what you stand for, what you represent, and your love for this trade union. Colleagues, on behalf of Congress, it gives me the utmost pleasure to move this vote of thanks to a very special person. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Penny. Congress, I could not fulfil the role that you have bestowed on me, none of it, without your total support. I personally thank you all for that. Before I hand over to my colleague, I just have one comment in relation to American elections. You know, when I was a kid my Dad used to say, "Ooh, I just trumped." (*Laughter*) But he blamed the dog! Well, Mr. President, you have the right name because you smell in the same way.

Congress, before we begin our first debate, I would like to explain a few points of procedure. Please listen carefully. To save time, I will take motions in groups. Your session programme will show the grouping. If you are speaking on any of these motions, register at the desk in front before going to the chairs here in front of the rostrum ready to speak. This saves a vast amount of time. I will call movers and any seconders, and any one who wishes to speak against a motion, if we are opposing will only be called. I will call the CEC speaker to reply at the end of the group rather than deal with each motion individually. Where the CEC is supporting a motion, I will advise Congress. Where the CEC has any other position, the CEC speaker will give the reasons for their decision. We will then move to the vote on all those motions in that group. Where there are no speakers against the motion, I will call for the votes on motions in a block. Should any delegate wish to take separate votes on an individual motion, please make this known to me in good time, and from the platform.

Finally, could I remind Congress that as you have voted on the SOC Report No.1 all existing policy motions will not be debated.

CEC RULE AMENDMENTS

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, all the CEC Rule Amendments are on page 116 of the Final Agenda and the CEC is supporting all of these.

CECRA1	RULE 8.4	CONGRESS OF THE UNION
CECRA2	RULE 8.5	CONGRESS OF THE UNION
CECRA3	RULE 8.7	CONGRESS OF THE UNION
CECRA4	RULE 56.3	FATAL ACCIDENT BENEFIT

Rule 8 Congress of the union

4 All delegates must be fully financial members. Each region will elect one delegate for every 1,500 financial members, as stated in the membership figures for the previous September.

CECRA1

Rule 8, Clause 4,
Line 1

Delete "elect", Insert "be entitled to send"

Add at end of clause "These delegates will be selected in line with clauses 5, 6 and 7 of this rule."

Rule 8.4 to read:

4 All delegates must be fully financial members. Each region will be entitled to send one delegate for every 1,500 financial members, as stated in the membership figures for the previous September. These delegates will be selected in line with clauses 5, 6 and 7 of this rule.

Rule 8 Congress of the union

5 For 90% of delegates, each branch of a region may nominate one delegate to represent the region at the Congress. These

nominations must be sent to the regional office no later than 31 December. The region will then print and issue lists during the third week of January, setting out the name and branch of each candidate. The closing date for voting will be 28 February. The candidates who receive the largest number of votes will be elected.

CECRA2

Rule 8, Clause 5,

Line 2

After 'one' Insert "member to stand for election as a"

Rule 8.5 to read:

5 For 90% of delegates, each branch of a region may nominate one member to stand for election as a delegate to represent the region at the Congress. These nominations must be sent to the regional office no later than 31 December. The region will then print and issue lists during the third week of January, setting out the name and branch of each candidate. The closing date for voting will be 28 February. The candidates who receive the largest number of votes will be elected.

Rule 8 Congress of the union

7 Each branch will be invited to nominate one further delegate to be considered by the Regional Committee in appointing delegates under clause 6 of this Rule, and in appointing delegates to make up any shortfall in the delegation following the election process in clause 5 of this Rule. In making these appointments, the Regional Committee may also consider members recommended by other committees, forums or post-holders within the Region.

CECRA3

Rule 8, Clause 7

Line 1

Delete "delegate"

Insert "member"

Rule 8.7 to read:

7 Each branch will be invited to nominate one further member to be considered by the Regional Committee in appointing delegates under clause 6 of this Rule, and in appointing delegates to make up any shortfall in the delegation following the election process in clause 5 of this Rule. In making these appointments, the Regional Committee may also consider members recommended by other committees, forums or post-holders within the Region.

Rule 56 Fatal accident benefit

3 The Central Executive Council will have the power to make decisions based on all the evidence, and to consider whether to pay fatal accident benefit. The Central Executive Council can take

any steps necessary to find out whether the member is entitled to benefit in line with the conditions set out in these rules. However, we will not pay benefit for members who die as a result of an accident they had:

a while they are serving with any armed forces or any irregular force (other than while training as a volunteer or reservist with a regular armed force);

b while they were insane; or

c as the result of:

- **an injury they have deliberately given themselves;**
- **their aggressive behaviour towards someone else (not including genuine self-defence);**
- **a disease or natural causes;**
- **carrying out an illegal act; or**
- **deliberately taking part in a riot.**

CECRA4

Rule 56, Clause 3

Delete "b while they were insane"

Move ",or" to end of clause a

Re-number clause 3c as clause 3b

Rule 56.3 to read:

4 The Central Executive Council will have the power to make decisions based on all the evidence, and to consider whether to pay fatal accident benefit. The Central Executive Council can take any steps necessary to find out whether the member is entitled to benefit in line with the conditions set out in these rules. However, we will not pay benefit for members who die as a result of an accident they had:

a while they are serving with any armed forces or any irregular force (other than while training as a volunteer or reservist with a regular armed force),or;

b as the result of:

- an injury they have deliberately given themselves;
- their aggressive behaviour towards someone else (not including genuine self-defence);
- a disease or natural causes;
- carrying out an illegal act; or
- deliberately taking part in a riot.

CECRA 1, 2, 3 and 4, does anyone wish to speak on any of these? Malcolm.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, President. Colleagues, could I also thank you on behalf of Mary and myself for allowing us to continue as your President and Vice President for the next four years and promise you that we will continue to support this great union with honesty and pride in the future as we have done in the past. Thank you very much indeed. (*Applause*)

Malcolm Sage, on behalf of the CEC, moving Rule Amendments CECRA 1, 2, 3, and 4. Congress, I hope you will agree with me that none of these are controversial and help to clarify the application of the rules concerned.

CECRA1 amends clause 4 of Rule 8 so it no longer suggests all delegates are elected when 10% are appointed and also makes reference to the process for selecting delegates as set out in clauses 5, 6, and 7 of Rule 8.

CECRA2 amends clause 5 of Rule 8 and clarifies that for 90% of delegates branches nominate members for the election of delegates.

CECRA3 amends clause 7 of Rule 8 and clarifies for the remaining 10% of delegates branches nominate members for appointment by the regional committee and ensures the wording of the first sentence of this clause is consistent with the terminology in the final sentence, and with the new wording of clause 5.

None of these changes in any way affect the operation of the current procedures.

CECRA4 amends clause 3 of Rule 56 and removes the reference in the Fatal Accident Benefit rule referring to insanity. Given the GMB policies on mental health it is inappropriate to leave this clause in the Rule Book. In addition, this also now reflects the guidelines for the application of the rule to drop any references to insanity in 2003. Congress, please support the CECRAs 1, 2, 3 and 4.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. Does anyone wish to speak on the Rule Amendments? No? I will now individually, and I cannot take these in block under rule, call for a vote on CECRA1. Can I have someone to formally second the report?

CECRAs 1, 2, 3 and 4 were formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I now ask you to vote on CECRA1 – please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

CECRA1 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Rule 2, anyone against? Support? That is carried.

CECRA2 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Rule 3, all those in favour please show. Anyone against? That is carried.

CECRA3 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Rule 4, all those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

CECRA4 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Congress, very much indeed.

UNION ORGANISATION: CONGRESS

THE PRESIDENT: We are now moving to the first of Congress motions. London Region, then Wales & South Western Region, please come to the front. Hello, there. What are you doing up here? Come on, I am joking.

CONGRESS PROCEDURES

MOTION 1

1. CONGRESS PROCEDURES

This Congress calls on the Standing Orders Committee and Central Executive Council to ensure that delegates are provided with a written copy of the CEC's stance in response to their motion(s) ahead of any Pre-Congress delegates' meetings as to better facilitate and inform lay members during Congress each year.

LOWESTOFT BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. DOUCE (London): President, Congress, our colleague Martin Foster's contribution to the Standing Orders Committee Report debate this morning demonstrates the purpose of this motion entirely. Had the CEC stance been shared with him ahead of the pre-delegates meeting, he would have had the opportunity to do his extra research beforehand and there were many other examples of this at the pre-delegates meeting.

Congress, branches submit their motions based on subjects that they believe in but they are only presented with the CEC stances that have had weeks to be developed 30 seconds before they need to reply to them. Now, sometimes there are issues with these stances and I had a similar experience with Martin last year with the existing policy stance. Sometimes experienced delegates struggle with these so just think about new delegates, how they must feel when they are presented with this opportunity to have to reply *like that*. Colleagues, this is a lay members' congress talking about subjects that we care about so we need the information to be able to debate these as fully and as thoroughly as possible. I know the CEC will not like this resolution but, colleagues, it is our congress, they are our motions, and it is our debate. We need the evidence and the information to debate them properly. I move.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you seconding it?

SIS. T. CHANA (London): I am seconding, yes. Thank you. President, Congress, as a lay delegate attending Congress we receive a lot of paperwork. This is not a criticism of the paperwork received because it is part of the process. The issue to

Congress is one of timing, transparency, and fairness. As a member we put forward a motion by the deadline, January 31st, from my knowledge. Then at our pre-Congress regional meeting we are informed whether our motion is existing policy, supported, withdrawn, or is deferred because they are waiting for a report information. It is on the day of our pre-Congress meeting that we are told of the CEC stance. We are rarely, if at all, given a written statement of the CEC stance; maybe a short verbal comment. This does not allow us to digest, consider, or even fairly challenge the stance. In the interests of fairness and transparency, do we not deserve as members a right to reply by being provided with a written reason of the CEC's stance received in a timely manner. The CEC from our knowledge has about four to six weeks to consider it. We only have a few hours in one day. Like anybody, the CEC may change their stance. Just like as you go to a tribunal, at the door of the tribunal positions can change. But in order for us as members to make an informed decision about important motions it is important that we receive a written CEC stance in advance so we are able to make that informed decision. It is about adequate timing, transparency, and fairness. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you, Taranjit. Are there any speakers against? No? I call Andy Worth to respond behalf of the CEC. Before I do call Andy to the platform, can I have Save More Time for Congress Delegates to Speak, Wales & South West Region would you please move, and the CEC is supporting with qualification, and I would like Congress formally to second. South West.

SAVE MORE TIME FOR CONGRESS DELEGATES TO SPEAK MOTION 2

2. SAVE MORE TIME FOR CONGRESS DELEGATES TO SPEAK

This Congress is concerned at the extended period over which the business of annual Congress is conducted, and agrees the crucial importance of lay delegates having a full opportunity of contributing to the development of GMB policy.

We call upon Congress, therefore, to ensure that the time of this event is used as optimally as possible and, whilst accepting that paid officials and guest speakers have a role to play at Congress itself, to limit the amount of time set aside for their respective contributions.

TORBAY & SOUTH DEVON BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. RAYBOULD (Wales & South West): Good morning, Congress, President. Since I wrote this small motion about three or four months ago, it seems to have actually taken place because we already have a shortened Congress by two days. I do agree that lay delegates do need to have more time to speak, me included. I do like to waffle quite a bit sometimes. This will not be one of those times. I do also agree that Congress is a place where guest speakers and full-time officials have their place too, as we do, but it is our Congress. We do tend to find that we come to part of the day where we have the Congress rolls on and on and on and, basically, a lot of the time is taken up by other people apart from lay delegates. I am just asking that the CEC, the National Officers, and the General Secretary, and President, take some time to look at the procedures we have and put in place maybe a little bit more time for us people who only get maybe once a year to have a yap up here, an extra special go.

What I would like to say in conclusion is that it is not a go at the union. It is a go at the Conservative Party. Basically, a message for Mrs. May-Believe in Number 10, the GMB do not support seven pence a day on a bowl of gruel for school children, a dementia tax that was actually written by somebody who could have written *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, we do not want our NHS sold to Medicare, we do not want to have the poor and needy punished any further for tax by billionaires, we do not want social cleansing in cities, and we certainly do not want child refugees punished.

We do support a great union like ours that created the Labour Party and all I can say to you is all of you out there vote Labour for the many, not the few, and not the greedy. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Can I ask the region whether they formally move? Second. Thank you very much indeed.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Andy Worth to respond on behalf of the CEC. Andy.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC in respect of Motions 1 and 2. President, first, I would like to say how great it is to see you here at Congress. I know you have been struggling. (*Applause*) I know you do not take advice very often, Mary, but I would suggest you do not do too much so you over-exert yourself. People here truly want you to get on and get better. Don't over-exert yourself and be worse when you go back just for the sake of doing it.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy.

BRO. A. WORTH: Congress, on Motion 1, which is asking for the Standing Orders Committee and the CEC to provide delegates with a written copy of their responses in advance of the delegation meetings. Firstly, the motion is incorrect as Standing Orders Committee, which is made up of lay delegates, do not have a role to play anywhere in this. The documents you are referring to are the sole property of the CEC, as they stand, so Standing Orders do not have anything to do with drawing that up and do not in fact actually see it.

Secondly, not that long ago Congress passed policies complaining at the amount of paperwork people received and by the end of this week you will probably be saying we have not done that much to reduce it, but actually we have. There is still an awful lot of paperwork going around. If you put this motion back in, you will destroy a rainforest by doing it because the CEC change their mind on a regular basis and you will end up with version six and potentially get confused by it.

The thing is not to stop transparency because there is nothing to prevent regional secretaries at their pre-delegates meetings issuing verbally or giving copies of the particular motions that are there but to copy out to everybody the response on 352 motions, I am sure you will agree, will just destroy everything. There is nothing to

stop that, indeed at my pre-Congress if somebody wants a copy of the particular motion they can give it. There is nothing to stop the CEC members telling you what and why, either, if you are talking about democracy. It does not have to be just the regional secretary who tells you. Providing that would simply be over-kill in the paperwork, I think. If it is a specific one, I do not think the CEC has a problem with that and I certainly do not. We would ask you to withdraw the motion, or if not withdraw it we would ask Congress to oppose. We want a full transparency debate. We are not against that at all as the CEC.

Motion 2, the CEC supports this motion but with some qualifications. Yes, the motion confirms Congress is the supreme policy-making body and that should always be the case. However, when talking about the debates, there is no restriction on the number of motions that can come in, nobody knows when we start calling for motions how many are going to be coming in, and they therefore have to be fitted into the time we have, whether that is a full week or in these exceptional circumstances a reduce time. A lot of work has to go into that. The chair tries her utmost to get people into the debates, which is usually why Congress sessions overrun and then people get a little bit concerned about it overrunning. We want to get the people in debates. The motions that come in have to fit round Congress events, awards, Congress reports, CEC Special Reports and Statements, and there are already Standing Orders Committee guidelines agreed to everybody who speaks, be they paid officials, or lay delegates, including the General Secretary. There is a time limit on that. You will normally find it is the guest speakers who run over. They should be tightened up and we need to be careful about the amount of guest speakers we have in so it does not impact on the ability of Congress getting through the GMB business. With that qualification on motion 2, we would ask you to support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. London Region, do you wish to respond to the CEC report. Yes, you do? Surprise, surprise.

BRO. G. DOUCE (London): Exercising the right to reply to Motion 1. Colleagues, we do receive the responses verbally and in writing could actually mean electronically. This resolution is about getting information for the individual movers of the motions, not a blanket publication for everybody. I feel there may be a misunderstanding there somewhere. *(Applause)* Colleagues, in opposing this motion I am not going to withdraw it. The region is not going to withdraw it. In opposing this motion the CEC is acting to stifle legitimate debate by denying sufficient time for members to prepare a defence to such opposition. That, colleagues, is an affront to democracy and I know there is inconsistency in approach across some of the pre-delegates meetings but, please, colleagues, support this motion and let's vote against the CEC. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gareth. Well done, for now anyway. Does Wales and South West Region have any comments on Andy's response? No? Okay. As the mover, Gareth, has said on Motion 1, London Region, they are not withdrawing the motion. Can I ask the region is that the stance of the region? *(Confirmed)* Okay. Thank you. I did not expect anything else. There you are. Here we go. I will take this particular motion first where the region is not to withdraw. It is extremely important. Motion 1, the CEC is asking you to oppose. All those in favour of the motion please show. *(Comment from the floor)* Say that again? I have been to

SpecSavers! All those against? I may have a bad eye but I can see that is totally carried. (*Applause*)

Motion 1 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: What a great start. I can assure the delegates here, I can assure you, and Malcolm, we have had this debate. This Congress belongs to you. You are the sole owners of this Congress. I will make sure that that will stand as long as I am in this chair, and Malcolm. Colleagues, thank you, a lot.

Can I now take the vote once again? All those in favour please show. All those against? That is carried.

Motion 1 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, London. A good start to the week. I now put Motion 2 to the vote. All those in favour please show. Anyone against? They are carried. Well done.

Motion 2 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: I keep changing these ruddy glasses! Thank you, Andy. You have done a great job. We lost the first one.

BRO. A. WORTH: That's how it should be, Mary.

UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we now move to item 12, Motion 5, Rule Book Terminology. The CEC is asking you to support this. On 8 and 9, and 10, and 11 will all those regions please come to the front so that we can move? All those who are supporting I am asking you to formally second. Don't tell me you are tired at this time of the day!

RULE BOOK TERMINOLOGY MOTION 5

5. RULE BOOK TERMINOLOGY

This Congress recognises that the building of a UK wide trade union movement represented a huge step forward for working class people across our islands. In Scotland the creation of UK wide trade unions was important in raising wage rates and achieving pay parity in many sectors of the economy.

Congress reaffirms that post the new devolved settlements for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and with the further devolution of power to English Regions possible, a UK wide GMB is the best option for advancing our members interest.

Congress recognises that the Regional structures and autonomy within GMB are vital to the democracy and strength of our union. Our Regional structures and autonomy also leave us better placed to quickly respond to events in a UK where power is increasingly decentralised.

Congress however does recognise that the language in our rule book does not properly reflect the realities of the UK or the fact that we organise in Ireland. Terms like “regions”, “regional committees” and even “Regional Secretaries” are not always appropriate and can even cause offence in the context of the countries of the UK and Ireland in which we organise.

Congress therefore calls for a consultation to be undertaken with Regions to consider finding more appropriate language which better reflects the realities of organisations in a devolved UK and Irish Republic. The consultation should focus on terminology of the rule book and not the principles of a union that organises across the UK and Ireland or our Regional democracy.

Any proposals for amending the terminology of the rule book should report back to Congress in 2018 with a view to adoption of any changes.

DUNDEE 1 BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland): Mary, on behalf of GMB Scotland, me in particular, it is good to see you looking well and if anyone is going to kick Theresa May’s arse it’s you!

Congress, GMB Scotland is asking for the CEC to conduct a review into the language used in our Rule Book. I need to make it clear also that this is not a call for any structural changes whatsoever in our union or to our union. GMB Scotland highly values the support of the GMB regional autonomy and democratic structures; they are the enduring strength of this great union. Our regions are the bedrock of GMB’s achievements and this motion fully recognises that GMB as a national union is better able to serve the interests of our members precisely because of our regions’ strengths and autonomy.

GMB members in Scotland are proud to be part of the UK-wide union that fights to improve the lives of our members wherever they may live. The question is whether our Rule Book uses language that reflects the politically complex times we live in. We live in an age where central government has devolved certain powers to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, for the devolution of regions as a future possibility. The political landscape is changing. We need to change our Rule Book terminology to reflect this.

All we ask is for the CEC to consult with regions over the language in our Rule Book and establish if it remains fit for purpose. We must ensure also that our union is relevant to those we aim to organise, recruit and influence, and the language we use is also very vital to that. We as activists are very familiar with certain terms like “region”, for example, and regard this as a second nature. However, we may without any intent to do so alienate others with the terminology that we use.

Our aim is to grow GMB to organise and represent as many working people as possible. To be successful we must constantly review all aspects of our organisation

and the strategy we use. This motion is simply part of that ongoing process. The review we request could be undertaken quickly by a working group of the CEC. Its terms of reference should ensure that they focus only on the language and not the structure. A further safeguard would be to require Congress next year to approve any proposed changes to the Rule Book wording. This motion is a simple request to look at the language in our Rule Book to ensure that it does not inhibit our organising objectives. This can only be an advantage for our union so please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charlie, very much indeed, and thank you for your kind words. I ask now for that formally to be seconded. GMB Scotland? Thank you.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to London to move Motion 8.

APPRENTICE GMB ORGANISERS MOTION 8

8. APPRENTICE GMB ORGANISERS

This Congress notes the GMB has some fantastic and hardworking Workplace Organisers, Branch Officers and members in workplaces who aspire to be Regional Organisers for the GMB, but who find it difficult to gain the experience needed to become a Regional Organiser.

This Congress calls for the CEC to examine the possibility of creating an apprenticeship scheme for members with the potential but lack the experience needed to become an Organiser for the Union.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

BRO. E. SIDDALL (London): In April this year the Government introduced a 0.5% levy for apprenticeships on employers who offer over £3m a year salaries. The GMB as employer will be subject to this levy but can use this levy to pay for apprenticeships. They are not just for young people. It is for older people too. With the introduction of the levy, we need to look at ways of using this to support activists to become GMB organisers. Our union has fantastic local work based organisers who may not have the exposure they need to become a fully fledged organiser in the union straightaway, therefore we can put an apprenticeship in for apprentice workplace organisers to make sure that we can train people with the GMB values, get people who are dedicated and willing to learn, and train them up so they can then become fantastic organisers in the GMB workplace, and help and support the GMB staff. We have a duty to do this as the apprenticeship levy charges that. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Edward. Does London Region have a seconder?

SIS. M. McCORMACK (London): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)*
It makes perfect business sense also to grow your own talent from within via apprentices. Limited facility time means many ambitious work based stewards do not get an opportunity to get the necessary experience to make a successful job application for GMB organiser roles. GMB employed officers are key to supporting the branches. The branches are like small businesses, skills needed, bookkeeping, marketing, PR, recruitment, compliance, and that is before you even get to membership casework from the members, and supporting the stewards. How can you be successful in an application if you do not know the nitty-gritty, the inside out, or have demonstrable firsthand experience and have no way of getting it? So, to assist such members to launch careers in the GMB, please permit this motion and allow this parallel route in. Let's bring on a new generation of talent who can learn from the wise and experienced. Please support Motion 8 and launch a GMB apprenticeship scheme. I second this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Well done and welcome. I now ask Wales & South West Region to move Motion 9.

IMPROVEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN THE GMB UNION MOTION 9

9. IMPROVEMENT OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN THE GMB UNION

This Congress recognises that GMB should keep up to date with new trends and developments in information and communication technology.

We must continue to explore the possibilities provided by modern technology, with a view particularly to providing a better information service to those members who work in fragmented locations.

Congress agrees that the use of new technology can not only provide better access to information, but can also create an improved awareness of union policies and activities, enhance visibility and accountability and promote greater participation in our activities and campaigns.

Congress notes that more and more members can now be reached through e-mail, text message and website usage, and that effective contact and communication can assist with our recruitment, campaigning and organising objectives.

We call upon the Central Executive Council to continually monitor, review and upgrade our new technology policies in order to make the GMB more effective as a twenty-first century Trade Union.

ASDA DEVON & CORNWALL BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. T. HARRISON (Wales & South West): Congress, first time speaker. *(Applause)*
The need for trade unions such as the GMB to keep up to date with new trends and developments and technology is an absolute imperative. Over the past five years or so the development and reach of social media has been truly prolific and has allowed individuals to have a voice in a public place that they never enjoyed previously.

Take, for example, Facebook and Twitter usage. The former has over 500 million users and the latter 175 million registered to it. Given the incidence of usage we have to continue to critically analyze this more away from formal methods of communication and engagement and arrive at some conclusions as to how they serve to transform our relationship with GMB members. There can be no doubt that social media has the capacity to become an integral part of our organising strategy but it is a case of learning how best to use the various tools in our work and activism. The speed of life itself continues to increase so we have to recognise that news is being received faster by our members through their devices and we have to ensure that what they receive from us is not inferior in speed or quality terms to what they receive from other sources.

Social media is a useful way by which we can inform, advise, and have a two-way debate with our members and, of course, prospective members as well. In terms of campaigning there must be a regularity with which we approach the use of this media form. If Facebook or Twitter accounts go quiet, then people lose interest. We are no longer reliant upon the old forms of media such as television, newspapers, and the radio, or even face-to-face conversations with members. We now have the means by which we can have personal conversations with matters of members, potential members, and supporters, but it cannot just be a quick fix and we have to invest in the necessary time and resources to do this effectively. It is no longer enough just to broadcast messages on a website or through a media release and members, and others, must be able to leave comments that are then read and responded to. Social media should be embraced by everyone in the union and not just one or two select people. We must have a coherent strategy, too, as sometimes activities can be both haphazard and ineffective. It is a case, really, of not trying to use too many platforms at the same time and then ending up not operating any of them very well.

As the motion recognises, the economy today is ever more fragmented with employees dispersed across so many locations, many of which are unorganised. Congress, our revamped Communications Department has grasped the nettle on how to improve the effectiveness and provide a first-class service to regions. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Tracey, well done. Welcome. Good to see you. Does Wales and South West Region wish to formally second or do they wish to put up a speaker? Yes? Come on, then.

BRO. P. HUNT (Wales & South West): Thanks, Mary. We wish to second the motion because it is supported with a qualification. President, Congress, there is no doubt that the advent of, expansion, and widespread use of information and communication technology presents us with both challenges and opportunities. We have to address how we can ensure that new technologies are used to the benefit of our members at work and within our own structures. There is an ongoing need to question our own ways of working, whether it be in campaigning, contact with members, or promoting their awareness and education.

The possibility for IT to be used as part of our wider strategy for revival is surely beyond argument. The time has come and passed for us to embrace the information age. Technology has a long history of putting people out of work as well as

monitoring and controlling them as another motion from our region clearly explains. It is understandable that some of us are at best sceptical and at worst opposed to new technology developments. However, the reality is we are in a position where our members and activists are ageing and where we struggle to recruit younger people. Communications and the potential of new technology cannot be underestimated and we have to understand more fully that cyberspace is one in which our members work, are entertained and educated to interact with one another.

As the mover has pointed out, the world of work is becoming more decentralised, broken up and networked. Our organisational approach is based upon industrial armies of workers organised in large industries, and other types of agencies, temporary contracts, and ephemeral work that exists today. As the world of work becomes increasingly casualised, young females and migrants, we have to respond by working carefully at our own structures and methods on how to help them, not hinder us in our organisation.

THE PRESIDENT: Paul, red light, please.

BRO. P. HUNT: Congress, there are downsides. I second this motion. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Paul. Well done. I ask the mover, North West & Irish Region, to move 10. Then after Motion 11 I will be calling John McDonnell from the CEC to give the CEC's stance. Okay.

FULL MEDIA ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN MOTION 10

10. FULL MEDIA ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

This Congress calls upon the GMB to fund a full and high profile media campaign that not only promotes the GMB but also educates the general public, and particularly young members, on the vast areas we as the general union cover and all the good work we as a union do also to include all the benefits of being in a union.

Ideally various methods of advertising should be explored that would include TV, radio, national/local/and free newspapers, bill boards, football programs/grounds also including advertising on public transport.

L25 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. MAWDSLEY (North West & Irish): First time delegate, first time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress calls upon the GMB to fund a high profile media campaign that not only promotes the GMB but also educates the public and, particularly, the young members of what a union does. Ideally, various methods of advertising should be explored that would include TV, radio, national and local newspapers, and billboards, which would include advertising on public transport. We believe that by having a full media campaign we could reach out to recruit new members who do not know what a union can do for them. Our target area could be students who have to work in fast food areas and public houses to help fund themselves whilst studying at university.

Other areas to be explored could be construction workers, particularly ground workers in these areas, as they believe they are self-employed when in fact if they are not invoicing the firms they are working for, for the work they carry out, they are most likely to be classed as workers, therefore they would have more rights to the likes of holidays, holiday pay, and sick pay. Another area to consider is foster carers, they are classed as self-employed yet many are not in a union and do not realise that if ever an allegation was made against them they would need the support of the union, even though they foster for the local authorities.

These are the groups we need to reach out to. How do we do this? Each region could advertise the best way that suits their region and finances. This could be done by having leaflets, posters on buses, or in national papers, TV, radio, local free papers like *The Metro*, even in football programmes. In the lower league football programmes you can advertise for up to a year for £1,000. When you get to the Premiership it is a lot more expensive. Other areas that could be explored are the likes of beer mats in local pubs. This seems to work for taxi firms. I move this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is there a seconder or is it formally?

SIS. G. KEOWN (North West & Irish): President, Congress, an advertising campaign would greatly benefit our membership in every region. I believe we should target a campaign through bus and bus shelter advertising, local papers, and especially social media, as this is the best way to engage young workers in this digital era. Advertising on bus shelters would target the demographic of new membership we are trying to recruit. We need to spread the word that you do not have to be in a large workplace to be in a union. Young people, young workers, and self-employed, are vulnerable too. We need a campaign that conveys the core values and benefits of the union in an accessible format. One of the biggest challenges we face when trying to recruit is the lack of visibility and presence on the ground. If there is a greater awareness of what we are selling, a union that fights for equality for all, provides information in the workplace, free legal advice, security in knowing that there is help available and, most importantly, knowledge that it is a union of people and not just one lone voice. We need the construction industry and local authorities and employers of casual workers to be aware of the benefits of having a unionised workforce. It is not just a one-way street. There are benefits to be had for everyone in each workplace. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Here we are. I now ask North West & Irish Region to move Motion 11. The CEC is supporting this.

DON'T BUY THE S*N RAG – THE REAL TRUTH MOTION 11

11. DON'T BUY THE S*N RAG – THE REAL TRUTH

This Congress asks that GMB actively encourages its members and engage branches and spread The Real Truth across communities and the country to do the same.

For many years, one particular mainstream newspaper has been boycotted by the people of Merseyside. We have heard at Congress directly from Margaret Aspinall and Sue Roberts (HFSG) families who have suffered and lived with the terror and pain such lies can inflict on lives and also some of the survivors from that fatal day. Four days after 96 football supporters were crushed to death at Hillsborough, and with a nation still numbed by shock and grief, headlines reading 'The Truth' were callously splashed across the front pages above sick and falsified claims that were anything but. Being embroiled at the centre of the hacking scandals and the consequent Leveson enquiry 28 years on, this rag continues to function under a constant theme of sensationalism rather than fact.

There are a number of campaign groups actively working within communities across the country spreading 'The Real Truth' and had many successes in getting the lies removed from high street shelves and educating its readers on the machines that lies beneath the glossy headlines. This motion asks that GMB engage with these campaign groups to assist in promoting their work and support them in sending a clear message to any media outlet, published or otherwise, will not be tolerated.

We therefore call on Congress to ensure that the S*n is not sold or brought into any GMB Congress, Conference or any meetings and that prior to any booking of venues, that it is made clear we do not support the selling of the S*n newspaper. We shall have no contact from the media, or within the Region, via the S*n.

K28 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. RICHARDS (North West & Irish): Congress, I am not going to speak too much about this scum newspaper as you are all aware of how disgusting and evil this rag is. We have all had the pleasure of listening to Margaret Aspinall and Sue Roberts from the Hillsborough Family Support Group at Congress over the years and we have heard firsthand the part this rag has played in clouding the facts and fuelling the hatred in an already impossible situation. The effects on the victims and their families are still very much alive today. I stood on the terraces that day and I will never forgive the rag for the lies that they wrote. If it was not for the solidarity and bravery shown by the Liverpool fans the death toll would have been even higher. I know we are all deeply saddened by last night's attacks and only two weeks ago we saw the horrific attack at the Manchester Arena and we as a union sent our heartfelt condolences as we stand in unity with the families directly affected and of course the people of Manchester. Whilst most newspapers were praising the bravery and solidarity of the people of Manchester, the scum posted online, and I quote: "Innocent people were murdered specifically because Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell suck up to the IRA." This was posted online at 2.35 a.m. only four hours after the attack. Whilst the article had no reference to the attack in Manchester, its timing is a sick and vile attempt to mislead the public. The campaigning group our region is working with is called Total Eclipse of the Sun and our branch has sponsored a taxi wrap. The campaigning group is supported purely by donations and volunteers. Our branch K28 has sponsored a hackney taxi which is being wrapped with an advertisement that *The Sun* is not welcome in our city. I would therefore ask any branch from any region that would be willing to sponsor a taxi wrap then please contact myself or our regional secretary, Paul McCarthy. The cost is a one-off payment of £90.

The scrub boycott in my city of Liverpool is well known and I would ask you all to send a motion into your local council and ask them for their support for this rag to be removed from retailers and vendors. I have recently put forward a motion to my local council and this was supported without opposition. The councils so far who have supported and passed this motion are Liverpool City Council, Knowsley Council, Strabane and Derry, the Wirral, West Lancashire, Sefton, Preston, and St. Helens. There are many local shops, supermarkets, and petrol stations that have joined the campaign by refusing to sell this rag. For the reason stated above, and in memory of the families of the victims along with those who have been destroyed in the name of profit and a result of lazy, spiteful, and plain bad journalism, we ask for this racist homophobic lying rag to be banned from all GMB meetings, banned from all GMB functions, banned from all GMB committee meetings ----

THE PRESIDENT: Hold on, I'm banning you from the platform. (*Applause*)

BRO. P. RICHARDS: And banned from all GMB owned buildings. Congress, let's all campaign to remove this rag from the face of the earth. Congress, I ask you to fully support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Can I make a comment on this particular issue. The work that the Region has done in highlighting the injustice that happened at Hillsborough has to be applauded. This union has sponsored heavily, and quite rightly, too, to make sure that those individuals get justice. We will not rest until all those who have been unjustly treated over the years get their justice, too. So well done Liverpool, North West & Irish. (*Applause*)

Colleague, are you seconding.

SIS. J. DAVIES (North West & Irish): Congress, I am seconding motion 11. President and Congress, the ban of his rag should be easy. Nobody believes what it prints. It is undignified what it says about people. It hates the unions and it hates the Labour Party. Unfortunately, working-class people buy it, and those are the people who Rupert Murdoch looks down to. So I second this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jane. Well done. When the yellow light comes up, be warned. You've got one minute and one minute only. Where we are supporting something, I have asked that it be moved formally. I know this is a special issue. I will now move on and I will call John McDonnell from the CEC North West & Irish Region to respond on behalf of the CEC. Let me tell Congress that this man ended up on my doorstep to wish me well and to come and see me with his regional secretary. John, thank you so much.

BRO. J. McDONNELL (CEC, Manufacturing): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on motions 9 and 10. I turn, first, to motion 8, about which the CEC is recommending referral. We support the spirit of the motion in its intent to provide more support and avenues of progression for our fantastic reps and activists in making the transition from activist to full-time organiser. Our activists are the lifeblood of the union, and we must always ensure that real-life experience of our members and activists is at the heart of what we do. The progression of activist to organiser to

officer is a key part of that. However, while we agree with the spirit of the motion, there may be a better way to ensure progression than through an apprenticeship.

GMB Scotland is, for example, piloting a scholarship programme, and we are in the midst of reviewing our training programme entirely at the behest of Congress. So we recommend referral so that we can look at this issue more broadly.

Turning to motion 9 on technology, which we are supporting with a qualification, when it comes to modern communications the CEC welcomes this motion. Our General Secretary has said on a number of occasions, “As the world of work changes, we must change with it”. That means communicating with our members in the most relevant way possible. The qualification is simply to note that the union is already embarking on an ambitious programme of updating our digital communications with a new text message platform being rolled out, a new website commissioned and a more active social media presence. We have implemented a new email system which, in time, will be linked to the membership database, but which has already seen five times as many people opening emails than has been the norm.

Finally, Congress, we are supporting motion 10 with a qualification. The CEC endorses the need for a campaign to show why being in a union matters. It is vital that we show we are relevant to the modern world of work, and highlighting even more prominently our successes, so that working people can see the practical and tangible benefit of being in a trade union. The GMB does and will continue to find opportunities for publicity that highlights the work we do, and to monitor the number of people we can reach through all communication channels. We will continue to do this.

Congress, as I said in relation to the previous motion, our social media profile is growing. As the motion calls for, we look out for opportunities at sports grounds and communities across the country. Our qualification is that paid TV and radio advertising may not be the most targeted or cost-effective way to get our message across. The union should have the discretion to make this decision based on cost.

To re-cap, we are asking for motion 8 to be referred and for you to support motions 9 and 10 with the qualifications that I have outlined. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John, very much, indeed. I am going to ask, first of all, if Wales & South West Region, and North West & Irish Region, who I have called, wish to respond to John’s report from the CEC? *(No response)* Thank you very much, indeed. The CEC is supporting Motion 11. I now move to London Region. Does the mover wish to respond to the CEC report? *(No response)* So that means you are happy. God Almighty! What has happened in this world. Are you prepared to refer? *(Agreed)* Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you, London. All those in favour of motions 9, 10 and 11? Is anyone against?

Motion 5 was CARRIED

Motion 8 was REFERRED

Motion 9 was CARRIED.

Motion 10 was CARRIED.

Motion 11 was CARRIED.

UNION ORGANISATION: RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to Union Organisation: Recruitment & Organisation. I am recruiting even when I get into a cab. Oh, dear, he must have a headache by the time he gets me here. I have done that this week. I now call the movers of Motion 12, Wales & South West Region; Motion 13, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region; and Motion 14, Wales & South West Region. Then I will call the troublemakers — Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region (*Cheers*). Will the movers come down to the front of the hall.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNING AND ORGANISING MOTION 12

12. SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNING AND ORGANISING

This Congress recognises and respects the Young members network campaigns to reach out to young workers. The vast variation of work and employment models, the urbanisation of many jobs, and the lack of trade union organisation in many workplaces presents huge organisational challenges for the GMB in the modern world.

This clearly places challenges upon traditional, workplace-based organising strategies in today's ever changing labour market. Young workers mobilise through social media and other technologies on a wide range of political and social issues. There is no opposition among young workers towards collective action or toward trade unionism, but evidence suggests it is increasingly unlikely that young workers will develop collective responses to either the challenges they face at work or to achieving their employment objectives.

Congress believes that new modern technology and digital campaigning and organising strategies must be part of the solution for trade unions to both connect more effectively with young people and help solve their employment problems.

Congress calls on the Central Executive Council EC to adopt and implement a campaign to attract and recruit young people into GMB membership.

ASDA JOINT BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. ISMAY (Wales & South West): Congress, I move Motion 12.

Congress, social media is a very powerful thing. It allows unions to have personal conversations with hundreds, if not thousands, of potential members as well as activists. No longer are unions reliant on old forms of media and tools such as Facebook and Twitter should not be just afterthoughts. The GMB cannot start up a Twitter account, make one or two tweets and then expect hundreds of its members to start following. Like any tool, the effective use of social media requires practice and trial and error. Consumers of social media, our members and potential members, can interact with corporate and commercial users that have high standards of professionalism. Colleagues, hopefully, we can support this motion and the GMB must be prepared to invest time and resources to do so properly.

It is known that trade unions usually run a tight ship when it comes to communications, media engagement or interaction with members. When you have a presence on social media, we make it easier for our members to find and connect with the GMB. By connecting with our members on social media, we are more than likely to increase membership retention, promote loyalty and campaigns, and be able to organise within workplaces where we are unable to access with the traditional face-to-face method. Colleagues, please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. N. GAULIER (Wales & South West): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Increasingly, social media has become part of unions' organising strategies. More unions than ever now have a presence on a whole range of digital media outlets. However, colleagues, we are still learning to use these tools effectively in our work and activism. The GMB should ensure that we embrace all methods of social media, to explore all lines of communication, up-to-date campaigns and focus future developments on retention and recruitment. All GMB branches should be on Facebook and Twitter to enable them to interact with members, supporters and potential members. Millions of people are on Facebook and Twitter, so it is likely that the GMB will find either existing members or people in the industry who use social media. As a 21st century union we should lead the way in effective and powerful methods of communications.

Young workers mobilise social media and other technologies on a wide range of political and social issues. There is no opposition among young workers towards collective action or trade unions, but evidence suggests that it is increasingly unlikely that young workers will develop collective responses to either the challenges they face at work or to achieving their employment objectives. Modern technology, digital campaigning and organising strategies must be part of the solution for the GMB to connect more effectively with young people and help to solve their employment problems. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

UPDATE WORKPLACE ORGANISER'S TOOLKIT MOTION 13

13. UPDATE WORKPLACE ORGANISER'S TOOLKIT

This Congress recognises the importance of the GMB Workplace Organiser's Toolkit. It is a useful guide and point of reference for all reps, new and experienced. However, it is in need of updating. In particular, it needs to reflect the importance of Equalities. The GMB has a proud record in fighting inequalities. However, the first and, possibly most important, tool given to new reps does not reflect how important the issue is. Several years ago, an expanded, dedicated section on health and safety was, quite rightly, added to the Toolkit. It is time for Equalities to receive the same. Congress, therefore, calls for a new, revised Toolkit with greater prominence given to Equalities.

BARNSLEY HEALTH BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. BURTON-KEEBLE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Motion 13: Update Workplace Organiser's Toolkit. I am conscious of time so, basically, I am just going to read out our motion because everything I want to say is in

it. “This Congress recognises the importance of the GMB Workplace Organiser’s Toolkit. It is a useful guide and point of reference for all reps, new and experienced. However, it is in need of updating. In particular, it needs to reflect the importance of Equalities. The GMB has a proud record in fighting inequalities. However, the first and, possibly most important, tool given to new reps does not reflect how important the issue is. Several years ago, an expanded, dedicated section on health and safety was, quite rightly, added to the Toolkit. It is time for Equalities to receive the same. Congress, therefore, calls for a new, revised Toolkit with greater prominence given to Equalities.” I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alex, very much, indeed. I now ask Wales & South West Region to move motion 14.

MEMBERSHIP RETENTION MOTION 14

14. MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

This Congress recognises the need to recruit new members into the GMB and to maintain our effectiveness and to ensure we retain our bargaining position with employers and to build the GMB into a twenty-first century Union.

It is equally important that we retain our current membership and ensure that we tackle the current rate of leavers which will, if left unchallenged will certainly hinder our membership growth aims.

Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to develop a structured consistent and effective strategy to tackle the current rate of leavers, to collate data regarding the reasons why members are leaving and implement corrective actions to limit future decline.

CARDIFF 1 BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. KEMPTON (Wales & South West): Good morning, Congress. Deaf, half-blind but just about here. To the credit of many, our union has enjoyed modest but above-average membership growth during difficult times since the Tories came to power in 2010. Our strategy of effective workplace organising has led to increased membership levels in a number of key target areas identified by the National Organising Team and adopted by regions.

The concept of *GMB@Work* focusing upon the role of the activists in building the union and the engagement of members in the process has served us fairly well as our reputation as a challenging and campaigning force for good has grown. However, it can be tempting to focus only upon new member growth. It is understandable to do so as the recruitment of new members is often the method used to measure the success of how an organisation is performing. But rarely is the number of members lost given the consideration that it requires.

Congress, we need to be more focused upon developing longer-term relationships with members, and part of this process should, inevitably, include researching why that relationship ends. From experience, we know that the first year or even the first

few months is a volatile period over which many members leave the GMB. It is essential, therefore, to develop a contact and communication strategy in order to develop more stable and permanent arrangements with members, particularly in those areas where union recognition and representation is not available. It is important that we continue to allocate resources to identifying the most common reasons why people leave the GMB. We must operate clear and accountable procedures for recovering those members who, for whatever reasons, are no longer paying contributions to us. Early and decisive intervention is necessary to ensure that there is the best chance possible to persuade the members to rejoin.

Colleagues, member retention is, typically, a critical factor in any business plan because one of the easiest ways to grow your base is not to lose it. Retention, of course, cannot just be about trying to convince a leaver as to the value of their membership on being reinstated. Meeting and exceeding member expectations is the best way of increasing retention. Quality servicing, engagement, representation and communication builds loyalty, commitment and confidence in and to our union. Procedures that reduce the time that a member waits to receive advice and representation will also impact, possibly, upon the relationship with them. Similarly, being pro-active in terms of responding to the earliest knowledge of a member about to leave employment is vital, too.

Congress, there must be many examples of good practice throughout the union when it comes to retention. Let us not forget that members often leave a union by omission rather than commission. It is important that we don't just take the view that they have made a decision that is irreversible. I have another page to go, but I am going to say thank you very much. (*Applause*)

BRO. R. DANIELS (Wales & South West): Congress, I second Motion 14. President and Congress, someone once said that membership recruitment is the lifeblood of our union. Very few, if any, would dissent from that view. But it must equally apply to the principle and practice of retention. Whilst we will always aspire to greater recruitment figures, and the sky is the limit in that sense, it is an inescapable fact that the hard work and effort of activists and officers in recruiting new members is too often undermined by the sheer volume of members who terminate their membership with us. Membership marketing must be as much about retaining existing members as it is concerned with recruiting new ones.

Fundamental to any workable and successful approach to retention is the adopting of methods and strategies to improve member satisfaction and minimise the risk of them leaving the GMB. Servicing them, involving them, making them feel valued and welcome and enhancing their satisfaction levels are key issues that affect membership retention. In much the same way that there remains a need to better develop systematic recruitment strategies, there is a pressing requirement to evaluate critically our approach to retention. Some may take the view that chasing up people who have chosen to leave the union is a resource pressure that detracts from recruitment work, and which is a task disproportionate to the results obtained. My region does not share that view. From our own direct and personal experience, we apply a structured and consistent criteria to retention which involves activists, officer and support staff sharing both accountability and responsibility for maximising impact.

Congress, the capacity of the GMB to represent and campaign is inextricably linked to their financial position. The more members we have, then the stronger we are organisationally and financially. Retention must be seen as the cornerstone of any workable policy to grow the membership for the GMB. It should not and must not be seen as a junior partner to recruitment. We have to afford it the importance that it deserves. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Robert. Well done.

THE PRESIDENT: Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region, You are very lucky, Yorkshire, because your motion 15 is existing policy. So, therefore, I will not be calling you to the rostrum, or not yet, anyway. Do you agree? *(Agreed)* Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)*

I now ask the movers of motions 16 and 17 to come to the front.

HOW BEST TO PROTECT OUR MEMBERS MOTION 16

16. HOW BEST TO PROTECT OUR MEMBERS

This Congress, with the success of recent campaigns at ASOS and UBER and when considering the present government's increasing attempts to dilute the efficacy of the unions GMB calls on all members to re-double their efforts to identify workplace issues and campaigns which highlight the effect of the Tory's draconian policies. These must be reported to branches in order for them to organise and ensure our members get the best protection possible. This research must be fed back to regions to enable them to map the information. As a union we have activists that are second to none and the finances given to us by our members to offer a more coherent opposition than the present political parties.

BRIGHOUSE GENERAL BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. Y. HUSSAIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Colleagues, I am a first-time speaker and first-time delegate. *(Applause and cheers)* I move motion 16: How Best to Protect Our Members. President, Congress and visitors, this trade union has a long-standing history of protecting workers' rights. Congress acknowledges its recent successful campaigns in ASOS and UBER and when considering the present Government's increasing attempts to dilute the efficacy of the unions, thus the GMB calls on all its members to re-double their efforts to identify workplace issues and to report to branches to organise and ensure our members get the best protection possible. Finally, to feed the results back to regions to map the information. The results of these draconian policies work against human rights and workers' rights. Therefore, they should be fed back to the region as it will help map the issues, to build a picture of what may be occurring, to help us to protect our members and to be pro-active rather than re-active.

I call on the Congress to protect our members, (1) to identify the Tory's draconian policies; (2) to report to branches and (iii) to allow the region to map the issues, to help in being pro-active and to bring about positive change to the members. This is

essential, more than ever. Although the polls show that Jeremy Corbyn is bridging the gap in votes, there is still uncertainty. I call upon the Congress to act on the counter-intuitive Tory policies with immediate effect when identified by members. It is essential that we, as shop stewards, convenors and officers, work as a team and identify the issues.

One such example is the NHS pay freeze and how we can work towards fighting this Tory policy and others, too, that are counter-intuitive. How about the current state of affairs of local hospitals? Nationally, and in the tabloids, it has been reported that humanitarian organisations will come in to help with the crisis. This is unacceptable. Therefore, it is essential that GMB representatives of our trade union must ensure that we have our members on board and help bring about positive change by routine channels through shop stewards and officers or, if the crisis is more widely spread, to take it to a national level to help protect workers' rights and get our members the best protection possible.

As a union, GMB has activists who are second to none and finances given to us by our members to offer more coherent opposition than the present political party. I call upon the Congress to support and be in favour of motion 16 how best to protect our members. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call next Motion 17. After that, I will call Elaine Daley to speak on behalf of the CEC.

INDUSTRY/BUSINESS SPECIFIC CROSS-REGIONAL ORGANISING FRAMEWORK MOTION 17

17. INDUSTRY / BUSINESS SPECIFIC CROSS-REGIONAL ORGANISING FRAMEWORK

This Congress approves for the formulation of a framework and terms of reference of support, resources and training to improve lay member co-ordination and organisation of industry/business specific combines.

Many good examples of well-run combines exist. Best practice can be extracted from these to inform and create a structure in which others can be established and thrive across regional boundaries and structures.

LEICESTER WATER BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. EVANS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 17. President and Congress, this motion simply asks for us to build on what we already do well, to build improved structures and planning across our business and industrial sectors. We already have a good number of industrial combines and forums which organise nationally, but establishing these can take a considerable time which could be improved if we only introduced some general guidance. Much of this guidance could be based on the best practice from those established combines that we operate on a cross-regional basis. Employers and sectors are increasingly co-ordinating their strategies to attack the terms and conditions of our members and we must respond

accordingly by providing our activists with the best advice and guidance possible to this. Co-ordination is often the key to success.

My own sector — the water industry — is a prime example of where employers regularly come together to co-ordinate their areas of attack and cut. Therefore, we ask the CEC to develop a framework of guidance for establishing and operating across regional combines and forums. This could well be incorporated as an appendix to our existing *GMB@Work* training package. We are not seeking to prescribe a structure but merely to provide a framework from which to develop, incorporating key concepts and support roles across all regions. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Jason, well done. Congratulations. You kept nearly to time. We are moving on. Does Midland & East Coast Region wish to formally second or offer a speaker. (*Formally*) Thank you. Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) I now call Elaine Daley to respond on behalf of the CEC.

SIS. E. DALEY (CEC, Commercial Services): President and Congress, I am responding on behalf of the CEC. We are supporting motions 12 and 14 with statements and motions 16 and 17 with qualifications. On motion 12, the use of modern means of communication is highly important in building a union for the 21st century, especially as social media is used by both young and old, and is relied upon by many in the so-called “gig” economy who are seeking work. Many areas of the union embrace the use of social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and other less well-known apps. However, we are aware that using social media, such as Facebook, can cause problems, given its relatively open nature. Some branches, GMB committees and workplaces use closed Facebook groups as a means of communication. GMB supports the use of all appropriate media to reach our members and encourage new members to join, and our National Communications Department uses social media to communicate to members and the public, and continue to actively explore a wide-range of options for communications.

On motion 14, the National Organising Team and the Senior Management Team have made membership retention a key target for developing an effective union fit for the 21st century. Keeping the members the GMS has is as important, if not more important, than the recruitment of new members. GMB needs to recruit around 70,000 members per year in order to standstill. Workers are changing jobs more often, moving around the country more often and the phenomenon of an employee staying with a single employer for all of their working life has declined.

The challenge for a 21st century union is demonstrating relevance to workers who no longer identify with a single employer or job. The NOT and the SMT have undertaken a review of practices used by different regions to maintain existing members and are developing best practice to roll out to all. The strategy should be aimed at ensuring that members are contacted at the earliest possible time after their membership has been cancelled.

On motion 16 the qualification is that GMB campaigns are constantly kept under review to ensure that they are delivering better organisation and improving membership levels as befits any union seeking to be fit for organising in the 21st century. It is the responsibility of GMB organisers and lay members at all levels to

highlight workplace issues which can lead to union growth. GMB sections, regions, organisers and branches already identify potential employers and workplaces, and work is being undertaken to map employer and to consolidate our membership throughout the country, and provide information that can be used in collective bargaining as well as organising campaigns. This information is being shared with unions. However, this work should be a two-way communication process as branches are also required to submit branch development plans — rule 35 — which include powers for recruitment and campaigns to grow the union.

Finally, on motion 17 the qualification is that the establishment of sector industry and business-specific structures is being developed across GMB, and there are good examples of this already in existence in employers in the utilities industries and public services, retail and elsewhere. These structures allow members who identify with one another through their employer or through their job role to work together to provide strength and solidarity, which can improve the bargaining position and organisation of the GMB.

The future development of such structures is dependent upon a flexible approach, recognising that there is no “one size fits all”, as employers, industries and sectors unique attributes, which GMB needs to take account of in developing these structures.

Therefore, Congress, please support motions 12 and 14 with these statements, and motions 16 and 17 with the qualifications I have set out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Elaine. Can I now ask the movers of motions 12, 14, 16 and 17 if they wish to respond to the CEC stance? (*Calls of “No” from the floor*) Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) I will now put them to the vote. I ask all those in favour of motions 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 to vote? Does Congress agree to accept? (*Agreed*) Is anyone against? No. They are carried.

Motion 12 was CARRIED.

Motion 13 was CARRIED.

Motion 14 was CARRIED.

Motion 16 was CARRIED.

Motion 17 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to agenda item 14.

GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT: WOMEN’S TASKFORCE REPORT (PAGES 4,5)

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Good morning, again, everybody. It is lovely to see you all here in rainy Plymouth. I am moving a specific part of the General Secretary’s Report this morning. I am moving the main body of the Report tomorrow, but I thought it was so important that we deal with the Women’s Taskforce update separately. That body has done some groundbreaking and fantastic work in looking at and giving us recommendations about why our union, right across its structures, is not as balanced and as representative in terms of women as it should be.

Before I do that, Mary, there are a couple of pieces of business that I need to deal with. The first is our exhibitors. You will have seen in the hall on the way into this centre, they come along, they pay a lot of money to come here and, please, go along and visit those stalls throughout our shortened Congress. Thank you to Hilary Perrin for working tirelessly to get so many exhibitors along. One exhibitor is called Trade Union Friends of Israel, and there is some discussion about whether they should be here and what our relationship with this organisation should be. What I propose to do, Mary, and it has the support of the National Executive, the CEC, is that we will debate our relationship with Trade Union Friends of Israel, including the motion that was passed by this body in 2013, including the discussion that was subsequently had by the Political, European and International Committee in February of 2016, and including the discussion this year with the Finance & General Purposes Committee that agreed that they should have a stand here this year. I want to leave it at that. I don't want to do the business out *here* in public. We always do our business in private, behind closed doors and we will do that properly and thoroughly and report back to you.

The other piece of business, Mary, is the National Policy Guide. Please have a look, if you have not already, at this Policy Guide that is in your bags. It shows you and details for you our reps, our activists and every single policy that the GMB has across our union. Of course, that will be updated every year as a result of everything that you discuss and agree here at Congress. I want to thank Ida Clemo who has worked tirelessly on producing *this* document. It took hours of painstaking research and work so that we have a document that, if anyone asks us a question on what any of our policies are, you can refer to it straightaway. So Ida, well done and thank you so much. (*Applause*)

I now move on to the Women's Taskforce. The Women's Taskforce was set up in 2013 as a result of a discussion and a special report to Congress in 2012. The role of the Women's Taskforce was to look at why more women aren't coming through our representative structures, both at branch and lay level but also at full-time level as well. The Taskforce, which is exclusively made up of women, officials, lay activists and staff, has made an enormous amount of groundbreaking decisions and recommendations. It has done some amazing stuff: the development of a new national staff-to-officer programme; the introduction of a new GMB appointment process; two CEC special reports; the production of fact sheets, the creation of the Eleanor Marx Award, recognising the outstanding contribution for women, which will be awarded this afternoon; an annual women's conference in every region and, yes, for the first time in the GMB's history a national women's conference will now take place later this year following a recommendation from the Taskforce. (*Applause*)

Look, if you will, please, in the General Secretary's Report at page 5 at the progress that has been made. You will see two grids there. As a result of those recommendations we have made some startling progress. The figure for CEC members who are women is up from 35% to 47%! Regional council delegates who are women are up. The number of branch secretaries who are women has risen. Women organisers and organisation officers are up from 30% to 38%. Senior organisers and national secretaries who are women are up. But there is still work to do. We still don't have a woman regional secretary and we still don't have enough women representatives in our Senior Management Team. So it is anything but job

done! Conference, the development of women across our union and throughout our union needs to become a culture and a way of life. That is why we want to thank the work of the Women's Taskforce for coming up with some brilliant recommendations and action points. They have come up with a number of recommendations in *this*, their final report to us. But now the Senior Management Team of the union need to take the baton on.

I want to thank the Women's Taskforce for their efforts, for their unstinting commitment to this organisation and I assure you that the Senior Management Team are utterly committed to the continuous development of women right across our structures. If you opened and removed the barriers, then we will see women coming through. We are making progress but there is more to do. So I commend that part of the General Secretary's Report to you. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. I am now going to give the regions the opportunity, if they wish, to respond on motions 12,14,16 and 17 to the qualifications and statement of the CEC. Do you wish to put a speaker in? (*No response*) No. Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Thanks you. I will move now to the regions and I will give the opportunity to each region to put one speaker up on the General Secretary's Report. Southern (*No response*), Northern (*No response*), North West & Irish (*No response*), London?

BRO R. POLE (London): Congress, I am a GMB on the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. I wanted, initially, to raise a question with Tim. I actually now want to thank him for the undertaking that he has given in respect of the comments regarding the Trade Union Friends of Israel stall that is here, because he made reference to the minutes of the meetings that I had to remind him of where our policy on this issue was quite decided. It is that the GMB does not affiliate to that organisation at any level, nor do we join the delegation at national or regional level, or accept money from them. With a guarantee that he is going to take that to the CEC and report on that further, I would like to thank him for the comments that he has made and hope that that undertaking is met with that particular organisation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Dick, thank you, very much indeed for being so co-operative. Is there anyone else? (*No response*) Does anyone wish to respond to the General Secretary's Report on 4 and 5? (*No response*) So I will now put pages 4 and 5 to the vote and the Special Report. Please show? Those for the General Secretary's Report on the Women's Taskforce, please show? Anyone against? Thank you. They are carried.

The Women's Taskforce Report (pages 4 and 5 of the General Secretary's Report) was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: We are now moving to Composite 3. I will be calling, if they so wish, the Southern Region, North West & Irish Region to move and to second, and I will be giving priority in debate to GMB Scotland, Wales & South Western Region and London Region.

**UNION ORGANISATION: REPRESENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY
GOVERNANCE, THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TASKFORCE AND ITS
RECOMMENDATIONS
COMPOSITE 3**

C3. Covering Motions:

71. THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TASKFORCE AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

Southern Region

72. GOVERNANCE

North West & Irish Region

GOVERNANCE, THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S TASKFORCE AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

This Congress notes that there have been numerous motions and special reports addressing the under representation of women within all structures of the GMB and this still remains one of the most serious equality issues facing the union.

This Congress is concerned that although this was acknowledged in a Central Executive Council Special Report the 'GMB Women's Project,' which was adopted by Congress in 2013. This special report contained numerous recommendations one of which was the creation of a National Women's Taskforce.

The role of the Taskforce was to oversee the implementation of recommendations contained in the 2013 report, generate further recommendations which would encourage more women to be actively involved in all areas of GMB and to identify and remove barriers that bar them from doing so. The Taskforce was formed and presented an interim special report containing numerous recommendations to Congress 2014 and again submitted a second special report to Congress 2015.

Both reports were endorsed by Congress and also contained recommendations to encourage more women to be actively involved in all areas of GMB, and identify and remove barriers that they believe bar them from doing so.

Congress notes with disappointment that despite the continued growth in GMB female membership, the under- representation of women in our structures within GMB still continues.

Congress believes that this under-representation continues as a result of GMB's inactivity. Congress consider the number of recommendations contained within the 2013, 2014, 2015 special reports and submitted to the SMT which to date have not been implemented, is unacceptable.

The Taskforce have also submitted additional recommendations to the Senior Management Team and are still waiting the implementation of these. This is causing concern among female members, as membership is growing and we are pleased that the % of women membership is increasing, in line with the continuing expansion of the Service Industry. We acknowledge that two successful candidates to the post of National Secretary were female, but the underrepresentation of females in our structure and committees is continuing.

Congress believes that the work of the National Women's Taskforce is far from complete, and that the Taskforce should continue to work for equality for women in the GMB until such time that women are equally represented at all levels of the union, including SMT.

This Congress calls for the full implementation of each of the outstanding recommendations as a matter of urgency as not to do so would send the wrong signal to Congress delegates that voted and supported this Project in 2013, and subsequent Congresses.

Congress further calls for a report to be presented to Congress of 2017 identifying how and when each of these recommendations have been implemented along with resulting outcomes.

(Carried)

SIS. N. DARCEY (Southern): Congress, I move Composite 3. President, Congress and Comrades, Tim has done most of the job of my speech. I was going to talk a little bit about what the Taskforce did, how it was set up and what the recommendations were that it made. He has already talked about all of that, but the important part of this motion is now that the Women's Taskforce has been closed down, a number of the recommendations that it made have still not been actioned. So those recommendations came from the Taskforce originally. The process is written up into a report, it is looked by SMT, it then goes to the CEC and, if everybody is happy with it, that then goes on to Congress. It is then accepted by you as delegates. So all of those recommendations have already been accepted by this Congress. They have, essentially, become the law of this union but, unfortunately, some of them do seem to have been a little bit lost and have not been actioned yet. Some of the examples of those will be a workplace contacts pack of information that is aimed at women, equality audits across the regions, policies and procedures affecting our women employees and introducing part-time officer posts. All of those things will be a massive help for women in our union. That is why they have all already been agreed. So it is not really up for debate as to whether they should happen or not. It has already been decided that it should, but the important thing is that we make sure that they are not lost now that the Taskforce is not functioning. We have to ensure that those recommendations do actually happen moving forward.

As Tim said, we still have zero General Secretaries, zero regional secretaries who are women in our entire 128-year history. The job is not done. In fact, the only place where you do find a majority of women is right at the bottom, be it the employee structure or the lay member structure, because that is the only place where actually dominate. I think that women are sick of being relegated to the arse end of everything. Let us make sure our union does better with *this*. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: I call the North West & Irish Region to second.

SIS. T. PATRICK (North West & Irish): Congress, I second Composite 3. President and Congress, the National Taskforce was given a job to do and that was to recommend changes, to eliminate the hurdles that stood in the way of women's progression, hurdles that were created on the representation of women within the union. We welcome that progress has been made, the staff-to-officer training has been successful and has increased the percentage of women officers, and we welcome the appointment on merit of two female national section secretaries, but this work has not been completed as indicated by the number of women present here. Targets for equal representation have not been met. This is one of the recommendations made in previous taskforce reports that has not yet been reached. Another view that is not viable was consideration of appointing part-time branch secretaries and officers, which should continue to be open for discussion and placed on agendas of meetings for GMB staff and representatives. The Taskforce will no longer meet but the work must continue. We cannot be complacent. The work has produced initiatives to increase women representation throughout the union. It is essential and is creating a union that is representative of its members and every woman can play their part.

A new equality strategy is being launched. Let gender balance be the centre of that, and let's see women members be actively involved in their branch and GMB structures. Taskforce members are proud of their achievement, and this afternoon will see the presentation of the second Eleanor Marx Award that was initiated by members of the Taskforce. Later on in the year the first GMB Women's Conference will take place. Let us continue to move forward, not excluding our male members but working with them as equals to build a union that reflects our membership in society. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I now ask the movers of Motion 73.

OLDER WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE MOTION 73

73. OLDER WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

This Congress notes the increasing numbers of older women in employment, and commends the development of structures in the trade unions which encourage and support women to become active in the union.

Congress encourages the development of workplace policies through collective bargaining which recognise the changing labour market profile; for those with caring responsibilities; health conditions requiring reasonable adjustments; training within working hours to allow new skills to be learned; and addressing specific women's health and safety issues, such as supporting women in the workplace during the menopause.

Congress calls on the CEC to build on the recent successes with regional women's conferences, and to work across all sectors in preparing recruitment and training materials which highlight the role that the trade union can play in representing the needs, and valuing the experience, of older women in the workplace.

GLASGOW GENERAL APEX BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(*Carried*)

SIS. J. GAULD (GMB Scotland): Congress, I am moving motion 73: Older Women in the Workplace. That is not myself. Congress, in the last 25 years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of older women in employment. Women are living longer and healthier lives, but the increase in their state retirement age means that they are also expected to work for longer. In addition to employment issues common to all workers, older women at work can also face specific challenges. Many women, and older women, in particular often have a lot of caring responsibilities. Congress, these present a very real challenge to older working women. As well as holding down a job, many older working women find themselves caring for children and grandchildren, as well as elderly parents. They can be wives, mothers, grandmothers and daughters, and they are expected to provide support to their family in each of these roles. Isn't gran often the first port of call when a working mum needs support? Older women may have to juggle work and families whilst dealing with an employer who is not sympathetic to their needs for flexible working. They face difficulties in acquiring new skills and accessing training and they will be dealing with the menopause or age-related health problems. For similar reasons, older women may not

be able to fully participate in trade union training and activities in the same way as their male colleagues.

GMB has made great progress in encouraging women to participate in our union, but we can do more. For instance, almost half of the GMB Scotland members are women. But we see too few women in senior lay positions working for our union or as delegation members. There is scope to encourage and develop greater involvement of older women, a section of the workforce with experience and great potential. We know that the key to engaging people in conversation about the union is to talk about things that matter to them. However, to appeal to the huge number of older women in the workplace, we need to back conversations up with recruitment materials that focus on specific issues that affect them. I am talking about issues like caring, flexible working, training, health, discrimination and equal pay.

Congress, please support this motion. Let us do all we can to support, recruit and organise older women in the workplace. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Julie. It is good to see you.

THE PRESIDENT: We now come to motion 74. The CEC is supporting. The CEC is also supporting Motion 75.

WOMEN AGAINST THE TRADE UNION ACT MOTION 74

74. WOMEN AGAINST THE TRADE UNION ACT

This Congress believes that the sustained attack on trade union organisation has made massive changes to employment and equality legislation. This is a major concern and highlights the detrimental impact on the rights of women to organise collectively in trade unions through the Trade Union Act.

This Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to implement a campaign which: -

- Raises awareness to encourage and support trade union activists
- Highlight the advantages of women self-organised in the GMB
- Raise awareness of the importance of facility time in bargaining for equality and challenging discrimination

ASDA JOINT BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. L. DELAZ-AJETE (Wales & South West): Congress, I move Motion 74: Women Against the Trade Union Act. President and Congress, the Trade Union Bill's vicious attack was recognised throughout last year's Congress and will be during this week. The wage freeze between the public sector is the longest since Victorian times. We need to prioritise and enhance our capability to meet the recruiting, organisation and recognise the challenges created by austerity measures, including cuts, workforce reductions, reorganisations, attacks on facility time and privatisation. Women are being hit the hardest by the Government's cuts and by

changes that restrict access to justice, like those to the Legal Aid Scheme. It is a vile by-product of austerity but, above all, it is a political choice.

Every year too many women die as a result of domestic violence. The lack of preventative and support services mean that women and their children often suffer in silence. Cuts to local councils have meant fewer options for women to protect themselves and their families. This increasingly desperate situation makes trying to leave a manipulative, abusive partner even harder. But, unfortunately, this Government have no interest in helping the most vulnerable. It seems that women are definitely not on top of their list.

In the workplace sex discrimination claims have plummeted by 83%, not because there has been a huge decline in discrimination but because of the direct rise in employment tribunal fees. Women are forced to pay these fees up front before they can take cases to an employment tribunal. It is now much harder to get justice, which leaves unscrupulous employers free to continue and treat workers badly. But, Congress, no Bill or law will ever stop women in the GMB fighting. We will never stop fighting for those who care about equality in the workplace, about maternity and the gender pay gap. Women are the foundation on which the GMB is built. There are many inspiring women in our union's structures. Look at the rallies and marches that they have organised throughout the regions. We have seen thousands of women workers take to the streets to show themselves as activists. We will fight a government that wants to erode the quality of life for women and our families and diminish our opportunities to achieve our potential. We need to nurture new women members to come forward as activists and as leaders. We need to recruit new members, improving density and increasing our women activists' base. Colleagues, we need to raise awareness and to help women to self-organise. Please support.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Can motion 74 be seconded formally?
(Motion 74 was formally seconded from the floor)

GENDER EQUALITY – TACKLING POVERTY MOTION 75

75. GENDER EQUALITY – TACKLING POVERTY

This Congress recognises that poverty is a gender issue and requires the GMB to support the world-wide promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. Z. ASLAM (London): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move motion 75 on Gender Equality and Tackling Poverty.

Congress, gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. The disadvantages facing women and girls are a major source of inequality. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that this inequality perpetuates extreme poverty for women. All too often women are discriminated against in education, health, political

representation, the labour market and living standards, all of which have connected consequences for the development of their capabilities and their freedom of choice. According to a 2016 United Nations Human Development and Gender Inequality Report, their index measures state that gender inequality is not just low in less-developed countries, like India and Tanzania, but also, surprisingly, in the UK and USA, where it has fallen in rank by three and four places, respectively, over the five years from 2010 to 2015. Clearly this report suggests that gender inequality and poverty is a worldwide issue.

Gender-based inequalities of positions in power are long-standing. Fifty years of policy effort has secured some important changes, but evidence of sustained progress is lacking, and there are marked signs of regression. Radical change is required to bring about progress towards a world of reduced gender inequality and rectifying this long-term social injustice. Integrated and innovative approaches are needed to address the social and economic barriers that prevent women from achieving equality and empowerment.

Critically, governments must be involved in policy intervention to stimulate proactive thinking and to steer public policy to overcome the systemic disadvantages facing women. When women have equal access to education and go on to participate fully in business and economic decision-making, they are a key driving force against poverty. Women with equal rights are empowered. They are better educated, healthier and have greater access to financial resources. Their increased earning power also raises household incomes. Gender equality also translates into better prospects and greater wellbeing of children, reducing poverty of future generations.

This Congress recognises that poverty is a gender issue and requires the GMB to support the worldwide promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Zahida. Well done. I now call June Minnery to give the CEC response on composite 3 and motion 73. Welcome, June.

SIS. J. MINNERY (CEC, Public Services): Conference, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC, responding on composite 3 and motion 73. The CEC is supporting composite 3 and motion 73 but with some qualifications. The recommendations in the Women's Taskforce Report, adopted by Congress in 2014 and 2015, will be worked on with a view to implementation. The Women's Taskforce was established more than three years ago to do a specific piece of project work, and much progress has been made in removing some of the barriers to the development and progress of women within GMB. The Taskforce has reached its natural conclusion, but although the Taskforce as a body will no longer meet, future and outstanding work in developing women within GMB will continue and become mainstream. It will be integral to all that we do and the work of the Taskforce will naturally flow into the GMB Equality Department. This work will include the development of equality policies and materials supporting our women members across all regions, sectors and industries as highlighted in motion 73.

The qualifications are that the composite calls for a report to Congress 2017, which is impossible as this motion will only be debated at this Congress. A report to Congress

2018 may be more appropriate. The composite calls for the Women’s Taskforce to continue until such time that women are equally represented at all levels of the union, including on the SMT. Of course, our ultimate aim should be to achieve internal structures that reflect our membership, but we do have some way to go. This will take time, but the crucial point is that we are moving in the right direction. Our culture is changing for the better, but that will only be achieved by good and progressive management with the right commitment. Therefore, Congress, please support composite 3 and motion 73 with the qualifications I have set out. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, June. Let me ask the two regions if they wish to respond to the report from the CEC? *(No response)* No. Thank you very much, indeed. I have now just sacked Tim because he doesn’t need to reply to anything. Southern and North West & Irish Regions accept the qualifications. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Does GMB Scotland accept the qualification on motion 73? *(Agreed)* I now put motions 73, 74 and 75 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Is anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 73 was CARRIED.

Motion 74 was CARRIED.

Motion 75 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: I call composite 11, London to move, North West & Irish Region to second. Then I will call motion 151: Outdated Dress Code.

**EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY RELATED DISCRIMINATION
COMPOSITE 11**

C11. Covering Motions:

149. PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION

London Region

150. STOP MATERNITY RELATED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AT WORK

North West & Irish Region

PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY RELATED DISCRIMINATION

This Congress notes under the present Government we have seen the erosion of many employment rights which were put in place to protect workers. Employers have taken the opportunity of lax employment laws to justify their failure to follow basic principles which have resulted in discrimination.

Pregnancy and the maternity period (which includes breastfeeding) has been used by many employers to discriminate against women as they frequently fail to consult properly with women who are on maternity leave, are not carrying out workplace risk assessments and are treating women differently if they are of childbearing age.

This Congress is concerned by the rise in the number of women experiencing pregnancy discrimination and maternity-related discrimination at work since the last report into this issue by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC).

According to a report published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2015, it found that one in nine mothers reported that they were either dismissed; or made compulsorily

redundant, where others in their workplace were not; or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job. This works out as around 54,000 women each year (if the figure is applied to the whole population) losing jobs every year in Britain due to pregnancy discrimination, almost twice the amount since the initial study in 2005.

The national charity Maternity Action Group has also reported that the number of women calling their advice line increased by 18% in one year alone. This is whilst the TUC has reported that only 1% of women who are discriminated against in pregnancy take a claim against their employer to tribunal, mainly as a result of tribunal fees introduced by the Government in 2013.

It is not appropriate to allow these discriminations to go on unchallenged.

We need to challenge pregnancy discrimination whether it be intentional or not. What may begin as unintentional, if it goes unchallenged, will become the panacea and will be accepted more widely in the workforce? We are protected by the Equality Act, protecting women during pregnancy and maternity and these should be enforced.

We ask Congress to:

- 1) Provide guidance on challenging pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace
- 2) Produce a code of good practice to support women who are pregnant or during the maternity phase which branches can use to support these women
- 3) Provide pregnancy and maternity discrimination training sessions to activists
- 4) Increase awareness of pregnancy and maternity rights
- 5) Call on the Government to meet the TUC's demand that they stop charging women up to £1200 to take a pregnancy discrimination claim to tribunal and extend the 3-month time limit for new mothers to bring a claim.

(Carried)

SIS. N. CLOUDEN (London): Congress, I move composite 11 — Pregnancy and Maternity Related Discrimination, cover motions 149 and 150.

Imagining being pregnant. Planned or unplanned, you are carrying another life. With trepidation or excitement, you carefully choose the right moment to inform your employer. To your disbelief, your employer hits you right between the eyes with, “How are you going to look after a baby when you can’t even look after yourself?” “Don’t think being pregnant means you don’t have to do your playground duty. You should have an abortion”. Or your partner calls work on your behalf as you have been suffering with the early effects of the pregnancy, to be told, “Tell you wife that if she takes any more time off sick I will force her to take early maternity leave”. These are just a few examples of some of the disgraceful and vile words our members have reported to me that head teachers and other employers have used. Pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination is rife in the workplace. More than three-quarter of mothers surveyed for the Equalities and Human Rights Commission reported discriminatory or negative treatment by their employers. Sadly, only 3% went through the employer’s grievance procedure. The reasons for not raising a complaint included fearing the impact on their relationship, their own stress and tiredness, feeling that nothing would change, a lack of clear complaints procedures and the financial cost of raising a complaint.

The Equality Act is supposed to protect women during their pregnancy and maternity, and yet employers continue to discriminate and flout legislation, failing to follow basic principles, failing to consult with women and failing to carry out risk assessments. Employers abuse and use employment laws to their advantage, deliberately providing women with false information, actively promoting an environment of fear and even making redundancies whilst on maternity leave. Shockingly, one in nine mothers reported being dismissed in 2016. This is around 54,000 women every year losing their jobs due to pregnancy and maternity-related discrimination. That is a huge increase since the initial 2005 study, and the number will continue to rise unless we make a change. Sadly, for those women who challenged their employer, they often find access to justice being denied as a result of the unfair tribunal fees. The fees are incredibly high and are not always recoverable. It is no good employers hiding behind feeble excuses of restructures or re-organisations as a perverse form of justification.

The composite before you seeks to challenge pregnancy and maternity discrimination and sets out proposals to bring about fairness and justice to all working mothers. Congress, please support this composite. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE PRESIDENT: Nicola, thank you. Well done. It is good to see you back.

SIS. L. WINSON (North West & Irish): I second motion 150 on stopping maternity related discrimination against women at work. It is an absolute fact that women are discriminated against work, whether pregnant or in the early days of parenthood. The TUC says that only 1% of the women who are discriminated against in pregnancy will take a claim against their employer. I am absolutely certain that the only reason for this was the introduction of the tribunal fees by the 2013 Tory Government. A report from the Parliamentary Women & Equalities Committee has condemned the Government for its inaction with this injustice. The same report outlined rising costs associated with challenging an employer as a key barrier to reaching justice and called for a substantial cut to the £1,200 fee that now stands for an employment tribunal. Personally, if I knew any women at work at the moment who were thinking of getting pregnant and having a family, I would be advising them to join a very good trade union before actually implementing their plans.

I ask Congress to call on the Government, and let's hope that this time next week it is a Labour government, especially with the TUC's demand that they stop charging pregnant women £1,200 to take a pregnancy discrimination claim to a tribunal, and that they also extend the three-month time limit for young mothers to bring a claim against their employers. Women are suffering discrimination in the workforce on an industrial scale and too many are now forced to suffer in silence. Congress, please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lorraine. Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) Then I call Motion 151.

**OUTDATED DRESS CODE
MOTION 151**

151. OUTDATED DRESS CODE

This Congress calls upon the Government to substantially increase the fines of firms for enforcing discriminatory dress codes despite being unlawful.

T10 TAMWORTH BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

SIS. J. INGLEBY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move motion 151. President and Congress, many bosses still order women to look sexy at work, an MPs' inquiry found. The probe heard from hundreds of female staff who were told to dye their hair blond and wear revealing outfits. Others described long-term health problems from wearing high-heels for long periods. The inquiry followed the case of Nicola Thorpe, who was sent home from her temp job for not wearing heels from 2 inches to 4 inches in height. She branded her treatment outdated and sexist and more than 150,000 signed her petition. A Commons' report says that the incident is not isolated, and laws protecting women are not up to scratch and fines to such firms should be substantially increased. Discriminatory dress codes are widespread, despite being unlawful. It is clear that there are not enough incentives to prevent employers breaching the law. The report appertains to our male colleagues as well, where they are told what to wear. Congress, we need to change attitudes. Please support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jackie. It is good to see you. Does anyone else wish to speak against? *(No response)* Does Birmingham & West Midlands Region formally second? *(Formally seconds)* Thank you very much. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Can I now put composite 11 and motion 151 to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? Those are carried.

*Composite 11 was CARRIED.
Motion 151 was CARRIED.*

**EMPLOYMENT POLICY: UNION BENEFITS & SERVICES
MOTION 50**

CALL FOR HOME OFFICE SUPPORT FOR RENEWAL OF VISAS

50. CALL FOR HOME OFFICE SUPPORT FOR RENEWAL OF VISAS

This Congress calls on the GMB to campaign for support on the 28 day guideline for renewing a work visa, for example if the member's renewal is submitted outside of the 28 day time limit; they are dismissed from their work. This dismissal falls outside of employment law on unfair dismissals, as they are categorised an illegal.

CAMDEN APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

BRO. J. WOOD (London): Congress, I move motion 50, which is calling for Home Office support for renewal of visas. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

The Home Office has a 28-day limit on the renewal of work visas. Unfortunately, a late application outside the time limit will automatically put the individual in as an illegal as section 3(c) in a renewal visa application only applies if the new visa application was made prior to the expiry of the old visa. This can only be done one week prior to the expiry date. However, if the applicant misses a deadline but still submits a renewal after the expiry date, you are at risk of being dismissed from your working position despite the application still being processed. It will be late. The late submission makes the individual an over-stayer for the duration of the renewal, despite supporting the visa, which is now in the process of the Home Office. The employer can use this information to dismiss the individual for fear of being fined by the Home Office for technically employing an over-stayer individually.

The work-related dismissal of an individual for being technically an illegal immigrant where some have married, some have renewed and some have defined leave to remain — means that the dismissal in this way goes against the Human Rights Act as we have removed the rights to be represented for unfair dismissal by definition of being an illegal. Submitting a late visa application should not discriminate by removing a basic right. A racial overview by the Home Office on visa renewals, with the protection of rights to continue within the working environment until a late visa process is required. Therefore, the GMB seeks an employment law to add a wording, which says that unfair dismissal also by visa overstay, if less than three months, of renewal to be deemed unfair dismissal. Protective rights by visa overstays of less than three months plus the Home Office system of renewing a visa requires a radical protective review due to the current climate. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Well done. Is there a seconder?

BRO. J. COLES (London): Congress, I am seconding this motion. Imagine you came to this country a long time ago. You are granted leave to remain and you have been happily working as a teaching assistant. You see a job advertised in a local neighbouring school. You know your job is vulnerable due to budget cuts, so you decide to apply before you face redundancy at your current school. You get the job, and the next thing that happens is you get a letter saying you must refrain from work because you do not have a new biometric passport. By the way, this will take several months to process. So, in order to be not classed as an over-stayer, you are forced to travel from London to Sheffield and pay £2,000 to have your application fast-tracked. That is a money-making exercise for the Home Office. It is all unnecessary because employers were told of the change and should have passed it on. Fortunately, our member is back at work and not in a financial mess. As she was from Australia, a country that May wants to trade with post-Brexit, what does that say?

Congress, our members who have legally worked for years should not be treated like this. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jonathan. Does anyone wish to speak against the motion? *(No response)* Thank you, Congress. I now call motion 151.

**ORGANISATION OF WELFARE RIGHTS WITHIN THE GMB
STRUCTURE
MOTION 51**

51. ORGANISATION OF WELFARE RIGHTS WITHIN THE GMB STRUCTURE

This Congress believes that we should develop welfare rights within our organisation. This Congress believes that this issue has become important within the community and requires a structure to be developed in order that we can affiliate with organisations to assist us in this role.

NOTTINGHAM NO.1 BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. B. CLARKE (Midland & East Coast): I move motion 51 — Organisation of Welfare Rights Within the GMB Structure. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)*

President and Congress, the motion that I am placing before Congress today is fundamental to the survival of most of our communities and it has, in effect, proved a saviour in the community that I live in. Unfair dismissal, constructive dismissal, extended illness, employer/employee relations, all the things that we are known for, with teams of solicitors, experts on employment law, means that we are one of the best. But what happens when members are awaiting decisions on these cases? Many of our members are used to being in work, used to receiving a regular pay packet, and what happens when this is taken away? Who do they turn to for advice? Who can tell them what they are entitled to? Who, in short, can guide them through the minefield of the benefits system? It is my belief that the union should provide this support. A lot of our members who are going through employment problems are struggling financially, and are looking for advice. Many of them are completely ignorant of the benefit systems, and many of them who have worked all their lives don't even know how to go about claiming benefit, and are suffering because of it.

We in Nottingham No. 1 branch are very fortunate in having access to a local charity — Social Inclusion — that runs a weekly drop-in clinic to everyone needing help, and the GMB use them for our local, and in some cases not so local, members, who are given free, independent advice and practical help. They will fill in the necessary forms, advise them on what they should be claiming and, if necessary, representing them at tribunals. They have represented local members with a very high level of success. You have to remember that these people did not know who to turn to. It is only because of my personal involvement with the charity and the people who run it. Can we guide our members through Jobseekers, Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independent Payments? Not at the moment, but we do need to address the situation. I believe that every branch should have someone to call on for the information and take what we have in Nottingham No. 1 and produce it nationwide. Our members need this help and they have nowhere to turn. In the last year alone, 50 of our local members received the support of Social Inclusion and have secured over three-quarters of a million pounds for GMB members and the community. In the majority of those cases, the recipients were totally unaware of their rights through ignorance and lack of information. We should be providing them with the

information. We should be supporting them through the tortuous process of claiming, and we should be doing this at a regional and branch level. We are very fortunate at Nottingham No. 1 as we have Social Inclusion to call on, but what we are doing should not be the exception and all branches and regions should look at seeking out the kind of support that we have. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

BRO. P. SINGH (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am seconding motion 51: the organisation of welfare rights within the GMB structure. Congress, it is very important that the GMB has a structure in place that will advise, support and represent GMB members on all welfare rights and any other matters of concern. If members are unfortunate that they experience a termination of their employment, there should be some kind of support in place to help them navigate what can be quite a complex welfare system. Supporting this motion will provide a much-needed service and fill a gap that exists at present. This will help in retaining membership and build on GMB's excellent reputation as a caring trade union that looks after those members in what might be a difficult time for families and individuals. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) Thank you. I call Sheila Bearcroft to speak on behalf of the CEC.

SIS. S. BEARCROFT MBE (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Sheila Bearcroft, responding on behalf of the CEC on motions 50 and 51. I will deal, firstly, with motion 50 on work visas. We note that amendments to immigration rules, which came into effect from November 24th 2016, removed the 28-day grace period and replaced it with more restrictive provision of 14 days. This grace period gave employers a window during which they could carry out investigations and establish if dismissal were necessary once the grace period was over. Under the old system, the employee retained a right to work while the Home Office decision was pending. However, under the current rules, with a reduced period, employers can dismiss workers within a shorter timeframe. The CEC supports the call in the motion for reinstatement of the 28-day rule for those who overstay but is asking for the motion to be referred for further investigation on a possible campaign of what might be the case after the General Election.

Turning to motion 51 on welfare rights, we are asking for this motion to be withdrawn. A similar motion was submitted to Congress in 2016, and then withdrawn by the region. We understand that trade unions play an important role in assisting advising their members, and that many low-paid workers are unaware of what benefits they are entitled to. But, Congress, this is a highly complex area requiring specialist advice. Providing advice on welfare rights to communities and the public has, primarily, been the role of the Citizens Advice Bureau, which has trained advisers and specialists, who have kept up-to-date with the latest changes in welfare benefits and services.

The motion is asking GMB to take on this role and develop welfare rights within our organisation. Firstly, we are unsure as to what the resource implication might be. Secondly, GMB does not have the skills or experience to offer this service, nor would it fit, necessarily, in our structures. The motion also asks us to affiliate to organisations to assist in this. Well, GMB already affiliates nationally to the Child Poverty Action Group, the CPAG, a welfare rights organisation. In addition, we offer

a limited service to our members as regions have access to the CPAG Welfare Rights handbook. LRD also produce an excellent guide on state benefits, which all GMB members have online access to. I cannot stress enough that this is a highly specialised area which may require case work, etc. We need to be careful about the consequences of giving inaccurate advice to vulnerable members.

To re-cap, Congress, the CEC is asking you to refer motion 50 and, if motion 51 is not withdrawn, then we have to ask you to oppose it. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Does London Region or Midland & East Coast Region wish to respond to the CEC report?

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): The CEC is wrong. I am a former Citizens Advice Bureau welfare rights' worker made redundant due to austerity. So much referring to CABs. It is wrong. It is specialist. We have the training and we can do it. I have been doing it, albeit not that in depth — I am not a lawyer — and CABs train their volunteers. These are ordinary people, just like us, who are giving out that advice. That advice is not there any more. That specialism is not there. When I was giving advice and representing people, the benefit gains to my clients were £380,000 in one year. That is not just a benefit to local residents but that is a benefit to the local businesses. That money did not go into PEPs, ISAs or bank accounts. It went into local shops. We have got to be active in this area. There are a lot of people in our union — in this room — who are reliant on Housing Benefits, Disability Benefits, PIPs, ISAs or whatever. We need to be supporting this. I disagree with the CEC completely. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: London Region, you were responding to motion 50.

BRO. V. THOMAS: No. It was 51.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 51? I had not called that. The region comes first, let me tell you. Anyway, that is your last shot. *(Chuckling)* Does Midland & East Coast Region wish to respond? *(No response)* Does anyone else wish to speak against? *(No response)* No. Thank you very much, indeed.

Before I move to the vote, can I inform delegates that motion 121, North West & Irish Region; motion 122, Wales & South West Region; motion 123, Southern Region; composite 9, Southern to move and second; motion 128, Southern; motion 129, London; and motion 130, Yorkshire. So come to the front and be prepared.

I am taking you back to the vote. Does London Region accept reference? *(Agreed)* Yes. Thank you. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)*

Motion 50 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 51. Does Midland & East Coast seek withdrawal? *(Calls of "No")* So we will put it to the vote. The CEC is asking you to vote against. I'm sorry, Andy, but that is the system. Midland & East Coast will not accept withdrawal. We are asking you to vote against. All those who support motion 51, please show? Those against? *(Cheers and applause)* That is carried.

Motion 51 was CARRIED.

**UNION ORGANISATION: RIGHTS AT WORK
SCRAP THE TRADE UNION ACT
MOTION 121**

121. SCRAP THE TRADE UNION ACT

This Congress condemns the Trade Union Act which is the biggest attack on trade unions in decades and represents a further transfer of power against workers and in favour of the employer.

Congress should discuss all options for challenging the new legislation. This should include stopping up the campaign to scrap the Act and other anti-union legislation as well as taking practical steps to support unions and groups of workers threatened by this anti-worker legislation.

Beyond repeal, there needs to be a new framework of law including: a right to organise, a right to bargain collectively with statutory support for sectoral collective bargaining and an unequivocal right to strike.

V15 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. DENTON (North West & Irish): Congress, I move motion 121: Scrap the Trade Union Act. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause and cheers)* The Government's attack on unions through the Trade Union Act is the hardest and most draconian change to collective labour law since the 1980s. Even prior to the Act, the UK had some of the weakest employment rights in Europe. The provisions already implemented represent a massive attack on workers and their unions. The media attention has been on new thresholds for industrial-action balloting. Unions were already subject to onerous rules in conducting legal strike ballots, providing enormous scope for employers to legally challenge the credibility of ballots, putting workers and unions at risk.

The further restrictions introduced by the latest Act are unjust and vindictive. There are a number of other changes in the Act in the areas like the political fund, facility time and check-off which will have further detrimental effects on unions. This, of course, is their purpose at a time when the hostile political climate makes a strong union base in the workforce even more important, and we haven't even got to Brexit yet. The bonfire of rights that will burn by Teresa May means that she will be able to lie her way to a so-called mandate for a hard Brexit, and it must be resisted at all costs. Trade unions are a force for good and fairness. Fewer days than ever are now lost through industrial action, and far fewer than are lost through illness and injuries caused at work. This Act represents a partisan desire to weaken trade unions to the point where it becomes almost impossible for workers to defend their interests and dignity. Deliberately undermining workers' organisations is part of a deliberate attempt to increase the inequality that has already done so much to damage our communities.

I call on you, Congress, first of all, to campaign for the repeal of this invidious legislation, but taking us back to the situation we were in before this Act, with the weakest employment rights in Europe is not enough. I, further, call on Congress to seek the enshrinement of workers' rights in law, including the introduction of mandatory collective bargaining and safeguards to ensure the rights of employees to withdraw their labour without fear of being sacked or prevented by a court from taking this action. Collective action has given us weekends, maternity leave, sick pay and an end to child labour. No wonder they want to take it away from us! Please support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. D. GRAY (North West & Irish): Congress, I am second motion 121: Scrap the Trade Union Act. Is it not ironic that here we are celebrating a hundred years at a GMB Congress and we are facing attacks on trade unions rights that we enjoyed all those years ago? The Tories tell us that the Act is designed to protect people from undemocratic strike action, but we all know it is there to serve the interests of big business, who after all are the paymasters of the Conservative Party. The law is solely designed to make it problematic for trade unions to take industrial action by changing the ballot thresholds and attacking facility time, making it much more difficult for us to represent our members.

However, although many of the threats have been greatly reduced, this Government have left space for secondary legislation to be introduced at a later date. This, I am sure, when they are confident that they have public opinion on their side, means they will ramp up attacks on legitimate trade union activity.

Colleagues, it is not just our ability to negotiate local wages and conditions for our members who are attacked by these laws, but it also affects our attempts to defend our services, especially the NHS, which are constantly under threat from this Government, and the Trade Union Act will help them do that. Therefore, we call upon the GMB and the wider trade union Movement to strenuously resist this unnecessary and unjust Trade Union Act and protect the rights of working people in this country. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. I ask Wales and South West Region to move motion 122, which the CEC is supporting.

TRADE UNION ACT IN WALES MOTION 122

122. TRADE UNION ACT IN WALES

This Congress congratulates the Welsh Government intention to pass a Bill through the Welsh Assembly in Cardiff Bay that will dis-apply sections of the Trade Union Act.

The NHS, Education Sector, Local Government and the Fire Service are examples of devolved Public Services which are therefore the responsibility of the National Assembly for Wales.

If the Bill is passed by the Assembly, the imposition of an overall support threshold of 40 per cent on strike ballots, provisions on trade union facility time and conditions on payroll deductions for trade union membership, commonly known as check-off, will be repealed.

This Congress calls upon the Central Executive Council to support this Bill so it becomes an Act to campaign for similar legislation to be introduced through competence within other devolved administrations.

RHONDDA CYNON TAFF CBC BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. R. DAWKINS (Wales & South West): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move motion 122: Trade Union Act in Wales. President and Congress, as well we all know, the GMB campaigns forcibly and strongly against the hostile provisions of the Trade Union Act. Some of the most aggressive proposals relating to picketing, the use of social media in trade disputes, the abolition of check-off and the restrictions on the use of union funds for political purposes were also the subject of a climb-down as the Government came under huge pressure to water down their original proposals. However, what is left by way of the legislation introduced will still make it harder for unions and their members to take strike action, particularly by the way of the requirement for specific thresholds to be met in order for actions to become lawful.

Similarly, the provisions of the Act represent an unjustified and an unnecessary intrusion by the state into the freedom of association and assembly of union members and makes it more difficult for individuals to exercise the rights and entitlements that have existed in the workplace. The Act amounts to an ideological attack upon the rights and freedoms of workers in this country, and will undoubtedly cause significant damage to fair and effective industrial relations. Contrast the motives of the Westminster Government with the then position of their regional counterpart in Wales, where they operate a successful model of centralised dialogue between, government, employers and the trade unions, avoiding the creation of a highly conflictive industrial relations system.

The Welsh Assembly has a statutory duty to consult with the trade unions where the exercise of its functions impacts upon our interests, so there is an opportunity at a full social partner level to raise issues of concern with ministers, discuss key policy developments and generally engage in discussions on matters relevant to the members who we represent. It is that partnership approach, Congress, that has both inspired and been reflected in the opposition of the Welsh Government to the application of specific terms of the Act to devolved Welsh public services. The notion of partnership at work might well have become widely embraced in the United Kingdom in the past 20 years or so, but usually without any exceptions to the principle of union involvement and influence. However, in Wales the tripartite agreement mirrors some of the European partnership styles, which commits a wide-range of economic, industrial and social policies to be determined. There is a centralist view that the Act, if implemented, would be detrimental to the interests of Welsh public services and to those who both deliver and access them. Hence, the decision taken by the Assembly Government has competence legislatively to ensure the continued and effective delivery of public services and to support the social partnership agenda.

Congress, it is not perfect, but the Welsh model works for us. We call upon the CEC to both commend and support the objective of repealing this heinous legislation from

the Welsh perspective. We also ask that GMB campaigns, as appropriate, to provide a similar level of legislative competence. Thank you. *(Applause)*

RESTORATION OF A REGULATED AND INSTITUTIONALISED LABOUR MARKET MOTION 123

123. RESTORATION OF A REGULATED AND INSTITUTIONALISED LABOUR MARKET

Congress calls for the restoration of a regulated and institutionalised labour market:

That it should be a criminal offence for employers and managers to impede or obstruct the human rights of workers to combine and secure collective bargaining in their workplaces. All workers in unionised workplaces regardless of their country of origin should be covered by the collective agreements secured by these workers.

That all workers regardless of their country of origin should be covered by all employment legislation and that the practices of agencies and employers to casualise workers should either be outlawed or regulated.

C28 CENTRAL BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

SIS. C. BUTTERICK (Southern): Congress, this is my first Congress and my first time speaking. *(Applause and cheers)* I move motion 123 on the restoration of a regulated and institutionalised labour market. This motion calls for hostile actions against employers who interfere with the human rights of workers to join trade unions and who want to see collective bargaining classed as a criminal offence and punished accordingly. In many companies and organisations today we are increasingly seeing trade union rights come under threat. No worker should have to stay underground for fear of retribution and loss of employment. We must, therefore, put an end to employers who carry out anti-union practices and get away with doing so with impunity.

In 2007 the GMB settled strike action at Asda Distribution depots on being allowed to have ballots for 12 depot centres on union recognition. Subsequently, GMB won all 12 ballots and 90% of members voted in favour. As a result, GMB now has a national collective bargaining agreement at Asda Distribution depots.

Joining a trade union is a basic right for all workers, something which is respected in many international conventions. We must, therefore, clamp down on employer hostility which, quite frankly, is fully-fronted attack on the rights of the working classes in Britain. These can no longer be tolerated. Tackling hostility, enabling collective bargaining and strengthening workers' rights should be an absolute priority for an incoming Labour Government. Congress, please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Well done. Do we have a seconder or is it to be formally? *(The motion was seconded formally from the floor)*

CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL PROCESSES COMPOSITE 9

C9. Covering Motions:

125. PORTAL REGARDING EMPLOYMENT DISPUTES Southern Region

126. ONLINE DETERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL CLAIMS
Southern Region

127. DELEGATION OF JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS IN EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS TO
CASEWORKERS
Southern Region

CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL PROCESSES

The government is proposing to digitise the Employment Tribunal process.

The portal in personal injury cases adds another layer of compliance to the litigation process that is simply another barrier to accessing justice. In Employment Tribunals, Employment Tribunal fees, mandatory ACAS Early Conciliation and the strict time limits for lodging claims already act as barriers to accessing justice.

Adding another layer whereby individuals must use a portal system to progress any claim will only be a further barrier to accessing justice. Any attempt to introduce a portal system to resolve employment disputes should be opposed and reversed.

We oppose any attempt on the part of the government to introduce any type of portal system regarding employment disputes and we object to any digitalisation of the ET process if use thereof is mandatory.

A requirement for cases to be conducted wholly online will invariably disadvantage:

- those who have literacy issues
- those whose first language is not English
- those who don't have access to a computer
- those who have poor computer skills
- those who are unable to use a computer for medical reasons etc

In addition the government proposes to delegate judicial functions in Employment Tribunals to caseworkers.

Employment Tribunal judges are largely redundant owing to the introduction of ET fees and the subsequent drop in the numbers of ET claims being brought.

Those judges who are still working have sufficient time to deal with all the administration surrounding case work. There is therefore no need to delegate any of their current functions to non-qualified caseworkers.

The Government hopes to make the ET process more efficient. However, the opposite is likely to happen if non-qualified caseworkers make poor decisions arising out of the fact that they are not qualified and inexperienced in litigation.

With all respect, caseworkers cannot replace judges who are usually solicitors or barristers and therefore regulated by independent bodies.

- Any attempt to replace the judicial functions of judges with caseworkers should be opposed and reversed.
- Any attempt to digitise the ET process will be a further barrier to accessing justice and if such legislation is introduced, it should be reversed so that it is not mandatory for parties to use any online service.

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: Southern is to move and to second. The CEC is supporting this composite.

BRO. R. MELCIOIU (Southern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause and cheers)* I am proposing on behalf of the Southern Region composite 9, comprising motions 125, 126 and 127: Changes to the Employment Tribunal system. The introduction of fees has already made access to the employment tribunal system more difficult for the vast majority of workers. We ask the GMB to support opposing any further attempts by this Government to replace the current system with portal systems in their attempt to digitise the employment tribunal process.

This decision by the Government to further change the process has, as its impact, an attempt to lessen the impact on employers by deterring workers from even commencing to seek justice before an employment tribunal. Ignoring the fact that workers may not even have access to a computer, it then assumes that they will have the ability to go through many extra levels imposed by a government determined to prevent judicial openness. Workers will now find, if they can navigate their way through those new and unfair changes, that they may have to go through a further hurdle and suffer an intervention by a legally untrained and inexperienced case worker. All this will diminish our members' rights, potentially, to have their day in court. I, therefore, ask the Congress to support the motion to oppose the changes to employment tribunal processes proposed by this Government. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: As the CEC is supporting, can I ask that we formally second?
(Agreed) (Calls of "Formally seconded") Thank you very much, indeed.

TAXATION OF INJURY TO FEELINGS COMPENSATION MOTION 128

128. TAXATION OF INJURY TO FEELINGS COMPENSATION

Any government legislation to tax awards for injury to feelings in discrimination and other employment disputes should be abolished.

The government is legislating / has legislated so that compensation for injury to feelings in employment disputes e.g. discrimination and whistleblowing cases is henceforth taxable.

Injury to feelings can only generally be awarded where there is medical evidence to show that an individual has suffered damage – mentally or physically.

The government's legislation to seek to recoup any part of such damages is immoral, especially when any such awards have been calculated to compensate an individual for the damage they have suffered.

We call on any such legislation to be abolished.

C28 CENTRAL BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. HUGHES (Southern): Good morning, Congress. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move motion 128: Taxation of Injury to Feelings Compensation.

President, delegate and visitors, the wording of this motion is self-explanatory, but I want to point out that where a GMB member suffers injury to feelings because of the way that they are discriminated against in their workplace, their feelings are often very injured as a result. The tribunals and courts can award injury to feelings compensation. However, this Tory Government is now proposing to tax any compensation received for injury to feelings. As you may already know, injury to feeling compensation can only be awarded where there is medical evidence to show that the individual has suffered mentally or physically.

The proposed legislation is immoral and it should not be allowed through Parliament. If it does get through the legal process, the GMB and our fellow comrades should campaign to have it abolished. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. As the CEC is supporting the motion, can I ask the region to formally second? *(Formally seconded from the floor)* Does anyone wish to speak against? *(No response)* In that case, we go on to motion 129.

JUSTICE & EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS MOTION 129

129. JUSTICE & EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS

This Congress is requested to campaign for Employment Tribunal decisions to be exempt from Limited Liability protection for Directors of companies going into receivership.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, I move motion 129: Justice & Employment Tribunals. According to Government data, more than a third of successful claimants at employment tribunals never receive any compensation and less than half are paid in full. Where is the justice in that?

Let me give you a couple of examples from the press. A chap was sacked from working in a call centre in Liverpool who complained about his girlfriend being sexually harassed by a team leader. He felt he had to do something about it and he lost his job because of it. He took the case to an employment tribunal and was awarded £40,000, but the employer went into liquidation. Another case reported in

the press involved a woman working in an ice-cream parlour in Weymouth lost her job the day after telling her employer that she was pregnant. She also took the case to an employment tribunal, and was awarded £28,000 because she was unlawfully discriminated against because of her sex. Her employer liquidated the company and transferred its assets into a sister company with a slightly different name but operated from the same address, still selling ice-creams. That cannot be right.

Congress, I am going to say something that will sound a little bit controversial. Limited companies can't sack anyone. It's people who do this, not some disembodied, abstract entity called a limited company. Of course, these people carry out what can only be described as a confidence trick on society, on employees and on our members. We are told that it is not the manager or the director who is the employer but the company; hence, allowing "bad employers" to walk away from their legal responsibilities when it is the work of bad managers and/or bad directors. When we know who is responsible, and they should be made to pay and we should be done with this convoluted legalese that amounts to little more than an argument about the emperor's clothes. It cannot just be me who notices that they are not wearing anything. We know who wants to deny our members the justice they deserve and it cannot be allowed to go on. By denying employees and our members the justice that even the legal system itself says that they should receive is to bring that legal system into disrepute. This is a path to anarchy that undermines the very institutions that employers need as much as our members do, but it is not working at the moment, other than for bad employers; that is bad managers and bad directors, shirking their responsibilities towards the likes of me and thee.

The GMB needs to campaign to exempt tribunal decisions from the limited liability protection. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Is London Region formally seconding or not? If not, carry on.

SIS. S. WILSON (London): I second motion 129. President and Congress, even the Government Insolvency Service admits that there could be hundreds of these cases every week where claimants have been awarded thousands of pounds but not yet received a penny. However, they will not do anything about it because they say the costs outweigh the benefits. It is now time for us all to take action and insist that the Government look at ways to tighten the laws preventing employers getting away with it. Congress, support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Sharon. Does anyone wish to speak against? If not, we will move on to motion 130.

SMALL CLAIMS LIMIT MOTION 130

130. SMALL CLAIMS LIMIT

This Congress notes that:

1. 95% of all personal injury claims are valued at £5,000, or less.

2. The current civil court system for accident claims is based on the principal that the polluter pays. This means that if a person is injured and it's not their fault any legal fees for a lawyer are paid by the person responsible for the injuries.
3. The government plans to strip citizens of this right by increasing the small claims limit up to £5,000.00. Victims of injury – anywhere, including at work – will have to pay for the legal help they need from any compensation or fight the insurers on their own.
4. This will affect nearly one million people injured through no fault of their own each year.
5. Government data shows a decrease of 41% in whiplash claims since 2010. Insurers have paid out 30% less in motor accident costs than they did in 2010, saving them over £8bn. Premiums are higher now than they were in 2010, and have increased by 14% in the last year.
6. Workplace accident claims have fallen 12% in the last decade.
7. Total number of injury cases has dropped by 6% since 2013.
8. There is no suggestion of a problem with fraudulent workplace accident claims and yet the changes will affect anybody injured anywhere, including at work.
9. The government has announced that implementing its policy will lose the Treasury £135 million.
10. If these reforms go ahead insurers are set to profit from an additional £200 million per year.
11. In 2015, the then CEOs of four insurance companies received packages ranging from £4.55 million to £11.55 million.
12. The government admitted that it won't force insurers to pass on the suggested savings they make to consumers.

This Congress believes:

13. Whiplash claims have nothing to do with workers being injured at work. The government is using a so-called "whiplash epidemic" as a fig-leaf to attack peoples' legal rights on behalf of the insurance bosses.

This Congress resolves:

14. To oppose an increase in the small claims limit or any decision by the government that reverses the principal that the polluter pays.
15. To call on all GMB Sponsored Labour MPs to act in accordance with this motion.

LEEDS GENERAL BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

SIS. C. GAVIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move motion 130: Small Claims Limit. President and delegates, at present our civil court system for small claims means that the person responsible for inflicting injury or harm pays the full cost of the court fees, and quite rightly so. However, this Government want to change that. Not only do they want to cap the small claims at £5,000, but they are going to ask the poor person, the victim, to cover all the costs of the legal fees, either by taking this from their claim or incurring extra costs at their own expense.

Isn't it bad enough to have suffered injury or harm at the hands of somebody else that cannot only be physical but also mental, and then to ask them to endure the worry and stress of thinking how much it is going to cost to get justice. Congress, if this reform goes ahead, insurers are the only ones to profit. The Treasury will lose £135 million a year. The person injured loses. Savings made by the insurers will not be passed on to us, the consumer. Again, the fat cats win.

Congress, we ask you to support this motion. We ask that you oppose the small claims limit. We ask that you oppose the reform that means the victim pays. We call upon all GMB-sponsored MPs to lobby and support this motion. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Cindy. As the CEC is supporting, I ask you to formally second. (*Motion 130 was formally seconded*) Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) Does Congress agree? (*Agreed*) I now call John Phillips to speak on behalf of the CEC. John. While John is coming up, I would like to thank him for the support he has been giving me, and for this week. Thank you, John.

BRO. J. PHILLIPS (Regional Secretary, Wales & South West): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. Mary, let me say, on behalf of everyone in the region, how good it is to see you at the helm today.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause)

BRO. PHILLIPS: Congress, the CEC asks you to support motions 121 and 123 respectively with a qualification, and to refer motion 129. Dealing, first, with motion 121, GMB has a long-standing policy going back to the 1980s to oppose anti-union legislation and has most recently called for the Trade Union Act 2016 to be repealed. The qualification, Congress, is that in supporting those threatened by the legislation, it should always be without exposing GMB members, the union or the union's employees to the risk of legal action. The CEC also supports the establishment of a new framework of labour law, and wishes to explore the ideas put forward in the motion alongside ideas presented by academic organisations, such as CLASS and the Institute of Employment Rights, before adopting any formal policy. However, Congress, the motion is a useful contribution towards stimulating debate on this subject.

Turning now to motion 123, GMB also has a long-established policy to oppose the threat to freedom of association, posed by both the state and, indeed, by employers. Motion 123 considers this by looking at the particularly vulnerable position of migrant workers and employees. The CEC supports, therefore, the call for effective sanctions. The qualification, Congress, here is that the CEC would wish to explore the issue of criminal penalties proposed in the context of an overall policy in this particular area. The experiences that we have had in the blacklisting litigation particularly have highlighted existing weaknesses in protection, together with deficiencies in the protection from victimisation of our workplace representatives, which fall far short of the requirements of ILO Recommendation 143.

Finally, Congress, dealing with motion 129, the CEC is fully aware of the problems highlighted in the motion of enforcing tribunal awards where the employer goes into

receivership. The CEC is asking for this motion to be referred as it believes it would be useful to review the rules on insolvency matters before adopting policy, taking into account, especially, the fact that the economy has changed fundamentally and dramatically since the present rules were put in place many years ago. The growth of the gig economy and the complex employers' structures that go with it present new challenges in preventing employer avoidance of employment rights themselves.

In summary, Congress, the CEC is asking you to support motions 121 and 123, with the qualifications outlined, and to refer motion 129. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. I now call on North West & Irish Region on 121; Southern Region to come to the rostrum, if they so wish — I won't push you — and does London Region accept the CEC Report? (*London Region accepted the CEC Report from the floor*) I am sorry. I did not hear that. You are accepting the reference? (*Agreed*) Does anyone wish to speak against? (*No response*) Then we will move to the vote. Does North West & Irish Region accept the qualification on 121? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 121 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Southern Region accept the qualification on motion 123? (*Agreed*) All those in favour, please show? Is anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 123 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: Does London Region accept reference on motion 129? (*Agreed*) Does Congress accept? (*Agreed*)

Motion 129 was REFERRED.

THE PRESIDENT: I now put motions 122, composite 9, motion 128 and 130 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Thank you. Is there anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 122 was CARRIED.

Composite 9 was CARRIED.

Motion 128 was CARRIED.

Motion 130 was CARRIED.

THE PRESIDENT: The General Secretary has a quick message.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thanks very much, Mary. Due to events yesterday, national campaigning for all parties has been suspended, but local campaigning still goes on. Here in Plymouth we have two great candidates, who we really need to see elected, in the form of Sue Dann and Luke Pollard. A number of delegates have asked whether any Labour campaigning has been organised, and Ben Cooke, from our Midland & East Coast Region has offered to co-ordinate campaigning for visitors across the next three days and for delegates outside of Congress business, of course. So if you would like to sign up and go out on the campaign trail, please see Ben. He

will be at the National Office stand at the front during this lunch-time. Thank you, Mary.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Tim. Is that agreed, colleagues? (*Agreed*)

We now move to lunch. The only designated smoking area is outside the main front doors to the left-hand side. Please note, Mary gave up smoking last year. (*Applause*) Please remember to collect your delegate's gift T-shirt from the Ethical Threads stand in the exhibition hall and your special edition of whisky. We will have one hour for lunch. After lunch we will take pensions and international after the awards. Does Congress agree. (*Agreed*) That concludes Congress for this morning. As there are no fringe meetings, please be back in the hall promptly at 2.15 p.m.

Conference adjourned for lunch at 13.18 hours.

AFTERNOON SESSION

(Congress reassembled at 2.15 p.m.)

THE PRESIDENT: Will Congress please come to order. Colleagues, somebody has lost an earring. Tim has applied for it but I have decided not to give it to him. Taranjit, get up here! You could have left me the pair! Please, Congress.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Just a short announcement. The York Disabled Workers Co-Op invites delegates to visit their stall. We are now producing the best banners in the country, and also a limited number of Mary Turner badges and good raffle prizes. So, if you can go along to that stall and help them out it would be much appreciated. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP AWARDS FOR EQUALITY

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we will now go to the President's Leadership Awards for Equality. We launched these awards in 2009 so this is the ninth year of recognising the exceptional work of our members in regions and branches. There are four categories with awards given to those who have inspired and championed various aspects of the equality agenda. You will find more details about the winners in a separate document in your wallets. It gives me pleasure to announce the winners of each award and invite them to come up to the platform and collect their framed certificate and trophy.

The first one is the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or At Work, and that goes to David Lascelles of the Midland Region for his outstanding commitment.

(Presentation amidst applause)

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): I am accepting the award on behalf of David Lascelles, winner of the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or At Work. He sent a little message so I will read it out: "President, Congress, I am

very honoured and humbled to accept this award. In any acceptance speech the list of those who must be thanked is long and this week you do not have the time. My thanks must go to the President, the Vice President, and to Andy Worth and his staff and activists down many years in the GMB at the Midland & East Coast Region. Sending you all my best wishes and a successful conference.” He has thanked everybody but I think from this Congress we should thank David for all his support and the work he has done within the GMB and the TUC. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Number 2 is the Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum and that goes to the North West Region Equality Forum.

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: While they are taking the photographs could the third one come down, please, that is for the Most Inspirational Equality Project for Organising, and that goes to Yorkshire Region for their campaigning work on Mental Health Matters. *(Applause)* Whoever is picking that one up can you come forward, please?

A DELEGATE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Just give me one second to say something. Our EF is fantastic. It is like one big family. We are all friends. It is a right good pleasure getting this. Thanks to Lisa and Paul, and all the North West Region. Cheers. Thanks. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Number 4 for the Most Inspirational Project for Making a Difference at Work goes to the London Region for their training on Mental Health at Work. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Now could we have the winners of the Highly Commended Awards, please come to the stage and collect your framed certificates. Number 1 is the Most Inspirational Individual on Equality in the GMB or At Work. We have joint winners on this, we have Paul Sony from the Southern Region and May Quigley from GMB Scotland. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The second one is for the Most Inspirational Regional Equality Forum and that goes to Southern Region Equality Forum. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The third one is for the Most Inspirational Equality Project for Organising and that goes to Northern Region. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the entries for these awards have been inspirational and motivating. However, Congress, could I please ask all regions to submit nominations next year.

MARY McARTHUR HEALTH & SAFETY AWARD 2017

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to the Mary McArthur Health & Safety Award for 2017. As we celebrate 40 years of Health & Safety legislation and our 100th Congress we are launching a new award for GMB Health & Safety Reps who make outstanding contributions to workplace safety. This award is in honour of Mary McArthur who ended the barbaric practice of “sweating” workers and who organised safety standards for women working with explosives in World War One.

I will call the award winners up to the stage to pick up their awards. I am proud to announce the winner is Lee Hillam, London Region, for his design of a worker involvement tool for the waste industry which has been adopted by the HSE. We will nominate Lee as the GMB representative for the TUC Health & Safety Rep.

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We have two runners-up, the first one is Rob Burgon, North West & Irish Region, for his work in tackling mental health issues in United Utilities, in the face of management seeking to impose a corporate approach to the issue. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The next one is to Helena Sharpe from the London Region for her quick response when her Asda store in Luton caught fire and was severely damaged, particularly in the support and advice she provided to her colleagues. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

ELEANOR MARX AWARD

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We are now moving to the Eleanor Marx Award and it gives me great pleasure to announce the second year of our GMB Women’s Award in memory of Eleanor Marx. Eleanor worked alongside Will Thorne setting up our union and was elected to our Executive at the 1891 Congress. I am so pleased to announce that the winner is Taranjit Chana from the London Region for her outstanding commitment in fighting for justice and fairness and for her work in regional and national equality forums and campaigns. *(Applause)*

(Presentation amidst applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will nominate Taranjit as the GMB representative for the TUC Women’s Award. She has also been invited to have tea in the House of Lords by Baroness Angela Smith, the Shadow Leader of the House of Lords. *(Applause)* Colleagues, that finishes all the awards.

THE PRESIDENT: I thank you for your patience. I am now leaving you but thank you so much indeed. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I remind delegates that if there are any questions on the accounts, you should submit these in writing to the Congress Office by 5.30 p.m. today.

Before I ask for the SOC Report No.2, could I just say that we are quite some time behind now at the moment and we have had more red lights this morning than we had in the whole Congress last year. I know it is difficult to try and time your speeches and it is hard when you get up here, but when you get the red light, if delegates could then finish by saying, "I move" or "I second", it would be very much appreciated. Thank you very much for your help. (*Applause*) I now call on Helen Johnson to move Standing Orders Committee Report No.2. Helen.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO.2

SIS. H. JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): Thank you. Bucket collections: The SOC has given permission for the following regions to hold bucket collections: Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region for the Rotherham Great Get-Together. The SOC recommends that this takes place at the end of the afternoon session today. For GMB Scotland for Guide Dogs for the Blind, the SOC recommends that this takes place at the end of the afternoon session tomorrow. Would the Regional Secretaries please note that once the collection has taken place the regions should provide the SOC with a written note saying how much has been collected so that this can be reported to Congress. Vice President, Congress, I move SOC Report No.2. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Accept that report? (*Agreed*)

Standing Orders Committee Report No.2 was ADOPTED

CEC SPECIAL REPORT ON PENSIONS

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now take the business carried over from this morning. The first one is the CEC's Special Report on Pensions. We will now move to the first of our CEC Special Reports. I will now explain how I intend to take this debate. The report will be moved. Then I will call only one speaker from each region who wishes to speak. I will then ask Barbara Plant, of Southern Region, to move it and for it to be formally seconded. Barbara.

CEC Special Report: Pensions

Background

It has been over 10 years since the last CEC Special Report on Pensions was passed at Congress 2001 followed by a CEC Statement in 2006. As can be imagined much has changed in the field of Pensions,

Governments and legislation since that time. It is proposed that this short CEC Special Report on Pensions will update Congress on our policy, strategy and plans for the future of Pensions in the UK. It is too early to foresee exactly how Brexit may affect the pension's landscape but we can be sure that employers will look to take advantage of any opportunity to further attack workplace pensions.

Introduction

GMB is a driving force in pensions, consistently fighting to make sure our members get the best possible pensions both in their workplaces and from the state. The work done on pensions is driven by the GMB@Work ethos, arming our members with the know-how and confidence to fight for the pensions they want.

Workplace Pensions

There is a continuing trend in Defined Benefit pension schemes towards closure and downgrading of benefits which grows every year.

Although the work of GMB and its sister trade unions has kept Defined Benefit pensions schemes open in the Public Sector, there has been less success in the private sector. At present less than 15% of Defined Benefit pension schemes are open to new starters and membership is down to less than 1.7 million workers in the private sector.

There are numerous reasons why Defined Benefit pension schemes are in demise. One of the biggest current issues is that the falling Gilt rate (caused by Quantitative Easing) which is eroding the discount rates of schemes. Discount rates are the rate that schemes expect assets to grow by, therefore determining how much money is needed now to pay pensions in the future. Falling discount rates are pushing up deficits and future service costs.

The permanent threat is the employer's willingness and ability to pay for a decent, secure retirement for their workers. GMB continues to see the prioritisation of shareholder greed over decent retirements of those who produce their profit.

The number of Defined Benefit pension schemes that are closed to future accrual continues to grow each year with around 35% of all schemes now completely shut. Not only are Defined Benefit pensions shut but we are seeing an increasing trend of employers wanting to shirk their responsibility in paying the pensions they have promised. The advent of Automatic Enrolment has seen the number of workers brought in to workplace pensions continue to increase with over 11.6 million workers active in a workplace pension. Although this vast increase is a positive step GMB are seeing the average contribution to a scheme well below that which is required for a decent retirement, this is driven by employers using the legal minimum automatic enrolment rates. It is widely acknowledged across the pensions industry that to get a reasonable amount of pension to replace wages in retirement a 15% contribution to your pension between employee and

employer would be required. The current average contribution into a Defined Contribution pension is 4%! This is clearly not enough to provide a decent retirement for GMB members. Although the contributions are set to rise within automatic enrolment this provides another challenge, to make sure we do not settle for the minimum contribution levels from employers.

Automatic Enrolment has eligibility criteria which GMB has consistently argued against. The eligibility criteria of earning over £10,000 and being aged 22, block the very people who automatic enrolment was designed to bring into workplace pensions.

State Pension

Moving onto to the State Pension, in April 2016 significant changes to the state pension took place, with a move away from a two tier state pension system of Basic and State Second Pension (previously SERPS) to a single tier state pension. This change has caused unrest for a number of those close to state pension age due to the nature of how it was communicated by Government. This has led to large swathes of the population feeling hard done by due to poor communications especially Women. The change in itself should see people no worse off than before under the old system except the young, who would have been better off under the old system.

The Government have not done anything to deal with the continuing upset that is felt by the women who have had their pension age increased in 2011 without any communication and with short notice. In fact, despite exceptionally strong campaigning by the Labour and Trade Union movement, the government are adamant that the changes will be implemented regardless of the hardship they will cause.

A recent review of the State Pension Age by John Cridland has recommended the rise in the State Pension Age to 68 should be introduced earlier, between 2037 and 2039 and that there should be no further increases before 2047. Currently the increase in state pension age to 68 is due between 2044 and 2046. The report also suggests extensive range of end of career flexibilities in order to take into account the varying mortality rates in different regions, occupations and socio-economic classes. He does not believe the former should be introduced without the latter.

He notes the cost of the triple lock and suggests that the next government may consider scrapping in order to reduce its burden on GDP. The GMB remains of the view that age is an arbitrary determinant of life expectancy and locality, occupation and socio-economic status should also be taken into account when determining state pension age. On this basis we consider that the case for a further increase in the State Pension Age has not been made. GMB also considers the flexibilities suggested by the report are untested and that these should be introduced to assist the current rate of increases not just because

those current increases are being accelerated again. The triple lock which is the method by which state pension is increased by either CPI, Average Earnings increases or 2.5% whichever is the greater, has been a very powerful tool in helping the state pension regain some of its lost value and we note that the Labour party has committed to retaining it throughout the next parliament if elected.

Pension Pressures

There will continue to be pressure to reduce the value of pension provision and this will be exerted in many ways and the GMB will carry on its leading role of resisting. The pressure comes from Government and Employers seeing pensions merely as an expense that they would like to reduce.

We see growing pressures at every 3 yearly valuation of defined benefit pension schemes. Currently this is due to falling gilt rates which trustees have translated across into falling discount rates, pushing up deficits and future service costs. This increasing deficits and future service costs look to be another opportunity for employers to look to close valued defined benefit pensions schemes.

Another driver behind increasing costs within pension schemes is the amount of profit that is leaking out of workers' pension's pots into the City spivs pockets. Although every investor will charge an upfront fee for managing the investments of the schemes, there are a number of hidden costs investors charge schemes which they do not disclose and in most cases refuse to disclose upon request. Every £1 that is leaked from a worker's retirement into a fund manager's pinstriped pocket is a £1 too much and the employer has to make good this loss, putting extra pressure on schemes.

Defined Benefit pension schemes are affordable, that is not just GMB's conclusion but the current Tory Government's as well. However, the race to increase shareholder dividend each and every year see those employers who still have Defined Benefit pension schemes choosing shareholders over workers. GMB must fight this growing trend and make sure our members get a fair share of the profits they created.

The Pension Protection Fund (PPF) offers a great benefit to GMB members as lifeboat scheme for those whose employers become insolvent and the pension scheme is not fully funded. However, there is an increasing trend of employers wanting to pass their responsibility for workers' pensions on to the PPF. We must make sure that the PPF is not damaged or sunk by corporate greed.

Cuts to pension benefit used to be the sole domain of Defined Benefit pensions. However, we have seen the start of contribution rates in Defined Contribution schemes being reduced. Defined Contribution schemes have historically been less well funded and are much riskier for members than Defined Benefit pensions. The introduction of Automatic Enrolment and the minimum standard of pension has seen a lowering of employer's aspirations.

GMB needs to be at the forefront of improving Defined Contribution pensions which are now the most prevalent type of pension in the private sector. As we have done on pay issues we must never settle for minimum pensions for our members as we have never settled for minimum wage. We wish to see a rise in the minimum contribution levels in AE schemes, for contributions to be on all pay and a widening of access to include those earning less than £10,000 and those below 22.

Retirement with a Defined Contribution pension scheme is a complicated and expensive business. Annuity rates are cripplingly expensive leaving most people unwilling to purchase them. The rest of the Pension Freedoms now available leave GMB members guessing how much they need at different points of their retirement, resulting in most people overspending or underspending their retirement savings. The expensive options at retirement further emphasise the need for GMB members to fight for greater employment investment in their Defined Contribution pensions. It also requires that pressure is kept up on Government to continue to drive down costs and provide free guidance. It also dictates that we start to consider other ways that income could be provided to pensioners without the current level of corporate greed.

Recommendations

GMB will continue to fight to protect our member's pension schemes. In addition we will:

Defined Benefit Pensions

1. Continue to fight for the ongoing provision of Defined Benefit pension through workplace organisation
2. Work with GMB officers to identify trustees across the GMB, adding this identification to the membership system. Also, identifying and assisting GMB members to become trustees.
3. Support GMB trustees with training and guidance, to help them fulfil their role in questioning the expert advice given to them.
4. Work with our sister trade unions to highlight the transaction costs and the money leaking from pensions into the pockets of city spivs.
5. Argue for limitations on shareholder dividends until deficits are cleared and continue to highlight the prioritization of shareholders over workers' pensions.

6. Work with activists to remove the inequality within workplace pensions which have limited the survivor benefits of same sex couples.

Defined Contribution Pensions

1. Launch an Auto-Enrolment campaign toolkit – we need to be at the forefront of shaping how auto-enrolment affects our members.
2. Map the pension schemes across GMB employers where we have recognition so we can develop plans for improvement
3. Continue to pressurise the Government for transparency in costs and the capping of corporate greed within Defined contribution pension schemes.
4. Continue support for the provision of free Government pension guidance.
5. Explore, where possible with our sister trade unions and the Labour Party the potential for new and innovative retirement products that could be provided by the state through National Savings and Investments that eradicate the corporate profit agenda.

State Pension

1. Support the GMB Retired Members Association (RMA) in its work to defend the State Pension
2. Work with the Labour Party to make sure that state pension works for working people. This includes working to find innovative ways to combat the increasing State Pension Age for those in physically demanding occupations.
3. Work with the Labour Party to support the retention of the triple lock and the policy intention of making sure that state pension value is not eroded.
4. Assist Regions where needed in their work in supporting local WASPI groups to highlight the issue of the disproportionate impact that the 2011 State Pension Age increases had on women.

Education and Training

1. Continue to offer activist pension training to every GMB Region
2. Continue to offer officer training to every GMB Region
3. Continue to deliver online training for pensions
4. Continue to keep GMB members updated with pension changes through regular communications and our website www.gmb.org.uk/pensions
5. Respond to Government consultations

Produced by: GMB National Pensions Department

(Carried)

SIS. B. PLANT (CEC, Public Services): Vice President, Congress, speaking on behalf of the CEC, proud to be moving the CEC Special Report on Pensions. Thank you to those regions who have withdrawn their motions in favour of the report. It seems around every corner there is a new challenge for workplace pensions with employers keen to cut their costs and risk. This has led to cuts to pension scheme benefits and closure of schemes to be replaced by ones that are cheaper for employers and that place all the risk on scheme members. Without the challenge of the GMB and our sister trade unions employers would continue to compete to be first in the race to the bottom on workplace pensions. The GMB will not stand by and watch the erosion of deferred pay. We will fight against both poverty pay and poverty pensions for hardworking GMB members.

This Special Report outlines both the existing and upcoming challenges in pensions for workplace and state pensions. As an end challenge to working people it will be GMB's strength in the workplace that defeats these challenges. Every GMB member should be given the opportunity through their workplace pension to have a decent and comfortable retirement. The key to improving and defending workplace pensions will be in the training of GMB activists to take the fight to the employers. GMB's national pension department will continue to develop its training and education to fit the needs of GMB activists. We have outlined that there needs to be significant improvements to defined contribution pensions that the vast majority of people joining the workforce find themselves in. Improving auto-enrolment compliant pensions above the bare minimum lies at the very heart of this. By now you will have heard all the election promises on pensions. Be assured that GMB will continue to pressure any government on positive legislative changes to enhance and improve workplace pensions but our ability to do this lies with the desire and hunger from our members for change. As an activist led organisation we harness our collective strengths not merely to ask for change but to demand it. The CEC believes this Special Report outlines the blueprint for GMB activists to continue to lead the trades union Movement in delivering for working people on pensions. Therefore, Congress, please support this report. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Barbara. Would Birmingham like to put up a speaker? Can I have it formally seconded first, please? (*Agreed*)

The CEC Special Report on Pensions was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Birmingham, a speaker? No? London?

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, when many of us started out in our working lives we entered into a contract with our employers for both employer and employees to pay into a pension scheme. It is a contract and we expect employers to adhere to it. When there is a deficit in a pension scheme employers need to make additional payments but when they do not trustees are forced to find ways to reduce the deficit by cutting benefits, increasing contributions, or closing the scheme for future accruals. This is not right, it is not just, especially when the UK's blue chip companies could clear pension deficits with one year of dividend payments. There would not be any dividend payments without the many millions of employees, many of whom are our members. Congress, pensions before dividends. I support the CEC Special Report on Pensions. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Midland? Northern? North West?

BRO. K. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): I am speaking in support of the Special Report on Pensions. We were delighted to withdraw Motion 119. You ought to read that. That contains the sentiments that we wish to express in terms of the injustices that many of our pensioners face. There are over 12 million pensioners in this country and one million of those pensioners are aged over 75 and living in poverty. That is the facts. Yet we have a government and we have employers who are seeing pensioners as the next target in the marketplace to be picked off. They are the only ones they think have money left. They have taken the food out of our children's mouths at lunchtime. They have now shackled many young people with debt. They have managed to enslave many adults now in their working lives with low skills for work. The only target left now is pensioners. The only target left that they want to destroy is the pensions that people thrive on and live on, and depend on. I know as an individual facing a pension in a few years time I will lose £27 a week because of the option out clause within the pension payments. I did not choose to opt out in that way and I certainly did not choose to close my pension scheme. That was closed for me by the pension company who were scared when they looked at the fees. We had no choice. We have a whole generation of people who are now excluded from earning a proper living in pension. It is a disgrace. I ask you to back this report. I ask you actually to support it intergenerationally. This is not just an issue for pensioners. This is a pension issue for the whole trades union Movement. Congress, I move. Don't just support it, action it. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Scotland? Southern? South West? Yorkshire? Thank you, colleagues. I will now put the CEC Special Report on Pensions to a vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? That is carried.

The CEC Special Report on Pensions was ADOPTED.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: PENSIONS & RETIREMENT

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move on to Employment Policy: Pensions & Retirement. Would Birmingham withdraw Motion 107 and 116? Withdrawn? Okay, fine. Get your speaker down.

PENSION TRIPLE LOCK ISSUE MOTION 107

107. PENSION TRIPLE LOCK ISSUE

This Congress advises that the 'triple lock' has protected the incomes of the older generations since 2010. The mechanism that ensures that pensions rise by the same as average earnings, the CPI or 2.5% whichever is the highest is set to be scrapped by the Government.

Government ministers say that the 'triple lock' is unsustainable and unfair on younger families. If the 'triple lock' is scrapped then there will be a direct increase in pensioner poverty.

S75 STOKE UNITY BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Withdrawn)

SIS. S. YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): You have heard a lot about the triple lock just recently and over the next week you will hear more about it because the Tory Government are planning to scrap the triple lock. The triple lock was put in place to ensure economic security and dignity in old age. It ensures that pensions rise by either average earnings, consumer price index, or 2.5%, whichever is the highest. Pensions are not excessive and certainly do not allow pensioners to live in luxury. What the triple lock does is give a guarantee of a rise in a specific figure. The Tory Government are saying that the lock is unsustainable. We believe pensioners' dignity and some financial security is a price that is both affordable and worth paying. We cannot allow pensioner poverty to escalate, which it will undoubtedly do if the triple lock is scrapped. Let's fight to keep it. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. Birmingham has already said that they are going to withdraw 107 and 116. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Motions 107 and 116 were WITHDRAWN.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: North West have said they will withdraw Motion 119. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Motion 119 was WITHDRAWN.

INTERNATIONAL

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We move on now to the International and the first one is 362, London, please. Then 363, London, 366, Wales & South West, 367, Yorkshire, 368, North West, and 369, London. Could all those come down to the front, please? If you have put in a seconder, could they come down as well, please? 362, London.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS MOTION 362

362. HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

This Congress is gravely concerned about humanitarian crises in conflict areas and;

- (i) deplores any action by a standing army or other armed group which deliberately targets, or takes insufficient care to ensure the safety of, civilians;
- (ii) deplores any action by a standing army or other armed group which deliberately targets, or takes insufficient care to ensure the safety of, healthcare personnel and healthcare facilities;
- (iii) deplores any use of white phosphorus, neurotoxic gasses and anti-personnel mines as weapons in urban environments;
- (iv) calls on the GMB to lobby the relevant bodies to ensure each party in a conflict allows for free passage of medical supplies to the victims;
- (v) calls on the GMB to lobby the relevant bodies to hold to account those who prevent access to healthcare.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. Z. AZLAM (London): Congress, I am sure many of you will be familiar with aspects of Health & Safety at Work but what are your rights to protection if you are a doctor, or healthcare personnel working in a conflict zone or war environment. International humanitarian law and the Geneva Convention specifically prohibit military attacks on medical personnel and hospitals. The absolute rule is that civilians must not be directly targeted from military attack.

However, recent conflicts of war have not provided them with immunity. Across the globe combatants have ignored the prohibition against bombing hospitals, this includes artillery attacks on Sarajevo Kosovo Hospital in 1994 during the Bosnian War. In 2014, four hospitals in Gaza were hit under heavy shelling by the Israeli military. In 2015, a trauma centre in Afghanistan run by Medicine de Frontiers, or doctors without borders, was attacked by a United States gunship. These deliberate breaches of law have resulted in thousands of patients and medical personnel being killed and wounded in virtually every conflict since World War Two. Additionally, medical personnel have been targeted individually as was the case of the brave heroic British volunteer surgeon, Dr. Abbas Khan, who was tragically murdered by the Syrian Government in December 2013.

Of grave concern are the mounting civilian atrocities as heavily populated areas have been attacked with the use of the deadly chemical white phosphorous in Gaza by Israel and nerve gas Sarin by the Syrian Government on its own people. These war crimes cannot go unchallenged. Working with international relief agencies and human rights groups' complaints and legal action must be lodged for prosecution. GMB works with international unions. We must ask them to assist in this endeavour.

We are gravely concerned about humanitarian crises in conflict areas and the motion raises five key points. We deplore any action by a standing army or other armed groups which deliberately target or take insufficient care to ensure the safety of civilians and, furthermore, deplore action which deliberately targets or takes insufficient care to ensure the safety of healthcare personnel and healthcare facilities. We deplore any use of white phosphorous neuro-toxic gases and antipersonnel mines as weapons in urban environments. We call on the GMB to lobby relevant bodies to ensure each party in a conflict allows for free passage of medical supplies to the victims and call on GMB to lobby relevant bodies to hold to account those who prevent access to healthcare. I urge you to support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much indeed. Secunder?

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): Congress, last night London has experienced the horror of a third terror attack on UK soil in three months. There is still much we do not know about what happened but what we do know is that the rapid response of the medical personnel will have been essential in saving lives and preventing worse injuries. Congress, millions of our brothers and sisters living in war and conflict zones around the world face this kind of terrifying traumatising violence on a regular, even daily, basis. The doctors, the nurses, and the ambulance workers who are desperately trying to save their lives in these emergencies are themselves, as Zahida said, increasingly subject to attack, deliberately targeted by both state and insurgents in direct contravention of one of the oldest principles of international law, that even in war hospitals must be treated as sanctuaries and health workers must be left alone to do their job of saving lives and tending the injured.

Last year the World Health Organisation counted 302 such attacks on medical personnel, including one cited by Zahida. By far the largest culprit is Syria but many other countries are also guilty. In response, the UN last year passed a resolution reminding all combatants of this rule of war and calling on them to prosecute. One year on their resolution has made no difference whatsoever and they have been strongly criticised for making no effort to implement it. The problem is that the world's most powerful countries, including five permanent members of the Security Council, and including the UK, are not willing to enforce international rules of which they and their allies are breaking. Congress, the causes of these horrifying trends are complex but it is blindingly clear that until governments, including our own, adopt a genuine principled ethical foreign policy that UN resolution and the longstanding humanitarian law enshrines will remain just words on paper. Congress, I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kim. 363, mover?

REFUGEES – DISMANTLING OF CALAIS CAMP MOTION 363

363. REFUGEES – DISMANTLING OF CALAIS CAMP

This Congress notes in October 2016 the refugee camps in Calais were destroyed and all refugees dispersed throughout France. The authorities began to dismantle the camp with bulldozers and armed officers moving in to clear the settlements with buses being summoned

to take the refugees to temporary shelters across France. The tents, makeshift restaurants, libraries, places of worship and safe spaces were all dismantled.

The real situation and current plight of the refugees is not being reported. It is only from voluntary organisations on the ground in Calais that we learn that many of the refugees are not housed in shelters but are out on the streets sleeping rough. There are laws implemented prosecuting anyone seen helping the refugees.

The conditions for the refugees is much more dire than it was when there were settlement areas in Calais. Many do not know where they are or have lost contact with their family and friends. There is no clear information on the child refugees and where or who is caring for them.

The refugee crisis is a real humanitarian crisis. It is also a trade union issue.

We call upon Congress to:

1. Work with organisations in Calais and through France and offer support and solidarity.
2. Highlight the plight of the refugees
3. Support solidarity with refugees

EALING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. AKASIE (London): Vice President, Congress, this motion calls for Congress to support the refugees following the dismantling of the Calais camp. Congress knows that in October 2016 the refugees' camp in Calais was dismantled and cleared of refugees who were dispersed throughout France. The French authorities demolished the camp with bulldozers and armed officers moved in to clear the settlements. Buses were used to move these refugees to temporary shelters across France. The tents, makeshift restaurants, libraries, and even places of worship, were not spared in the demolition. The real situation and the common plight of the refugees are not being reported properly. It is from the volunteer positions on the ground in Calais that we learn many of the refugees are not even housed in shelters but are on the streets sleeping rough. Today we hear that a number of refugees in and around Calais are beginning to build up again six months after the camp was demolished. There are laws being implemented prosecuting anyone seen helping the refugees. The Calais major banned the distribution of food to migrants. The condition of the refugees is in a more desperate position now than it was when the settlements were in Calais. Many do not know where they are. Some have lost contact with their families and friends. There is no clear information on unaccompanied child refugees, who they are and who is caring for them. They fear the possibility of deportation, even when they claim for asylum. They fear deportation, especially the female child refugees.

Congress, we know that everyone should not and cannot close their hearts and their arms to these desperate refugees. They did not choose this condition. They are just caught in the crossfire. They are innocent beings caught up in the web of adult war politics. This is really sad. Congress, the trade union is in a position of campaigning for political, economic, and social justice not to a particular country but across the world at large. It campaigns for a fairer society and a fairer world. The refugee crisis is indeed a humanitarian crisis. Its cause was injustice. It is indeed a union issue.

We therefore call on Congress to work with those in Calais and through the French authorities to offer support and solidarity and spotlight, campaign for, or call attention to the plight of these vulnerable refugees. Congress, support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Godwin. Secunder?

SIS. P. DE VILLA (London): First time speaker, first time delegate. *(Applause)* I would like to ask for the help of the GMB in order to right the wrongs of the refugees. It is hard to imagine how our future will be when today we have thousands of people who are losing their lives and people who are losing their homes by war in the most balanced way without their basic human rights and without any psychological help they might need because they have had to witness children who have lost their dreams completely and who do not feel like children any more. If you leave them there they may even grow up but who will they become. Increasingly, young refugees are the first to live on the street and they need to go into prostitution and some even need to sell their possessions because they lost their family and do not have the money for food, and they do not have people to care about them. Congress, it is time to act and to help the refugees. Thank you, Vice President. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Patricia. The mover of 366.

SET THE KURDS FREE MOTION 366

366. SET THE KURDS FREE

This Congress notes that the Kurdish people have come close after both World Wars to achieving real independence.

Iraq's Kurds have been able to show that they have the economic and democratic viability to be able to gain independence, yet Turkey and Iran particularly remain opposed to an independent Kurdistan carved out of Iraq.

Congress agrees that the Kurds have earned a country of their own, but the US and its Western allies continue to oppose independence because of fears that it could destabilise the already volatile Middle-East area.

We call upon GMB to support the right of the Kurds to govern themselves.

AVON & WESSEX BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. LEADER (Wales & South West): Chair, Congress, the Kurds are one of the largest groups of people in the world that do not have a state while other smaller nations in their region do have a home and the Kurdish region of Iraq is home to up to one million people. Any country should have the right to have its own homeland if it can stand on its own feet, demonstrate democratic credentials, and have respect for other minorities. Iraq's Kurds are able to prove both economic and democratic viability and both these conditions are satisfied by way of value of their oil exports and regular parliamentary election.

In reality, the Kurds are the largest ethnic group without self-determination. The arguments against achieving that outcome are both hollow and obsolete. The US and British Government remain opposed to self-rule on the basis that this could destabilise the already volatile situation in the Middle East. The time has come when the Kurds should be given the form of government that they want for themselves instead of being ruled by others. Countries should be created by reference to the wishes of the people living there, not by the dictate of others. The Kurds have played a significant part in influencing regional developments, fighting for Turkish autonomy and playing prominent roles in the conflict in Syria and Iraq, yet they have never obtained a permanent nation state. For too long the Syrian Kurds have been suppressed and denied the most basic of rights. Land has been confiscated and political leaders arrested. In Iraq Kurds have faced brutal repression despite enjoying more national rights than those living in neighbouring states.

Whilst the homeland which fully unites the Kurdish elements of Turkey, Iran, and Syria, as well as Iraq, may remain a dream, at least Iraq Kurdistan has shown that it can build an effective and new nation state. The case for self-determination is an overpowering one and has to include the right to freely determined political status, pursue social, economic, and cultural objectives and manage their own resources. My region takes the view that in an ideal world the Kurds should have independence if they want it, just like every other nation. However, the top leaders of the Kurds seem prepared to accept that federalism must suffice. On that basis, we accept that autonomy rather than independence is the more pragmatic and sensible aim. I move.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ann. Secunder? Formally? Thank you.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I move on now to 367, mover, please.

STOP BRITISH BOMBS FALLING ON YEMEN MOTION 367

367. STOP BRITISH BOMBS FALLING ON YEMEN

This Congress believes that the inhumane bombing of Yemen is a national disgrace. The bombs are made and supplied by British companies breaking Arms Trade Treaty.

We call on the GMB to lobby and apply pressure to halt the supply of arms to the Saudi led coalition.

BASF CHEMICALS BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. HIRST (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): First time speaker, first time delegate. *(Applause)* Vice President, Congress, and visitors, Yemen is one of the Arab world's poorest countries. Since March 2015, it has been embroiled in a civil war, which has devastated the country and led to a humanitarian crisis that rivals, if not surpasses, the Syrian crisis. Approximately 5,000 civilians, many of them women

and children, have been killed and many more thousands injured by Saudi Arabian-led forces using bombs manufactured in Britain and sold to them by the British Government. Since the start of this conflict the British Government has sold over £3bn worth of arms to Saudi Arabia. There have been many clear violations of international law by all parties in this conflict but the fact remains that Saudi Arabia is a British ally and that ally is killing children and bombing hospitals and schools. This has been confirmed in a letter I have from Tobias Ellwood who says that the British Government regularly, that is, regularly, raises the importance of compliance with international humanitarian law with the Saudi government but goes on to say that the Saudis have the best insight into their own military procedures and conduct their own investigations. He goes on to say that the Saudis have published 13 reports into incidents where there have been recommendations to improve procedures. This was in December 2016. In February 2017, a funeral was targeted by Saudi forces and nine women and one child were killed.

We recognise that the arms trade is a very lucrative business and that the GMB have members who work in that business and nobody is calling for an end to the arms trade but we cannot ignore international law which states that arms sales can only legally proceed if Britain guarantee that they will not be involved in human rights abuses, and they cannot. This is a national disgrace and a shame on our country. Please support this motion, Congress. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mark. North West has told us that they are willing to formally move and second 368.

QATAR 2022 WORLD CUP MOTION 368

368. QATAR 2022 WORLD CUP

This Congress notes that migrant workers in Qatar working on preparations for hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup have been subject to appalling workers' rights violations and poor working conditions by employers since the country was awarded to host the football competition in 2010. In 2014 the ITUC reported that 1200 workers have already died from work-related incidents since 2010 and estimated that a further 4000 workers could die before a ball is kicked at the World Cup in a few years' time, if employers do not improve. Qatar's "kafala" sponsorship system is akin to modern slavery as migrant workers cannot change jobs or leave the country without their employer's permission. In 2016, Qatar announced it ended this system, though the ITUC and Amnesty International have reported that reforms leave the existing system of exploitation intact.

The GMB has done great work so far to raise awareness of this issue, though there is always more to do. Poor working conditions and deaths at work continue, one of the most recent being the death of a 40-year-old British man in January 2017 whilst working on the Khalifa Stadium. Football fans from across the UK and Ireland attending the World Cup or watching at home should be made as fully aware as possible of the terrible treatment of workers that are making this tournament in Qatar possible. Congress calls on the GMB to develop its work on this issue with a high-profile awareness raising campaign in the UK leading up to the tournament and to support a full ILO inquiry into Qatari labor law and the treatment of migrant workers there, so that tragedies like this never happen again.

(Carried)

Motion 368 was formally moved and seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to 369, London Region.

**US PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL BAN
MOTION 369**

369. US PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL BAN

This Congress notes on the 27th January 2017 the US President signed an Executive Order banning entry from seven majority Muslim countries into the US.

There was no public condemnation from the Tory Leader indicating complicity. We must stand up against this ban which is clearly wrong. A petition calling for a ban on the US President visiting the UK was signed by over 1.7 million people.

We call upon Congress to:

1. Visibly campaign to condemn this Order as morally wrong.
2. Work with GMB backed MP's to not allow a platform for the US President at least while the ban remains in force.
3. To ensure that any members affected by this travel ban are give information and guidance through resources for members such as UnionLine.

EALING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. COLES (London): Vice President, Congress, this is the motion to trump all others. In January, Donald Trump issued an executive order unilaterally banning entry to the US from seven majority Muslim countries. After this was ruled illegal, he then sought to override this making a new order on March 6th. This one omitted Iraq from that list, again a temporary restraint order was issued by the courts on the basis that it is illegal, in effect a Muslim ban. Trump said this is to prevent terrorism but what it does is prevent those suffering from terrorism and other dangers in those countries from seeking refuge in America, supposedly the land of the free. While we wait to see how things proceed, Trump's reaction, an utter refusal to set the rule of law, is indefensible for a leader of a supposedly democratic country. What did our PM do when she visited Trump at the time the first order was signed, she ignored it and carried on treating him as a close friend. Over 1.8 million people signed a petition against this but in a parliamentary debate May dismissed their views. May wants friendship with the US at all costs.

We call on you, Congress, to continue to campaign against the banning orders. We also call upon our MPs once elected on Thursday to fight not to give Trump any platform in this country. We also call for help to be given through Union Line, if necessary, to support any members that may be affected. Congress, this is the 21st century. We are country that supports the rights of all, and believes in equal opportunities and condemns discrimination of all kinds. We are being quick to

condemn an act against any country and its leaders that encourage any kind of discrimination so why should the United States be any different? We must be consistent in our approach and stand up for our morals. We must not be bullied by a so-called super power and not pander to the racist knee jerk reaction, a reaction that will do nothing to solve the problem of global terrorism. We must continue to support those in need, give shelter to those fleeing persecution or violence, and we must do more to give support to those countries on that list.

Congress, we have a moral duty to protect those in need and stand up against all discrimination, no matter who is responsible. I urge all people on Thursday to use your vote wisely to stand up against those who stand side-by-side with those who peddle discrimination. Vote on Thursday against this Tory Government and vote now to support this motion. I beg to move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jonathan. Secunder?

SIS. S. HURLEY (London): I think the easiest way is to spell it out. When I think of Trump I think of T for toxic, I think of R for racist, I think of U for unattractive, I think of M for Muslim hater, and I think of P for polluter. Congress, we must support the travel ban. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. I now call on Margaret Gregg, from the North West Region, to give the CEC qualifications. Margaret.

SIS. M. GREGG (CEC, Commercial Services): Thank you, Malcolm. President, Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on the international motions, which we are asking you to support with qualifications. I will take each in turn.

Motion 362 calls for GMB to help avert humanitarian crises and hold relevant bodies to account in conflict areas. The qualification is that our ability to do so is limited but we can support the sentiment.

Motion 363 updates our 2016 position on refugees as a migrant camp at Calais has been dismantled and the inhabitants dispersed. However, we recognise the renewed support to aid refugees and the only qualification is again that what we can achieve is limited, though we can continue to work with like-minded non-governmental organisations in the field.

The qualification for Motion 366 is that the Kurdish leader, Abdullah Öcalan, is not arguing for cessation from existing political borders but rather for peaceful coexistence within them. Therefore, we should support the Kurds and their struggle for self-determination but without specifically calling for an independent Kurdistan.

On Motion 367, few would argue against the general principle of an end to the arms trade in an ideal world. Unfortunately, we have members involved in the manufacture of weapons so the qualification is that it would be difficult for us to do anything that would impact members' jobs.

On Motion 368, the qualification is that it is difficult to see what more we can do. GMB subscribes to the global campaign by ITUC and building on Workers International and will continue to be involved, where appropriate.

Finally, the qualification to support Motion 369 is that the Trump ban on Muslims only applies to certain countries, excluding the UK. Moreover, we do not have the expertise to advise on travel via Union Line as the motion requests. That remains the responsibility of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

In conclusion, I would ask you to support Motions 362, 363, 366, 367, 368 and 369, with the qualifications I have outlined to you. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Margaret. Does London accept the qualifications on 362, 363, and 369? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Wales accept the qualification on 366? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Yorkshire accept the qualification on 367? (*Agreed*) North West accept the qualification on 368? Thank you. I will now put these motions to the vote, 362, 363, 366, 367, 368, and 369, all those in favour please show. Any against? They are carried.

Motion 362 was CARRIED.

Motion 363 was CARRIED.

Motion 366 was CARRIED.

Motion 367 was CARRIED.

Motion 368 was CARRIED.

Motion 369 was CARRIED.

INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now move on to the Industrial & Economic Policy: Public Services. I ask 181, Wales & South West, 182, Wales & South West, Composite 15, Scotland to move and second, and 187 Scotland, please, to move to the front. The first one is the mover of 181.

POSITIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY MOTION 181

181. POSITIVE APPROACH TO PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

This Congress notes that, despite facing common challenges the devolved Scottish and Welsh Governments have created a more constructive approach to public services delivery than the UK government. Both devolved governments have established structures which enable regular on-going workforce engagement and trade union participation.

Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to promote and share good practices and outcomes and that GMB experiences in Scotland and Wales are more widely shared, evaluated and understood. This should help support in the long term a more positive approach, irrespective of changes in the political climate.

HENGOED ENGINEERING BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. BUTLER (Wales & South West): First time delegate, first time speaker. (*Applause*) Congress, another motion from my region explains how our government in Wales have resolved to repeal those parts of the vindictive Trade Union Act which applied to Wales public services. Here in Wales we have taken a fundamentally different approach to industrial relations compared to that practised by Westminster government. The concept of social partnership working is firmly founded upon recognition by government that the work of trade unions is valuable and a respect for the rights of those workers that they represent. It is commendable, therefore, that the Labour Welsh Government are prepared to stand in opposing the Act for the rights of our members in devolved public services.

The political dominance of Welsh Labour since devolution in 1998 has seen a real commitment to public service provision and employment. This policy has been channelled through a social dialogue arrangement with both trade unions and employers. Just two examples of Welsh initiatives in the area of equalities promotion illustrate how government has been supportive of equality at the workplace in Wales: firstly, the funding of a trade union equality network project officer based at the Wales TUC, which has led to in excess of 300 lead equality contracts being established in an increasing network; secondly, because of inability to pass legislation itself to provide statutory facility time, the Welsh Government has encouraged employers to enable equality representatives to carry out their roles effectively by allowing sufficient facility time.

It is clearly the case that equalities initiatives are more likely to succeed with employer support so the Welsh Government have played a valuable role in intervening to facilitate dialogue between employers and trade unions, and how this approach contrasts with the stance of Westminster where the state has consistently rejected the partnership solutions since as far back as the 1970s. Simply talking about partnership in employment is not enough; instead, it is necessary to provide day-to-day support to our representatives in workplaces. When we talk about partnership it is crucial that our members understand what it means but also are able to perceive the benefits it can bring to them. What partnership is not, Congress, is some kind of phoney industrial relations where GMB kowtows to the employer. So we have this important belief that the public sector in Wales can become an exemplar of best practice in the sphere of employment generally and equalities specifically. Congress, the benefits in devolved government department from the market-based obsession of Central Westminster and implementing the social democratic style of industrial relations is beyond argument. Congress, best practice must be shared and extended and must include England too. I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maxine. Secunder?

SIS. A. LEADER (Wales & South West): President, Congress, the past two decades have been significant for public services with much change in terms of privatisation, outsourcing, and the ongoing policy of deficit reduction. Public service employment relations has increasingly taken centre stage with the recognition that reform of services cannot be achieved purely by changes in organisational structures and performance standards, rather there is an appreciation that workforce engagement has a vital role to play in ensuring that effective services are delivered to the public. The need in these circumstances is to communicate problems in an open way, generally

consult with trade unions about the staff required, and allow that concept of a voice to be exercised and expressed fully. To be able to better control and manage the changed process we have to re-engineer our relationships with those that we consult and negotiate with. Public service employment relations have been typically adversarial in the past but have to be transformed first to be able to rise to the increasing challenges of employee voice and equality.

In Wales we have deliberately shifted away from the old institutionalised model of industrial relations to a newer template based on social partnership. The delivery of high-quality public services depends upon an engaged and committed workforce so it is necessary to have a government policy of working collaboratively with the other stakeholders. Positive employer/employee relationships need to be supported. Partnership requires shared aims, appropriate structures, frequent meetings, enhanced worker voice, and an optimal and open approach to problem solving. Experience shows how well partnership can work in the devolved Welsh and Scottish administration. Now it is England's turn, surely. I second. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ann. The mover over 182?

ETHICAL PROCUREMENT MOTION 182

182. ETHICAL PROCUREMENT

This Congress is concerned that Public Services employers are responding to the austerity costs by Westminster Government by using external contracts to run all or part of the services.

To offset this, the procurement procedure should always have an ethical consideration built into it. This would include no zero hour contracts, the Foundation Living Wage (not the pretend one from Westminster), mandatory access to the relevant pension scheme, travelling expenses and time included, no umbrella Companies (direct employment only) and no black listing company to be awarded any contracts.

This Congress calls upon the Central Executive Council to provide information and training for all activists so that they can influence the procurement process to the benefit of our members.

RHONDDA CYNON TAFF CBC BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Referred)

BRO. H. WORKMAN (Wales & South West): First time delegate, first time speaker. (*Applause*) Vice President, Congress, as we know too many employers in this country lack responsible governance and ethical values. Outsourcing and competitive tendering has introduced many of them to the public sector, often impacting badly upon service users and sometimes undermining the services themselves. The public sector must set out to these private providers the ethical standards expected of them and then incorporate these standards into mandatory requirements for those who bid for public sector contracts. In employment this means a commitment to paying at least the real living wage, direct employment, elimination of zero hours contracts, trade union recognition and rights, involvement of employees and their unions in decision-making processes, good practice on issues of health, safety, welfare, and

equality, ethical supply chain procurement, corporate responsibility and good governance should all be prerequisites of being awarded a public sector contract, and of course involvement in blacklisting should automatically exclude employers from even bidding for public sector contracts.

Unfortunately, the leverage that public sector employers have to insist upon such conditions being met is rarely applied. Obviously, our vested interest is that of our members and their families working in and accessing the services of the public sector but, in addition, procurement is increasingly an international issue. Provision of local authority and healthcare services is big business with the NHS spending £30bn a year on procurement every year. The market is increasingly global. Congress, our concern as trade unionists should not be limited to our members in this country but should extend to the employment rights and conditions of those working around the world. If we can persuade public sector employers to use their buying power ethically and responsibly, then there is a real chance of improving the lives of working people elsewhere in the world.

Congress, a significant responsibility falls upon our workplace organisers to address all of these issues, so training and a negotiator's guide would be very helpful to facilitate our campaign and objectives here. We must campaign to improve ethical practice on both a local and a global level and, as usual, it is up to us to ensure fairness of application by the public sector employers that we negotiate with. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Hugh. Seconder?

SIS. M. BUTLER (Wales & South West): Congress, everyone understands or will have some experience of the financial pressures falling upon public sector employers as the regime of austerity continues under this Tory Government. As funding reduces and demands for services increases, there is an obvious temptation to access external suppliers of services. However, not enough employers are applying practices that ensure all goods, works, and services that are procured are sourced ethically. The legal framework requires outsourcing employers to award certain contracts in keeping with the overarching basic principles of the EU treaty, including those of non-discrimination, equal treatment, transparency, fairness, mutual recognition and proportionality. As the mover has said, there needs to be a strong public interest in ensuring that certain principles are observed as part of the procurement process, including safe working conditions, limits on working hours, minimum wage rates, regular employment, elimination of child labour, and adequate training has to be included within the principal category applicable to any contract allocation. Congress, every public sector employer that we deal with must have a policy which commits service suppliers to ethical practices.

This resolution calls for the GMB to create a better awareness amongst its activists as to what the main considerations should be in developing an approach to tendering that upholds the values of public services. I am sure that we are all one on this very important matter. It is just a question of continuing to do what GMB always does well, namely, training our activists to the highest level possible. Congress, please support this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Maxine. The mover of Composite 15?

**EXPOSING SCOTLAND'S AUSTERITY SHAME AND COMMUNITIES FIGHTING BACK
COMPOSITE 15**

C15. Covering Motions:

- | | | |
|------|--|--------------|
| 185. | EXPOSING SCOTLAND'S AUSTERITY SHAME | GMB Scotland |
| 186. | ORKNEY ISLANDS FIGHTING BACK AGAINST AUSTERITY | GMB Scotland |

EXPOSING SCOTLAND'S AUSTERITY SHAME AND COMMUNITIES FIGHTING BACK

This Congress notes that across the UK, Local Government has been under severe pressure to deliver local public services, against a backdrop of politically driven austerity.

This Congress regrets the political choice that has been made to force austerity cuts onto low paid workers delivering our public services across the length and breadth of Britain and believes that the Union must stand firm in defence of hard earned terms and conditions in local government, for decent local services and on the side of those vulnerable members of our society who are most affected when vital services are cut or withdrawn.

In Scotland, the Scottish Government have chosen to pass the cuts they have seen to their own budget, to Local government and in fact, have gone further by disproportionately cutting local government budgets and creating a crisis for Scottish Councils. This year, Scottish Local Government will face, in a real term cut of £327m, according to the *Scottish Parliament's Information Centre* independent evaluation of the Scottish Government's draft budget. The price for these cuts is being paid by some of the most vulnerable, the most reliant and local public services and by communities at large, with cuts to school budgets, at a time of declining attainment, social and community services, homecare, refuse and roads. Tens of thousands of Scottish Local Government jobs have gone and those workers who remain face increased workload pressure, declining standards of living as a result of stagnating wages and unprecedented attacks on terms and conditions.

GMB Scotland is clear the blame for austerity resides with the UK Government, but also condemns politicians in the Scottish Parliament, who have claimed to oppose austerity in the UK but actually increased it for Scottish Local Authorities. This is all at a time, when strengthening of the Scottish Parliament has resulted in the availability of progressive income tax powers allowing Scottish politicians to make different choices from the Tory government in the UK.

This Congress believes that austerity in local government results from ideological decisions taken at national level and that the cuts crisis in Scottish Local Government was avoidable. But refuses to stand by and allow the price of austerity to be paid by local government workers; delivering the services which are most relied upon by communities all over Britain and encourages all local government branches to organise against cuts and to take action ensuring those in power at every level, take responsibility for the reality of austerity in our communities.

Therefore Congress supports the campaign which has been run by GMB members in the Orkney Islands Council to defend their jobs, terms and conditions and local services. Congress notes that this campaign defeated a Council proposal to slash the pay of frontline staff by up to 10%, reductions in core hours, holiday entitlement and overtime payments and involved the Union by challenging local politicians to "Walk a mile in our shoes" to see the reality of

workload pressure on those staff who are left to deliver services when staff numbers and budgets are cut.

This Congress supports GMB Scotland's activists-led campaign to Expose Scotland's Austerity Shame by calling on all Scottish Councillors and Scottish politicians who claim progressive values but refuse to use progressive means to challenge austerity, stand with and defend their communities and Council workers and stop the council cuts.

This Congress calls on the Scottish Government to use the powers to oppose austerity and stop passing on Tory cuts.

(Carried)

SIS. A DRYLIE (GMB Scotland): Congress, this government's austerity programme does not just mean reducing the amount of money it spends on public services, NHS, schools, and fair wages. It means making cuts for also reducing the tax it collects from the big corporations and the super rich. It means tax cuts for the rich, wage freezes or benefits cuts for the rest. That is the political choice made by a Tory government looking after its own. Congress, austerity is not something that we have chosen for ourselves. It is not our choice to live with less money, a lower standard of living, and cuts to vital public services. It is not our choice for schools to be crumbling, hospital waiting lists to be rising, and the wages of the public sector workers to be frozen. It is a political choice by the government of the day. Their choice is for the most vulnerable citizens to carry on paying the price of the global financial crisis.

In Scotland and the Orkney Islands we are under no illusion that the blame for austerity lies with the UK government but just as the UK government made the political choice to impose austerity, so have the Scottish government and the Orkney Islands Council made a political choice to embrace that austerity. To their shame, these Scottish politicians claim to have progressive values whilst their policies have been to impose savage cuts. They do not need to do that. They choose to. They choose to in the knowledge that the inevitable effects are job losses, working pressure increased, and terms and conditions decimated. This is nothing less than political hypocrisy. It is shameful to claim to be against austerity and then choose to implement savage cuts.

Congress, GMB Scotland says that this kind of posturing without principle has to end. Crocodile tears and handwringing will not wash. The Scottish government has no choice than to do something different. It has the power necessary to make different choices, to stop the council cuts, to defend the services, to protect jobs, and to build communities rather than destroying them. GMB Scotland's campaign to expose Scotland's austerity shame is an act of a campaign that is calling these politicians to account. We believe that Scottish Parliament and the councils, like Orkney Islands Council, can and must reject austerity, not in words but in deeds. This is something which all Scottish workers deserve and we will continue to fight for it. We will continue to expose and shame the guilty Scottish politicians until they abandon their austerity policies that cause so much damage and despair. Congress, please support the composite. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Annette. Seconder? Formally second? Thank you.

The composite motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 187 mover?

END OF 1% PAY CONSTRAINT WITHIN PUBLIC SECTOR MOTION 187

187. END OF 1% PAY CONSTRAINT WITHIN PUBLIC SECTOR

This Congress, we at Beith Engineering would like to propose that the unfair and unjust and detrimental pay constraint imposed on the Public Sector be removed.

For example, paltry increases imposed within Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) trading entity, where increase on average equated to 0.06% non-consolidated payment, which in effect led to further pay cut and further loss of membership?

B38 BEITH ENGINEERING BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. J. McCROSSAN (GMB Scotland): Congress, the treatment of decent hardworking public sector workers by recent governments has been an absolute disgrace. Any politician with a shred of decency would stand up for the public sector workers, not use them as a punch bag to satisfy their fetish for cuts and austerity. I sometimes wonder what world these politicians inhabit. Is it one where children have to be fed, taught, and looked after at school? Is it one where the elderly need to be cared for in their homes or in residential care? Is it one where bins need to be emptied, roads maintained, and streets cleaned, or is it one where sick people need to be transported to hospital appointments or need an ambulance in an emergency, or need to be looked after in hospitals by caring NHS staff, or one that needs civilian workers to support the Armed Forces and those who defend our country, or is it one where the workers who do all these jobs, who deliver these services, and work ever harder as cuts bite and bills have to be paid, and children are raised? It seems that the government ministers do not live in the same world as us. They certainly do not have a clue about what we do and how hard we struggle to make ends meet. Congress, if they had the slightest idea we would not be facing yet more pay restraints. We are expected to work harder and harder and only rewarded with insulting pay increases.

Inflation is currently running at 3.7%, hitting everyone on low and middle incomes in their pocket. The longer that this 1% pay cut has been in place the more our earnings have lost their value. GMB has estimated that average loss suffered by public service workers from this unjust and unfair pay cut is £3,300 each year. This has to stop. Public service workers must not continue to bear the brunt of austerity. Labour has committed to ending the public sector pay cut and all parties must follow suit. We need a government that values public services. We need a government that values the people who deliver them. Congress, our public service members need and deserve a decent pay rise after far too many years of pay constraint. Please support this motion.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Secunder? Formally second? Thank you.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I now call on Gordon Gibbs, from Birmingham Region, to speak on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. G. GIBBS (CEC, Public Services): I will try and speak in English and not Dudley! We are supporting Motion 181 with a qualification and asking Congress to refer Motion 182, and supporting Motion 187 with a short statement.

On Motion 181, the CEC will be receptive to promoting good practice from devolved governments to apply to campaigning in the public sector. The qualification is that the evidence should be collected and presented to the CEC by GMB representatives working within those devolved governments in order to promote such best practice.

Motion 182 asks for education and training of activists in the public sector. We are asking Congress to refer this motion as it would be appropriate to define which activists would be eligible for this training and also if the training is required this should be requested through our regions.

Finally, on Motion 187, the public services sector has this year launched a national campaign to end the pay freeze. This is a public sector pay pitch campaign. Research conducted by GMB has found that the pay freeze and pay cap over the last seven years has meant the public sector workers have lost out on thousands of pounds, if not tens of thousands of pounds, in real terms from their wages. The section and reps from the region have helped to devise a campaign leading to pay talks for local government and the CEC urge all activists and members to get behind this campaign to fight this abhorrent constraint on wages. Now is the time more than ever before where workers in the public sector must stand together against this current government, and whichever government is formed after June 8th, to bust this pay cap.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motion 181 with a qualification, agree to refer Motion 182, and support 187 with a statement that I have laid out.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gordon. Wales and South West accept the qualification on 181? (*Agreed*) Wales and South West accept the reference on 182? (*Agreed*) Scotland accept the statement on 187? (*Agreed*) I will now put these motions to Congress, 181, Composite 15, 182, and 187, all those in favour please show. Any against? They are carried.

Motion 181 was CARRIED.

Motion 182 was REFERRED.

Composite 15 was CARRIED.

Motion 187 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call Motions 195, Southern, 196, 197, 198, Yorkshire, 199, Scotland, 200, London, 202, Birmingham, and 204, Wales & South West, to come to the front, please, and if there are seconders could they come as well.

Could the mover of 195 come to the rostrum?

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES MOTION 195

195. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FOR SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

This Congress notes that many school academies, or multi academy trusts, continue to follow the pay and terms and conditions of the local authority.

This Congress notes that where a local authority consults GMB over possible changes to the pay scales or Terms and Conditions relating to the LA maintained schools, any changes implemented will have a knock on effect to the Academies who follow their pay and T&Cs. However, the staff who work for the Academies affected are not included in the consultation.

Congress believes that failure to include staff working for Academies who follow LA pay scales and T&Cs in any consultations places those employers outside the duty to consult in their recognition agreement, and deprives GMB members of their right to be consulted.

This Congress resolves that GMB will, in these circumstances, encourage, and where possible require, employers who share the same pay scales and T&Cs to formally combine to form a joint employer side negotiating team.

This congress resolves to encourage, where appropriate, sectoral bargaining to cover school support staff across LA maintained schools and Academies within local geographical areas.

W15 WILTSHIRE & SWINDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

BRO. C. WATTS (Southern): One of the drivers and part of the motivation for the Conservative Government to push academisation was an attempt to weaken the collective strength of our union and members in education. The fortuitous unintended consequence of this Tory policy was to strengthen resolve and to highlight school support staff and teaching assistants the need to be collectively represented by a stronger union. This has shown in our increased membership in education since 2010. I also believe it has come as a surprise to those that seek to weaken us for academies have, wholesale, chosen to remain attached to local authority terms and conditions. Although this is largely welcome it does present an issue to those members in academies who may feel marginalised and disenfranchised as not fully engaged in consultation. All too often academy management appear content not to engage and accept local government collective agreements without understanding their legal obligations to consult. We must not be content to choose a path of least resistance ensuring that we are a constant reminder of the rights of our members and academies as well as state-maintained schools. This motion seeks to remedy this disenfranchisement and I would ask for Congress support of Motion 195. I am still on a green light and I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Chris. Secunder?

SIS. M. RODRIGUES (Southern): This motion simply places emphasis on creating a route to obtaining collective bargaining status for staff working within academies that are following local authority terms and conditions. This will ensure that their rights

are reflective of those exercised by staff members already employed by local authority schools. Delivery of services by staff irrespective of whether they are employed by local authority schools or academies would maintain the same goal of actually educating our children, who, of course, will be the future. I actually would like to second this motion and would seek your support on this. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Manetta. The mover of 196?

THE USE OF INAPPROPRIATE APPRAISALS FOR SUPPORT STAFF MOTION 196

196. THE USE OF INAPPROPRIATE APPRAISALS FOR SUPPORT STAFF

This Congress notes that schools are using the teacher's appraisal policies for support staff, this policy should not be used in this way as it is designed for teachers and is linked to their pay and conditions.

There is no benefit for our members to have an appraisal based on teacher's standards.

Support staff will not get a pay rise for reaching targets; they will be more at risk at being taken through a capability process.

We need a national campaign to highlight the issues and pitfalls of this sort of appraisal brings. We should promote a proper CPD that gives our members a proper route for professional development that is relevant to their role in school.

LEEDS SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. G. WARWICK (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): The purpose of this motion is very, very clear, stop the use of the Teachers' Appraisal Scheme for support staff, which is increasingly being used by schools. It is totally inappropriate and could lead to appraisal failures. The GMB National Schools Committee is keen that the use of teachers' appraisal schemes should not be used for support staff. There are many, many aspects of the Teachers' Appraisal Scheme which is inappropriate. I will only mention one. Teachers are responsible for pupil attainment. This is not, cannot, be a responsibility for teaching assistants. Appraisals should be a two-way process to ensure achieving appropriate standards of performance by our members, but it should also be about training and opportunity for career development. I ask you, with the current cuts by this Government in education and the almost negligible amount of training, it is far more likely to lead to incapability cases when people fail their appraisal.

This motion calls for a national campaign but after giving it some thought we really need more. We need the reintroduction of the School Support Staff National Body to ensure that we have statutory pay grades, conditions, and working practices for school support staff. The risk to jobs by the use of inappropriate appraisals is far too great without statutory backing, especially given the increase in number of academies where there is very little accountability and where the risk is so great. Please accept. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gary. Secunder? Formally? Thank you.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can we have the mover of Motion 197?

TWO-TIER APPROACH TO DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE POLICIES MOTION 197

197. TWO-TIER APPROACH TO DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE POLICIES

This Congress believes that there is a two-tier Disciplinary and Grievance Policies in schools.

More and more support staff are being suspended from schools pending an investigation. If a child or parent makes an allegation against a member of support staff they are suspended. The usual reason given is that it is a safe guarding issue and the school has no other option.

Yet when a complaint is made against a Head Teacher little or nothing is done, they are very rarely, if ever suspended, and the investigations go nowhere.

When a complaint is made against a member of staff a full investigation is usually the next step, and if upheld, it is followed by a disciplinary. This is rarely the case when a grievance is raised against a head teacher.

All staff should be treated the same whether they are support staff or Head Teachers. This two-tier approach to policies has made it easy for support staff to be made scape goats and many are forced out by the draconian ways disciplinary and grievances are used against them.

LEEDS SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. A EQUIANO (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Good afternoon, Vice President. Good afternoon, Congress. Should a school teacher be employed the same, should not equality at all levels equate to all staff regardless of their position. I have been to many investigations supporting support staff where allegations have been made against them; in some cases the support staff have been suspended or moved to a different environment while the investigation is taking place. I am not arguing about whether it is a safeguarding issue, putting pupils and other staff in danger, but the support staff should not be moved. My argument is that where there are complaints made against a teacher, it is brushed under the carpet or no formal investigation has taken place.

For instance, one of my members puts in a grievance form. HR is quick to get in contact and ask why this member did not try to resolve it a different way. When you think about it, when someone is a victim of bullying and harassment, how could mediation be discussed to resolve this issue? HR then requested a meeting to resolve this outside a grievance. The member agreed but when the member decided to contact HR for an update HR turned round and said they are still trying to have a meeting with the teacher, even though the member has stated in the email that the harassment still continues.

I will give you another case. A member had previously been off work with work-related stress due to their teacher. When the member of staff returned to work the bullying and harassment also continued. The member is now off sick again but prior to going off sick the member requested special leave so bought a holiday to her child's graduation abroad. They had not seen their child for a number of years and required an additional day to travel, which would include their child's graduation, and also the additional day. This was declined by the teacher. The request was from Thursday until Wednesday when they would return to work. Actually, they should have been three working days because the Monday was a bank holiday. They only offered the member one day, which was the Tuesday. So this could only be to fly out on a Saturday, attend the graduation on the Sunday, and fly back the day after. Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Atu. Formally seconded?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Could I have the mover of 198, please?

**THE INSTITUTIONAL BULLYING OF SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF IN SCHOOLS
MOTION 198**

198. THE INSTITUTIONAL BULLYING OF SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF IN SCHOOLS

This Congress notes that there is an unprecedented rise in the bullying of our support staff in schools.

Staff who already work over and above their contractual obligations are being bullied by Head Teachers and Senior Leadership Teams to provide cover, take whole classes but are employed and paid at a lower level.

Staff are forced to work with SEN pupils with little or no training. Many staff are attacked, injured and abused on a daily basis.

When they complain or ask for support they are told it is their job and if they can't deal with it then they should find alternative employment.

Every school will have a bullying policy, which would appear in practice not to include our support staff. They are fair game to the school bullies of Head Teachers, Principals, Deputy Heads and Business Managers.

We need a campaign to name and shame these bullies and for the consistent offenders we should be dragging them through tribunals.

LEEDS SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. HINCHCLIFFE (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Vice President, Congress, hello, hello. My name is Michael Hinchcliffe from the promised land of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. (*Cheers*) This morning – sorry, this afternoon – I am moving Motion 198, which is the Institutional bullying of School Support Staff in

Schools. This potentially was going to be one of those controversial ones because I was moving this with the support of my family, the great region of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire, but until yesterday without the support of the CEC. Hot news off the press, however, is that the GMB elders have now relented, not wanting to take on the gladiator, and they are now supporting the motion with a qualification.

Whether you are educating in Yorkshire or other locations throughout the UK, our school support staff are the champions of our education system, but they face a barrage of bullying and abuse on a number of different levels. A number originally entered this profession as volunteer mums assisting in schools and all they wanted was a bit of dignity and respect. On the surface they seem to be keeping up appearances but underneath their resolve has been broken by the physical and verbal abuse from parents and their offspring. They often need a minder to protect them in some circumstances.

The role has been extended over the years. They are expected to be experts in every field including toilet training, self-defence, conflict resolution, and socialisation of both the children and the parents. They are often forced to take on the classes when teachers fail to appear with little or no notice at all. If that was not bad enough, they get little support from the academy heads, which are now known as business unit managers, which is BUMs for short. When they raise issues they get little tea and sympathy from these ayatollahs, and they are told to get on with it or get another job.

Attitudes of this sort are now forcing our school support staff to leave in droves and if we fail to address this countdown it will have a number of devastating effects on the next generation; remember, they will be working to pay our pensions. This motion calls for the school bullying ayatollahs to be identified and appropriate action taken to eradicate this institutionalised abuse of our members. The GMB has a proud tradition of standing up for the weak and the vulnerable in society. We are the voice when people are suffering and we are the current batch of the workforce police that need to carry on that great tradition. We are at a crossroads and we need to act now because if we pass the tipping point it may be too late.

If you look back in history, it is littered with examples of where good people did nothing, despicable behaviour went on unchallenged for years. Look at Savile, he ruined the lives of so many. We all wanted to be in Gary's gang in the '80s until we found out the real gang and what was happening in Cambodia. When an Australian guy wrote a song about abuse of a kangaroo, we all bought it and took it to number one. What about poor old Skippy, I say. Worst of all is the lack of action when young people are being trafficked and abused nationwide. Police and various councils turned a blind eye ----

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Please wind up.

BRO. M. HINCHCLIFFE: I move. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The mover of Motion 199, please?

**HIGHLAND COUNCIL'S LACK OF PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH
ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS
MOTION 199**

**199. HIGHLAND COUNCIL'S LACK OF PROVISION FOR CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL
SUPPORT NEEDS**

This Congress notes with shock and disgust the lack of support for children with additional support needs.

The level of Pupil support staff who deliver the support to these children have found their jobs and hours cut due to the austerity cuts forced on Highland Council as part of the Westminster ideological destruction of our educational and local council funding structure.

Due to the last round of budget cuts pupils designated in the lower tariffs had their funding cut to support the higher tariff pupils, in effect taking them out of the system and denying them support. This in turn put increased pressure on the support staff and their ability to carry out their role and the pressure of job cuts has had a knock on effect of reducing the number of support staff in main stream schools. This has also had an increased impact on the number of reportable violence at work incidents because of fewer staff being available to deal with pupils needs. Children need continuity in their lives to feel safe, strong and free.

This Congress is requested to put pressure upon both the Scottish government and Westminster government to ensure that education is fully funded to provide the level of care and support these children need to fulfil their lives and future potential.

HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Carried)

BRO. R. PATERSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, the Scottish government have accelerated austerity on to councils. The Scottish government attacks on local government funding have left Scottish councils struggling to balance their budgets, a government that makes noises about fighting austerity but does nothing in practice to support struggling councils. Of all the council funding areas hit hardest has been education. Contrary to false claims about protecting children and fully funded education, serious budget cuts have been imposed. One of the biggest impacts in this area has been educational support staff. They have faced job losses, cuts in hours, and the extra work that results from having fewer people on the job. Who suffers, Congress? It is the children, the children in need of support and assistance from these dedicated staff. All the children are affected but those with additional needs who rely on their support the most have been forced to the bottom of the pile. The very children who need the most support are the children they are letting down. It is not because the support staff do not care and not because the teachers do not care, and not because the head teachers do not care. It is the politicians who make these decisions do not care. It is not them who suffer the consequences of their indifference.

Congress, our children did not cause the financial crisis. Our children are the victims of it as these savage cuts in councils' funding seriously affect the quality of their education. Our children deserve better and our children deserve the best. Congress, we are one of the wealthiest nations on earth and our children have the right to a high-

quality education and to be supported and cared for in school by an adequate number of staff. Anything less is a disgrace. We must keep up the pressure for a fully funded education system. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: The mover of Motion 200, please?

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOLS MOTION 200

200. ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION IN SCHOOLS

This Congress agrees that the administration of medication and medical complications some children have in our schools has now reached a stage where nurses, more than ever, are needed back in them. These duties should not be added into school support staff job descriptions and then see them bullied, harassed and intimidated into taking the responsibility on.

Congress calls upon GMB to intensify its campaign and force the government into providing schools with the funds needed to employ nurses.

BEDS COUNTY BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): Congress, it is not a subject that has never been brought to Congress before. However, it is a problem that has and continues to grow and intensify. Every day our schools have to accept and deal with children that have very serious medical needs. This means someone in the school has to take responsibility for the administration of the medication and in most cases this does not mean just giving out the odd tablet or two to a child here and there. In fact, in many cases it now means undertaking far more complicated processes. Congress, these processes were once undertaken by nurses employed by the school and only stopped because the savage cuts to our education system made it financially impossible for schools to employ them. As a result, our school support staff members are now being expected to pick up these duties and every day we are seeing them added to their job descriptions. Then if they refuse to undertake any form of medical administration, they are bullied, harassed, intimidated, and made to feel guilty in order to force them to take on the responsibility.

Congress, this has to stop and GMB needs to intensify its campaign to make it so. Our hard working support staff members should not be bullied and made to feel guilty for not undertaking duties that in truth should be carried out by a nurse. Therefore, we call upon the GMB to intensify its campaign and force the government to provide schools with better funding which includes the monies needed for them to employ nurses again. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Secunder?

SIS. N. CLOUDEN (London): Colleagues, imagine if you would that your son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter, niece or nephew, suffers from conditions such as allergies, asthma, ADHD, dyspraxia, epilepsy, or even cystic fibrosis. When you send the children off to school would you want untrained and unqualified members of staff to administer medicines and treatment. Colleagues, this is exactly what happens every day of the week in schools throughout the country. It is our dedicated hard working and loyal school support staff who are usually at the front line being bullied and forced into administering medication, often without adequate or any training at all. Some employers think by a member of staff having been trained in First Aid this is sufficient to allow them to administer medicines for the vast amount of different conditions. Where staff are trained in First Aid we have found many examples of contracts of employment having clauses incorporated which binds the members of staff into accepting these contractual obligations. Sadly, these contracts and job descriptions are not properly evaluated which results in our members not being paid the appropriate rate. Should anything go wrong it is our members who get the blame and live with the guilt all because schools are trying to save money. Parents would then submit negligence claims against the school. I think that is false economy. Therefore, what we need are more properly trained and funded nurses in all our schools. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Nicola. The mover of Motion 202?

DUDLEY COUNCIL'S PLANS TO SCRAP SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS MOTION 202

202. DUDLEY COUNCIL'S PLANS TO SCRAP SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

This Congress is asked to campaign against Dudley Council's plans to scrap school crossing patrols. In November 2016 it was announced that Dudley Council who currently fund the school crossing service, say the continuing reductions in funding from central government has prompted a review in an effort to save £395,000.

The Council's proposals are for the schools to instead fund the crossing sites which service their pupils, while operation of the service would still be overseen by the local authority.

Earlier in November 2016, the council's consultation with schools came to an end. Schools were asked to rate options including ending the school crossing patrol completely, retaining a crossing patrol operated and managed by the council at an estimated rechargeable cost of £6,500 and retaining a crossing patrol site with staff who are directly employed and funded by schools, with estimated fee of £1,500 payable to the council. The results of the consultation will go to full council in March 2017, but whatever the outcome the schools will find it almost impossible to fund the crossing themselves.

As a union we should be protecting our children and their right to be able to go to school in a safe manner. As the song says, "Children are our future, teach them well and let them lead the way" but we can't get them across a road safely to go to school. When are we going to say to the Government, No More Cuts? We cannot and should not put our children's safety at risk for the sake of trying to save a few pounds.

C15 GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. BAKER (Birmingham & West Midlands): It was in November when I submitted this motion. At the time I was unaware that other councils were also making these obscene cuts. This Congress is asked to campaign against Dudley Council's plans to scrap school crossing patrols. In November 2016, it was announced that Dudley Council, who currently fund the school crossing service, said the continuing reductions in funding from central government has prompted a review in an effort to save £395,000. The council's proposal is for the schools instead to fund crossing sites which serve their pupils while operating the service would still be overseen by the local authority.

Earlier in November 2016, the council's consultation with schools came to an end. Schools were asked to rate options including ending school crossing patrols completely, retaining a crossing patrol operated and managed by the council at an estimated rechargeable cost of £6,500, and retaining a crossing patrol site with staff who are directly employed by and funded by the schools with an estimated fee of £1,500 payable to the council. The result of the consultation will go to the full council in March. It has already gone. Whatever the outcome, the schools will find it almost impossible to fund the crossings themselves.

As a union we should be protecting our children and their right to be able to go to school in a safe manner. There was a song by George Benson that said, "*Children are our future, Teach them well, Let them lead the way.*" It is obscene that we cannot even get them across the road safely to go to school. When are we going to say no to this government, stop your cuts, stop your austerity, we cannot and should not put our children's safety at risk for the sake of trying to save a few pounds. I move.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Secunder? Thank you.

The motion was formally seconded.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I have the mover of Motion 204, please?

WORKPLACE STRESS – BUDGET CUTS – REAL COST SAVING (OR NOT) MOTION 204

204. WORKPLACE STRESS – BUDGET CUTS – REAL COST SAVING (OR NOT)

This Congress agrees to hold this Government to account for the true cost of their so call austerity measures. Over the last 6 years, nationally, there has been a reduction of 25 per cent in Police budgets which has meant 20,000 less Police Staff and 15,000 less Police Officers.

The knock on effect – and true impact – to our members is seen in the rising levels of stress in the workplace where department are being cut back to the bare minimum staffing levels and leavers not being replaced so remaining staff being expected to carry extra workloads.

We are constantly being expected to 'do more for less' but this is having a real impact on the health and well-being of our members, and ultimately on the service we are able to provide the public.

This has to stop, our members deserve better and so does the public!

(Carried)

SIS. K. SANDERS (Wales & South West): First time delegate, first time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, our members working in the police services have seen their numbers significantly cut whilst their workloads have massively increased over the past six years. So-called efficiency savings have resulted in the remaining staff carrying the burden of ever-increasing workloads. Ask yourself, what is the true cost? Budgets have been slashed. Departments have been cut back to the bone and barely function without the goodwill and commitment from our members. Sickness levels due to stress within the workplace affect everyone. The wellbeing of our members has either been ignored or taken for granted. Ignored because workloads still have to be managed, ignored because managers are under increasing pressure to get things done. Our members consistently go the extra mile, starting work early, finishing work late, and not taking breaks. Our members' stress levels are at an all time high due to the ever-increasing demands on emergency services. Our members' wellbeing is and has been suffering at alarming rates. A recent labour force survey showed that the total figures for work related stress and/or depression in 2016 totalled 488,000 cases. There were 24,000 new cases in 2016 alone resulting in a total loss of 11.7 million working days. These figures speak for themselves and it is well documented stress is more prevalent in public service industries. Only this week it has been highlighted in the media that one in 20 emergency service workers tried to kill themselves in 2016.

As a rep, I know I am spending more and more time dealing with stress related workplace issues. Do the books balance? How much more is being spent on supporting workers at breaking point? Are these true efficiency savings or just another case of pernicious Tory cuts? This has to stop. Our members deserve better as do the public. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call on Kathy Abubakir to speak on behalf of the CEC. Kathy.

SIS. K. ABUBAKIR (CEC, Public Services): We are supporting Motions 195, 196, 198, 200, and 202 with qualifications. Firstly, on Motion 195, it suggests a new direction which will permit flexibility in future bargaining so that all education staff are covered. This would work if the stand-alone or local academies would buy into this where they are within local authority structures. However, a national or multi-academy trust would have different pay scales across its business depending on which authority it is placed and would make pay and terms and conditions more complex. Therefore, our qualification is that it is agreed there should be a way that flexibility is permitted in future bargaining but we have to think carefully how this is achieved.

Motion 196 calls for an effective continual professional development (CPD) programme to be put in place. GMB has examples where appraisal schemes are in place for support staff so we will support this. However, our qualification is that we should think carefully about using teacher appraisals as these are linked to pay and support staff appraisal schemes are not. We need to develop best practice and a clear policy in this area, which we could do through our GMB schools committee.

Motion 198 highlights the rise in bullying in schools. GMB is opposed to all forms of bullying and harassment and we have campaigned to stamp out bullies in all workplaces. We will support the issues raised in this motion but our qualification is that tribunals are not the appropriate forum for this as their role is to enforce employment law. Instead, we would seek to work with schools on developing and implementing effective and robust anti-bullying policies and continue to support and represent our members through legitimate grievances.

Motion 200 is in line with our policy carried by Congress 2011, Motion 138, school support staff contractually forced to administer medication to pupils where similar issues were highlighted. We remain opposed to school support staff carrying out procedures as these should be done by medical professionals. However, this motion seeks to go further and calls for the school funding for nurses to be employed. We would support this initiative. However, without fair funding for the NHS and the right funding for schools, it would be difficult to implement this provision but we will continue to campaign on this.

Finally, on Motion 202, there have been examples of other local authorities cutting the school crossing service, one being Wandsworth Council in 2012. The qualification is that this is likely a national issue and information should be gathered to determine if this is a campaign that can be more broadly applied.

Therefore, Congress, please support Motions 195, 196, 198, 200, and 202, with the qualifications I have laid out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kathy. Does Southern accept the qualification to motion 195? (*Agreed*) Does Yorkshire accept the qualifications on motions 196 and 198? (*Agreed*) Does London accept the qualification on motion 200? (*Agreed*) Does Birmingham accept the qualification on motion 202? (*Agreed*) I will now put motions 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 202 and 204 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against? Those are carried.

Motion 195 was CARRIED.

Motion 196 was CARRIED.

Motion 197 was CARRIED.

Motion 198 was CARRIED.

Motion 199 was CARRIED.

Motion 200 was CARRIED.

Motion 202 was CARRIED.

Motion 204 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now call composite 24, please. Southern to move and Birmingham to second, and priority to London. Motion 326, London. Motion 327, Yorkshire. Motion 328, London. Motion 329, Northern, and motion 330, London. Will the movers come to the front. If there are any seconders, can they come as well.

**SOCIAL POLICY: EDUCATION & TRAINING
CUTS TO SCHOOLS FUNDING
COMPOSITE 24**

C24. Covering Motions:

322.	SCHOOL FUNDING CUTS	Southern Region
323.	SCHOOLS FUNDING FORMULA	Birmingham & W. Midlands Region
324.	SCHOOLS FUNDING	London Region

CUTS TO SCHOOLS FUNDING

Congress, the way school funding is changing, the reason behind these changes is to make it “fairer”. It aims to cut funding in real terms from schools budgets with the greatest needs. It will also put additional strain on those inner city and socially deprived areas. This will result in an average of 12% cuts in virtually all urban areas. To add to the problem, a 1% teacher pay rise, an increase in employer-paid pension contributions, a 1% pay rise to support staff and higher national insurance rates for employers have all been unfunded. In real terms the value of the funding cuts will reach as high as 18% to 20%.

As the average schools spend 85% of its total budget on salary, you can see that this change in funding will be devastating for school support staff. Redundancies will on average affect one third of current support staff.

Action is needed now. The GMB should design a campaign with possible Strike Action to combat these changes before it is too late.

This Congress calls upon the Central Executive Council to condemn the current fair funding formula as being disproportionately unfair for children from working class and disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Congress calls upon GMB National Office to put political pressure on the Government to:

- finance all education settings and schools in a more socially responsible and equitable way.
- return and redistribute the £384million to our schools which was taken back by the Treasury this year. This money was part of the £500million set aside for schools last year by George Osborne and just because the DFE’s failed Academy plan was ditched it does not give them the right to deny our schools the money which they are in desperate need of.

(Carried)

BRO. S. OAKES (Southern): Vice President, I move composite 24 — Cuts to Schools Funding. Before the election there were changes to fairer funding, which would be costing £3 million worth of cuts. In real terms, that is 12% of every school’s budget. In my borough — Greenwich — that worked out at £250K for every primary school, and £800K for every secondary school. Now the Tories have changed their minds, funnily enough, because there is an election and May’s made a U-turn once again. Basically, now they are saying that they are going to put in £4 billion. Let’s break this down a bit. Four billion pounds is £1 billion a year. We

don't know, and we can't trust here because she's a liar, what she is going to invest that money in. Is she going to ring-fence it into grammar schools? Is she going to ring-fence it into building academies where they are not needed? We don't know. So we have got to carry on fighting this and we've got to carry on talking about it and moving forward on it. So when these cuts happen, it is support staff who, primarily, take the lashing. It is our members who lose their jobs. You've got schools now asking parents for donations to buy exercise books. Come on! Things have got to change.

In our borough this year one school had a £1.25 million deficit, and they wanted to get rid of the jobs of 35 support staff. The members there said "No". What they did was they organised with the teachers' union and they went on strike for three days. At the start of the action, they were told by the local authority, "You've got no chance of making a difference". That's what they told us. After three days of organised strike action, we saved 20 jobs. It can be done. (*Applause*) What they are trying to do is to use these cuts to take away the future of our children. I say that we fight back for the future of our children. I say that we fight back for our support staff. They say "Cut back", but I say "Fight back"! Thank you. (*Applause and cheers*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Steve. I call Birmingham to second.

BRO. E. DOWNING (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I second the motion to composite 24. I also call on the CEC to use its influence with the Labour Party to get a campaign sorted, because the "fair funding" is not fair. It is taking money from inner cities, so primarily Labour supporters, and then giving it to leafy suburbs that don't, particularly, need that extra support. In the Birmingham region we are finding that a lot of schools are restructuring because they can't afford support staff or caretakers. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Elliott. Is London putting a speaker in?

BRO. M. FOSTER (London): Congress, I am speaking on composite 24. The cuts to our schools up and down the country are having a devastating effect, not only on staffing levels but also on the morale of the vastly reduced staff who are left behind. Congress, this situation cannot go on. Our schools cannot deliver quality education to our children on a shoestring budget. These attacks on schools funding must stop, and any new funding formula must be fair to all of our schools and not just the select few. However, before any funding formula is implemented, we demand that the Government returns the £384 million it stole from our schools after its £500 million academy plan failed. This is no way to solve the problem, but it will go some way to help our many schools that are struggling and in desperate need of funding help. Thank you. (*Applause*)

LASTING OLYMPIC LEGACY VERSUS SOLD OFF SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS
MOTION 326

326. LASTING OLYMPIC LEGACY VERSUS SOLD OFF SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS

This Congress agrees that the absolute commitment given by the Coalition Government that there would be a lasting Olympic legacy following the 2012 London Games is in tatters owing to the relentless sell off of school playing fields.

All applications to sell school playing fields must be approved by the Government. Between 2001 and pre-Olympics in 2012, 271 applications to sell school playing fields were approved. That was less than 1 every 2 weeks. Post Olympics, the rate of sell off is getting on for 1 a week.

How can there be a lasting Olympic legacy if there are no playing fields to ensure that legacy? Participation in sport is as important for children, as lessons. Because of the horrendous cuts to education budgets, schools have to sell assets to maintain academic standards and playing fields are an easy touch.

This motion calls on the CEC to work with councils and Government to stop the sale of playing fields and restore the lasting Olympic legacy.

HOME COUNTIES GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

SIS. F. FRANKLIN (London): Congress, I move motion 326. The 2012 Olympics in London were won under a Labour Government. The 2012 Olympics in London gave the opportunity for the Coalition Government to seek gratitude from the public, although in fact they did very little. On 13th February 2014 they published a document entitled: "2012 Olympic and Paralympic legacy". The document states, and I quote: "A lasting legacy from the 2012 Olympics and the Paralympics has always been a long-term goal. Just as the Games took 10 years to win, so the legacy must be seen as a 10-year project to realise the lasting change. Building on success to date, this document sets out a long-term vision to use the inspirational powers of 2012 and future major sporting events to help deliver the lasting change". The document goes on to say that through activities in schools, sports centres and community venues a foundation has been laid that would inspire a generation. Colleagues, that self-praising document was written 18 months after the 2012 Games. The Coalition were milking the Games for all they were worth. The reality is that this bold vision statement was unravelling even more before it was written. Between the end of the Games and the creation of this document, school playing fields were being got rid of at the rate of one a week. Some were being transformed into enlarged schools for teaching premises, but most were sold for housing. Cuts were affecting education then, as they are now.

Colleagues, sport is an important part of education. Sport is vital to a child's physical development. That development was being stunted by a Coalition and the subsequent Conservative Government which, at the same time, was trying to attract plaudits for the lasting Olympic legacy. It was another con. In 2012 the Olympics were a great success, a success for athletes, the public and sport in general. They were also a success for Tessa Jowell. How typical of Cameron and Clegg to muscle in.

Colleagues, sport is vital and school playing fields are vital because they make sport happen. The then government claimed to promote and foster a lasting legacy. Instead, their action in forcing playing fields to be sold denies that very legacy to our children. Please help to stop playing fields from being sold off. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Frances. Secunder?

BRO. G. FRASER (London): Congress, I second motion 326. Vice President and Congress, there is no doubt that the London Olympics of 2012 were a great success, not least because of the amazing performances of our British sportsmen and sportswomen. Those performances did, indeed, inspire the youth of this country, and that inspiration, colleagues, should have been nourished and supported. The damaged Coalition Government sought to enhance its image by publishing the *Lasting Olympic Legacy* document, which you have just heard about. You may have thought that it was a worthy document, but, colleagues, it was a soundbite. It was a sham. How can we develop our youth into world class athletes when the wherewithal to achieve this is removed? School playing fields were sold. Sports centres have been cut and closed. A Lasting Olympic Legacy? It's a lasting sacrifice of our youth to the God of austerity! Please support this motion. Thank you. (Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. I call the mover of motion 327.

OPPOSE GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS ON FAITH SCHOOLS MOTION 327

327. OPPOSE GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS ON FAITH SCHOOLS

This Congress opposes the proposal, in the government green paper "Making Schools Work for Everyone", to abolish the 50 per cent cap on pupil entry to faith schools. The cap was there to ensure diversity and prevent ghettoisation. The removal of the cap will allow faith schools to be filled with pupils exclusively from its own faith group. Instead of preventing ghettoisation, if this proposal is adopted, it will cause it. As pointed out by Bernard Trafford, "how can a 100 per cent faith school hope to encompass pupils from a variety of backgrounds." (TES 16th September, 2016).

Education should be inclusive not exclusive. All pupils should be exposed to different cultures and belief systems. The easiest way to do this is to have pupils from different backgrounds mixing together and learning from each other. Education should break down barriers between people of different faiths and beliefs; not reinforce them. Congress calls on the government to listen to those who know and care about our children's education and, drop the proposal.

PARKGATE BRANCH
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move motion 327. Vice President and Congress, hidden in the same White Paper containing Teresa May's vanity project of new grammar schools is a plan to remove the entrance cap for new selective faith schools. This will kids from non-adherent families being refused admission, potentially from the only school in the area where they live. It will create

the spectre of schools becoming ghettoised and our children's education becoming sectarian, and it is all paid by you, me and every other taxpayer in the country.

At present, religiously selective schools must have 50% of pupils from non-adherent backgrounds. This allows for schools having pupils from diverse backgrounds. Surely, comrades, diversity is an education in itself and it can only promote tolerance and acceptance of others in our children. If the Tories win on Thursday, we will end up with educational apartheid, based on the belief system of parents, with little opportunity to interact with those from different backgrounds with different faiths and philosophical beliefs. Segregation breeds mistrust, reinforces prejudices and promotes a siege mentality. Education should be — no, education must be — inclusive and not exclusive.

The proposal will do nothing to raise education standards. It won't promote social mobility and it will not increase opportunities. Professor Ted Cantele, an expert in integration, has raised concerns that religiously selective schools are less accessible to children from poorer backgrounds. Both the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and Matthew Ryder QC, the Deputy Mayor with responsibility for integration, have come out against the proposal. As Deputy Mayor Ryder said: "The proposal should be of concern to those of us who believe we should be striving to create more avenues for social integration, not fewer". That's why our union should be concerned. The proposal is the antithesis of what the GMB stands for and we should oppose it.

Comrades, support motion 327, oppose the proposal to abolish the 50% cap, oppose segregation and exclusivity and support integration and inclusivity. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Is motion 327 formally seconded?
(Motion 327 was formally seconded) I call the mover of motion 328.

SAFETY IN SCHOOLS MOTION 328

328. SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

This Congress notes in many of our inner cities children are falling victim to school gate stabbings particularly at the end of the school day. We urge the GMB to campaign for the provision of home to school transport services across all local authorities, to deliver our children safely to and from school. Going to school in the morning should not expose you to the risk of injury or death in the evening.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. McCORMACK (London): Congress, I move motion 328 — Safety in Schools. Research shows that if you are able to walk, walking is good for you. It also says that the armchair is the biggest killer. Children who walk to school are said to be less stressed and more receptive to learning when they arrive. Why, then, am I proposing a motion that would see our children walking less when it is considered detrimental to their health and education? Let me explain.

It's months now since I submitted this motion, and whilst there have been some recent tragic child fatalities, there have, thankfully, been less recorded incidents of violence and murder of children at the school gates, compared, that is, to the situation in 2016 and early 2017, when I submitted the motion. Nevertheless, problems remain, and there continue to be children subjected to bullying, harassment, intimidation and violence from their peers, and it appears that some schools seem powerless to tackle the problem. Installing security guards at the school gate is symptomatic of the problem but it does not tackle the cause. Some schools expect our members to carry out their duties in intimidating atmospheres. How can we expect children to learn if they are sitting in fear of what might be waiting for them at the school gates or at break time? There are laws to protect us at work but none, it seems, to protect school children from things that we would not put up with in the workplace. This motion specifically refers to transport but it needs to be seen in its context.

Realistically, it is unlikely that we will ever see the introduction of an American school-bus transport system here, but in areas where children are, clearly, not safe and run the risk of encountering conflicts, schools should provide transport so that risks are reduced or eliminated. Of course, the root of the problem needs to be tackled including getting knives off our streets and back into knife drawers and with investment in anti-bullying initiatives. But, until then, as the motion says, going to school in the mornings should not expose you to risk of injury or death in the evening.

I call upon the mighty muscle of the union to throw itself behind this motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Marie. Is there a seconder?

BRO. E. SIDDALL (London): President, I second motion 328 — Safety in Schools. The rise of knife crime and youth involvement in gangs is such that I call upon the GMB to campaign for the provision of safe school transport to and from schools to ensure that children and young people feel safe going to and from schools without the fear of being attacked. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Edward. I call motion 329.

ADULT LEARNING MOTION 329

329. ADULT LEARNING

This Congress notes that the Conservatives when they came to power in 2010 and since they became a majority government in 2015, have reduced the budgets and availability of resources for post education adult learning.

Congress believes that if the UK is to make a success of Brexit, for future generations of adult learners, it is vital that a fresh approach with requisite resources for adult learning must be urgently made available and the disastrous cuts since 2010 reversed.

Congress calls on the Government to urgently address this huge gap in adult skills development post education and Congress calls on the Labour Party to signal its intentions on this matter as part of its manifesto development for the next General Election.

(Carried)

SIS. E. DOWSON (Northern): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause and cheers)* I move motion 329: Adult Learning. Congress, adult learning used to be an important part of training, development and re-training. It was central to many great Labour initiatives set up post war. Indeed, the Open University was one of Labour's great educational achievements of the 1960s. Backing that up was a concentration on developing the skills of workers through trade union learning and on-the-job training. Millions workers have benefited and, crucially, the UK has benefited. However, Congress, this Tory Government and the previous Coalition government, which included the Lib-Dems, have cut and cut adult learning. At the very time when we should be investing in training and skills, the Government have been cutting. We know that the Tories have made it harder for adults to get funding for learning. It is clear what they think of the need for improving adult learning and skills.

Since 2010, the Tories, either in coalition with the Lib-Dems or as a Tory Government on their own, have attacked trade unions, whether that be on campaigning or balloting. Now, because of their own outdated beliefs in training and the modern workplace, they are doing the same on adult learning. So, Congress, we need to have a new approach that will give millions of adults the chance to improve their skills and development for the future. If this country is going to make a success of the future, it is a bare minimum that the Government should do. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ellen. Is that motion formally seconded?
(The motion was formally seconded from the floor) I call the mover of motion 330.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING MOTION 330

330. UNEMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

This Congress is requested to campaign for:

- (i) The abolition of unemployment in favour of training or retraining
- (ii) And for this to be modular and funded by industry levies.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. THOMAS (London): Congress, I move motion 330: Unemployment and Training. I am hoping that this motion will be pushing at an open door after this Thursday and we will have a Labour Government determined to create a national education service that can supersede both parts of this motion. Breaks in our working lives are commonplace and a job for life is increasingly rare for all too many. Life can ebb and flow and, notwithstanding, when it ebbs we might not know when or if it will ever flow again. It also brings a severe shock to everyone's finances. We need to address such a negative experience and do whatever we can to turn this around.

But given that breaks in our working lives are part and parcel of the work pattern of so many, any downtime needs to be used as productively as possible to help people not just to get back into work but to enhance their knowledge and skills for when they do start working again. A Jobcentre Plus handing out increasing numbers of benefit sanctions is the wrong approach. That does not help anyone.

What this means in practice is that any training or re-training needs to be immediate and short term, more like toolbox talks than full-blown academic courses that only start in September of each year. I would be more than happy if these could be covered by a national education service, but if not then industry levies, over and above the apprenticeship levy, should be campaigned for. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. I call the seconder.

SIS. S. WILLSON (London): Congress, I second motion 330. Vice President and Congress, unemployment is not just a wasted resource. It can be soul destroying by the individuals affected by it. We need to turn this situation around and see breaks in employment as opportunities to prepare to get back into work. Breaks in employment is the reality for most of us. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. I now call on Viv Smart, from the Birmingham region, to speak on behalf of the CEC.

SIS V. SMART (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. We are supporting composite 24 and motions 328 and 330 with qualifications, and asking Congress to refer motion 326. I will take them in turn.

Composite 24 highlights the unfairness of the current system of school funding, where funding formulas give different weights to different factors, which means that different schools, even in the same area, receive different levels of per pupil funding. Together with other education unions, we are opposed to these funding cuts, and we will be interested to see what might come of the current consultation after the general election on Thursday. The qualification is that we cannot call for a national campaign for strike action in schools, especially in the light of stronger provisions laid down in the Trade Union Act. However, we will continue to support local campaigns and calls for strike action where our members are facing threats to their jobs and massive cuts to school budgets.

Motion 326, in school playing fields, is a solid, sensible and relevant motion, but we need to seek referral to be clear about the facts. We would need evidence of playing fields being sold and how prevalent this is. Also the land has probably already gone back to the DfE, so it might be impractical. The CEC is, therefore, asking for Congress to refer this motion.

Motion 328 raises a sensitive issue, and we are, sadly, aware of increases in stabbing incidents across most of our regions. The motion puts forward a suggestion of school transport, but it is unclear how this might work in practice and there is no funding available for this. Some of our members provide walking buses and some schools have staff to patrol school gates, but the issue is a wider social one which, although

the GMB can highlight, our qualification is that we are unsure how we could deliver what is being asked.

Finally, on motion 330, we believe that the unemployed should be supported back to work through training, and GMB has a proud record of facilitating this. However, our qualification is that this training should be funded by Government and not necessarily by means of a levy. Levies can have unintended consequences, such as employers diverting money spent elsewhere to pay for the levy.

Therefore, Congress, please support composite 24 and motions 328 and 330, with the qualifications that I have outlined and agree to refer motion 326. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Viv. Do the Southern, Birmingham and London Regions accept qualification for composite 24? (*Agreed*) Does London accept reference on motion 326? (*Agreed*) Finally, does London accept the qualifications on motions 328 and 330? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I will now put these motions to Congress. They are composite 24 and motions 326, 327, 328, 329 and 330. All those in favour, please show? Any against? They are carried.

Composite 24 was CARRIED.

Motion 326 was REFERRED.

Motion 327 was CARRIED.

Motion 328 was CARRIED.

Motion 329 was CARRIED.

Motion 330 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now move on to motion 188, to be moved by North West & Irish, to be followed by composite 16, Yorkshire to move and Southern to second.

**INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES
STOP FORCING AMBULANCE WORKERS TO WORK PAST THEIR
SHIFT FINISHING TIME!
MOTION 188**

188. STOP FORCING AMBULANCE WORKERS TO WORK PAST THEIR SHIFT FINISHING TIME!

This Congress calls on the CEC to stop forcing ambulance workers to work past their shift finishing time.

NHS Ambulance workers across the length and breadth of the country invariably work past their shift finishing time, commonly known as shift overruns. Often, emergency calls are stacked up in the ambulance control centres waiting for an emergency ambulance to come free – sometimes when the crew arrive at the patient's house, that patient has been waiting a number of hours for an ambulance. Frequently, an ambulance crew will arrive at an address (well past their finish time) to be greeted by a patient's relative who says I called for this ambulance many hours ago!

Imagine working on a 12 hour shift, where you started work that morning at 6 a.m. and you have been extremely busy throughout the shift and, if you were fortunate, you may have been able to take your half-hour (unpaid) break. However, because of the sheer volume of

emergency calls that the ambulance service receives daily, you may not have been able to have your break at all during that shift.

Well, picture yourselves as part of an ambulance crew today; it is now a couple of minutes to 6 p.m. (your end of shift time) and the alarm on the radio alerts you to another emergency call. You are then compelled to attend this call – you cannot refuse it. Having treated the patient, you are further obligated to remain with this patient until you can hand them over to hospital staff, however long this may take!

On reaching the hospital, you may then be put into a queue before you can hand over your patient to a qualified nurse or doctor.

Now the downside, you may need to queue with your patient from between a few minutes and anywhere up to a few hours and in some exceptions – 8 or 9 hours (and we have seen in the press how ambulance staff have to queue on hospital corridors waiting for a scarce hospital trolley)!

So, whereas your shift should have ended at 6 p.m. it may now be 8, 9 or even 10 p.m. or in some cases even later. This would then impact further on the oncoming crew being unable to respond through lack of available vehicles and the late finishing crew unable to start their next shift until at least 11 hours between finishing their shift, because of the rightful (European) working time directive not to mention the impact on Ambulance staffs' work/life balance. Furthermore ambulance crews with small children often don't get a chance to see their children when working because they leave the house to go to work very early and often don't arrive home until very late.

This is not a unique scenario but often a regular occurrence and for many ambulance crews, it happens on each and every shift they undertake. This is not only a risk to the ambulance workers' health and well-being, but could also put the lives of the patient and public at risk, by having a tired and exhausted ambulance crew driving to an emergency call, or to the hospital with our loved ones.

Ambulance employers could significantly reduce emergency calls being given to crews in order to prevent shift overruns if they employed more ambulance workers and allowed them to attend to emergency calls immediately instead of the stacking up of calls to wait for an available ambulance which many ambulance services operate because of lack of funds.

The North West Ambulance (N61) Branch calls on Congress to support our motion to stop NHS ambulance employers compelling and forcing ambulance workers to continue past the end of your shift finish time.

N61 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. HARRIS (North West & Irish): Vice President and Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* I move motion 188: Stop forcing Ambulance workers to work past their shift finishing time! NHS Ambulance workers across the length and breadth of the country invariably work past their shift finishing time, commonly known as “shift overruns”. Often emergency calls are stacked up in the ambulance control centres, waiting for an emergency ambulance to become free. Sometimes when a crew arrive at the patient's house that patient has been waiting a number of hours for an ambulance. Frequently, an ambulance crew will arrive at the address well past their finish time to be greeted by a patient's

relatives who say, “I called for this ambulance so many hours ago”. Imagine working on a 12-hour shift when you started working that morning at 6, you have been extremely busy throughout the shift, and if you were fortunate, you may have been able to take your half-hour unpaid break. However, because of the sheer volume of emergency calls that the Ambulance Service receives daily, you may not have been able to have your break at all on your shift.

Picture yourselves as part of an ambulance crew today. It is now a couple of minutes to 6 o’clock, your end-of-shift time, and the alarm on the radio alerts you to another emergency call. You are compelled to attend this call. You cannot refuse it. Having treated the patient, you are further obligated to remain with this patient until you can hand them over to the hospital staff, however long this may take. On reaching the hospital, you may then be put into a queue before you can hand over the patient to a qualified nurse or doctor. The downside is that you may need to queue with your patient from between a few minutes and anywhere up to a few hours, and in some exceptional cases for eight or nine hours. We have seen in the press how ambulance staff have to queue in hospital corridors waiting for a scarce hospital trolley. So whereas your shift should have ended at 6 o’clock, it may now be 8, 9 or even 10 o’clock at night. In some cases, it might be even later. This situation then impacts further on the oncoming crews being unable to respond through lack of available vehicles and the late finishing crews. You have to consider the impact that this situation has on your family life as well, because there is no point in organising things when you are on shift.

This is not a unique scenario but often a regular occurrence, and for many ambulance crews it happens on each and every shift they undertake. This is not only a risk to the ambulance workers’ health and wellbeing but it could also put the lives of the patients and public at risk by having a tired and exhausted ambulance crew driving to an emergency call or to the hospital with our loved ones.

Ambulance employers could significantly reduce emergency calls being given to crews to prevent shift overruns if they employed more ambulance workers and allowed them to attend emergency calls, instead of stacking up calls to wait for an available ambulance, which many ambulance services currently operate. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. Seconder? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you. Composite 16.

STRATEGY FOR NHS WORKERS COMPOSITE 16

16. Covering Motions:

- | | | |
|------|--|----------------------------------|
| 190. | UNDERSTAFFING IN THE NHS | Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region |
| 191. | BULLYING AND HARASSMENT OF NHS WORKERS | Southern Region |

STRATEGY FOR NHS WORKERS

This Congress notes the survey of Yorkshire and North Derbyshire NHS staff that found that

their three main concerns were;

1. Staffing levels
2. Morale at Work
3. Work related Stress.

Together, these three create a vicious circle: understaffing is leading to low morale in the workplace, causing stress, leading to sickness, resulting in more absence, thus more understaffing.

It is time to break the circle. Proper staffing levels would improve morale at work, lowering stress levels and in turn reducing sickness levels. Instead of increasing funding to improve staff levels, hospitals are facing cuts, which in turn cause people to leave under the strain, reducing staffing levels all the more, increasing workplace stress and creating higher sickness levels.

Congress calls on the GMB to hold a national health conference bringing together all NHS workers, politicians, health campaigners and health and social care providers to develop clear GMB policy and a national strategy and campaign to stop the constant bullying and harassment of our hard working members in the NHS so that our members can see that even if this government are hell bent on destroying our NHS that we are not.

(Referred)

SIS. S. YOUNG (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move composite 16: Strategy for NHS Workers. Throughout 2016 our region ran an NHS staff survey to see what the main concerns were. They turned out to be staffing levels, moral at work and work-related stress. For too long the NHS has seen mass under-funding from a Tory Government, which say that they are ploughing billions into it when the reality is the opposite. NHS Trusts are forced to save more funds than what they are given. This is cutting the NHS, not funding it. This is becoming more obvious, and I believe that this has given us the results in our survey. The results show a vicious circle of what it is currently like working in the NHS, and it doesn't paint a good picture. Because of mass under-funding, our NHS is unable to employ as many staff, leaving less nurses on the wards over the years to look after the patients, thereby increasing workload and risk of making mistakes. This leads senior nurses doubling their role as clinical nurse specialists, moving them from the wards, leaving junior nurses doing more clinical work at a time when they need guidance from the senior nurses. It is normal for ward staff not to take breaks in shifts of up to 12 hours. It is also normal for staff to go home late, so they have worked shifts of up to 14 or 15 hours. These extra hours are done with goodwill. No-one will turn their backs on patients who need care. However, the NHS is slated in the press as being useless, greedy and being at fault. This leads to some patients, their families and members of the public believing this, and then having no respect for the nurses. They can be very demanding, easily losing their tempers as they don't want to wait for anything, shouting at the nurses and often will think nothing of answering their phones while nurses are speaking to them. This all leads to low morale at work, staff feeling bullied with nowhere to turn, constantly run off their feet in keeping the services running, constantly tired and constantly worried of getting it wrong. Then they suffer from stress and, inevitably, they become ill themselves, unable to work, sometimes long term and sometimes leaving their careers. This leads to more under-staffing and the circle begins again. If hospital are staffed properly, morale would improve, sickness levels would reduce resulting in proper and safe staffing levels.

Congress, I call upon the GMB to hold a National Health conference to bring together all NHS workers, politicians, health campaigners and health and social care providers to develop a national strategy so all can see where this Government are hell bent on destroying the NHS. We are not! Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Secunder? (*The motion was formally seconded from the floor*) I will now call on Neil Collinson from Northern Region to speak on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. N. COLLINSON (CEC, Public Services): Vice President and Congress, we are supporting motion 188 with a qualification and asking Congress to refer composite 16, which covers motion 190 and 191.

On motion 188, it is widely acknowledged, not just within the GMB but in the wider public, that those in the Ambulance Service work incredibly hard, and that it is an incredibly tiring job. Often our members are physical conditions that should negate them from being fit for work, but they continue because they care for those in need. The qualification for this motion is that it suggests that we campaign to reduce emergency calls to crews without any other campaign option. We could not credibly campaign to reduce emergency calls as that could put many people at risk. The issue lies in the lack of resources provided to the service in terms of staffing levels and vehicles in particular.

Composite 16 tackles the issue of bullying and harassment of workers in the NHS. We have previously undertaken surveys on this issue and, therefore, this campaign will remain ongoing.

The NHS undertakes a staff survey each year, and the GMB can review how we factor the survey results into this campaign. However, whilst this is an admirable suggestion, it should be referred to the National Committee of the Public Service Section to deliberate the practicalities of holding a conference specially for this issue. It should also be noted that it is a section conference year in 2018, which might be more appropriate as a time to debate this matter. Therefore, Congress, please support motion 188 with the qualification I have outlined, and refer composite 16 with the arguments I have laid out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Neil. Does North West accept the qualification on 188? (*Agreed*) Do Yorkshire and Southern accept the reference on composite 16? (*Agreed*) I will now put them to the vote. All those in favour of motion 188 and composite 16, please show? Any against? They are carried.

Motion 188 was CARRIED.

Composite 16 was REFERRED.

CEC STATEMENT ON THE NHS

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to the CEC Statement on the NHS. I will call for the CEC Statement to be moved and then we will hear from motions in the NHS section. Could I now call on Martin Jackson to move the CEC Statement.

GMB CONGRESS 2017

CEC STATEMENT: UPDATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE NHS



SUMMARY

GMB continues to have *no confidence* in the Tory Government management of the National Health Service in England, or in its commitment to preserve the NHS as a nationwide service free at the point of delivery.

It is very much the case that a considerable number of the electorate in June 2016 voted to save the NHS at the expense of the UK's membership in the European Union. We were told that there is an enormous amount of money that the UK sends to Brussels which is urgently needed at home. It is not only GMB members who care about the state of the NHS, but also many on all sides of the political spectrum who do so too. The big red bus used in the Brexit campaign told us that this money must be spent on funding the NHS, and this is a promise that the Leave camp *must* deliver on.

GMB continues to call for the repeal of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which dismantles and makes possible the privatisation the NHS. Billions of pounds of NHS Services have already been outsourced to private companies throughout the largely unaccountable system of NHS Trusts. GMB does not believe that this is the best use of taxpayers money, and that the profit motive has no part in healthcare.

Services are deteriorating under Tory policies – treatments are being rationed, waiting times are up, A&E is in crisis and NHS staff morale is at an all-time low. This has not changed since the Coalition government of 2010-2015, and has intensified under the majority Conservative administration.

NHS staff are bearing the brunt of austerity measures within the sector while private providers prosper. The recent recommendation on pay from the pay review body has been denounced by GMB as miserly and derisory. We are once more in a position to have to mount a campaign for "fair pay" for NHS workers.

GMB's strength in our GMB NHS workplaces is in our numbers and density, and we continue to generate activities to support GMB NHS Workplace Reps who are working continuously to organise, represent and consolidate GMB membership across the country.

Our NHS is being attacked and it's in the interests of our members and their families that the GMB continues to build and strengthen the NHS campaign

- against the Government's privatisation and cuts agenda
- to champion a publicly-run NHS, and to effectively recruit, organise and represent NHS workers in the GMB.
- to retain a NHS for future generations that is free at the point of use and there for us: cradle to grave
- continue to generate activity and mobilise support from the public for the NHS and for NHS workers.

THE NHS UNDER THE TORIES

In 2011, the CEC warned that the Coalition government reforms“ threatened to dismantle the NHS on a scale never seen before. The 2014 CEC statement on the NHS was targeted at gearing up for a general election, in which we were calling for a Labour Government to return and reverse the damage that the Coalition had inflicted on the service.

Since then, a majority Conservative government was elected and is now in power. This Tory government has deepened the crisis, and reneged on promises made in the general election of 2015.

NHS England Structures have been introducing proposals on Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) and have been creating vast new layers of bureaucracy; pressing ahead with an internal market for healthcare; paving the way for wholesale privatisation; and watering down local democratic decision making. All their policies are designed to break up and privatise the health service, and once again NHS staff have been made to bear the brunt of a vast top-down reorganisation, and attacks on their hard fought terms and working conditions. STPs are and will be the footprint for further privatisation of the NHS.

UNDERFUNDING THE NHS

The claim that NHS funding would be protected has also been exposed as a lie. Everyone who works in the NHS knows there is a funding crisis. Staff numbers, including nurses, continue to be axed, hospitals are operating at dangerous capacity, and NHS Trusts up and down the country are facing financial turmoil- putting patients, services and staff at risk. The narrative increasingly becoming the norm is the underfunding of the NHS. Hospital financial targets not being met due to unrealistic efficiency targets. Hospitals being put into special measures, hospital services being downgraded or closed down. It bears to be repeated that this is a toxic mix to pave the way for the market to come in and take its lion share.

PFI debt is crippling NHS services and the ability for some trusts to remain solvent is becoming impossible. We need a concerted effort to

either renegotiate PFI debt or for government to step in and support trusts facing difficulty in balancing their books. The consequences otherwise are patients will suffer. PFI may have led to one of the largest hospital building programmes, shiny new hospitals are little use when PFI debt is crippling NHS finances. If PFI debt is not reviewed and bold alternatives not found PFI legacy will lead to biggest NHS hospital and bed closure programme in the next decade and the closure of beds has already started.

The Spring Budget pledge of 2017 promised to immediately inject much needed funding into social care. This is welcomed, but we must hold the government to the proper allocation of the funding. This funding should serve the purpose of also relieving strain on the NHS with patients being discharged properly into the right care facilities, instead of having to wait in hospitals.

PAY

GMB members know this; austerity is an ideological cloak which hides privatisation.

If having to endure a pay cap of 1%, and working within an understaffed health service meant that it could keep all aspects of the NHS public, then this could be an easier pill to swallow. What we do know is that those doing the caring are seeing their wages being out stripped by the new layers of management and outsourced consortia; by those who have nothing to do with the saving of lives or the quality of medicinal care.

The NHS Pay Review body has made a recommendation of 1% for pay 2017/2018 - within the "cruel" pay restraints imposed by the government. The Health Secretary's derisory decision was made just days after inflation jumped to 2.3% in March, further squeezing NHS workers' living standards. Imposing a 1 per cent settlement is an insult to our selfless NHS staff and other public sector workers – who keep us safe day in, day out.

Research conducted by GMB has found that public sector workers have lost out significantly since the 1% pay constraint when compared to inflation rises, bills, and private sector counterparts. GMB analysis has revealed that without a change in policy, workers can expect average real terms pay cuts, some running into tens of thousands of pounds:

- Hospital porter: lost £7,285 since 2010 and set to lose a further £2,394 by 2020 (total loss 2010-20: £9,679)
- 999 call handler: lost £8,646 since 2010 and set to lose a further £2,617 by 2020 (total loss 2010-20: £11,263)
- Qualified residential care worker: lost £8,624 since 2010 and is set to lose a further £3,085 by 2020 (total loss 2010-20: £11,709)

- Staff nurse: lost £14,572 since 2010 and is set to lose a further £3,788 by 2020 (total loss 2010-20: £18,360)
- Midwife: lost £18,011 since 2010 and is set to lose a further £4,691 by 2020 (total loss 2010-20: £22,702)

This government has also failed on an important election promise in its Five Year Forward View publication from 2014 that NHS staff pay will have to stay in line with private sector pay as the economy recovers, in order to recruit and retain staff.

For this reason, GMB has launched the Public Sector Pay Pinch Campaign to bust the pay cap in the NHS and across the public sector.

PENSIONS

The government has further reduced the potential value of pensions for NHS workers with the introduction of a cap on exit payments over £95,000. On the outset this seemed like a common sense approach to curtailing massive redundancy packages for the top earners in the public sector. This policy however, will affect the pensions of a whole strata of workers in the NHS, as their pensions will be included in the exit package. For most long standing workers in the NHS who have built up a pension, this policy will most certainly strip out their pot. This a backdoor way of ransacking the public sector pension fund, our members deferred earnings, which the Coalition government were unable to do in 2011.

BREXIT AND THE NHS

Many of the voters who chose for the UK to leave the EU did so under the belief that money 'sent to Brussels' would be put back into the NHS. Immediately the Leave campaign backtracked and even scoffed at this idea, despite the sticker on their bus saying so. It goes to show however that citizens of the UK care about the NHS immensely and want that money promised to go into funding it. The likes of Johnson and Farage should be held accountable for this promise to the UK electorate; if the money does not go into the NHS funding then GMB and the electorate at large should insist that they are unfit for any governing office, present or in the future.

The uncertainty surrounding the Brexit negotiations and the status of EU nationals in the UK is a cause for concern for the running of the NHS. OBR reports from early 2017 shows that overall, 5% of the workforce in the NHS are EU (non UK) nationals. This percentage is higher in London where it reaches closer to 10%. Not only should we be concerned for the status of our EU national colleagues working within the NHS, but for the numbers of workers who are already leaving the NHS.

Figures have shown this year and since June 2016, a significant drop in EU national nurses joining the NHS and a significant increase in EU national nurses leaving work in the NHS. Nurses joining the NHS from the EU have also fallen, with 96 joining in December 2016, compared to 1,304 in July. If numbers of trained workers in the NHS fall, then we will have a significant issue on our hands. According to a UCAS report, the most notable decrease in applicants is nursing, falling by 23%, with English applicants (over the age of 19) decreasing by between 16-19%. This clearly shows that more has to be done by government to attract more applicants into training for key roles in the NHS. Scrapping nurses bursaries does not encourage school leavers into working for the NHS, and making it their career without burdening them with debt they may have to pay off for years.

Other elements of concern in the previous CEC statement on the NHS, was the prospect of the TTIP deal coming to fruition between the EU and the US. There was fear that this trade deal would open the door to significant privatisation in the NHS. With Great Britain exiting the European Union, and the change in government in the United States, this particular deal appears dead in the water. Whatever is left for the UK to barter with through these negotiations, and beyond, will be left to this government, and they should be held accountable. However we must be vigilant to oppose any trade deals which may negatively impact our NHS in such a way.

EMERGENCY SERVICES IN CRISIS

The Tories have continued the appalling legacy of the Coalition government, with A&E targets failing miserably. In December 2016, waiting times rose again breaking records for waiting times of 12 hours. This is 3 times the target time of being seen, treated, and discharged in A&E departments. Our elderly are waiting in corridors to be admitted on wards because community services are still in meltdown. Dozens of A&E departments across the country face closure or downgrading.

Our Ambulance service members are being pushed to the brink, regularly working beyond their shift ends and having to respond to calls within unrealistic times. This is only being exacerbated by the outcomes of STPs which have affected routes and resources, causing chaos particularly in the Midlands. Whilst it is still only regarded as an 'essential' service by the government, GMB firmly believes that our Ambulance service should be regarded as an emergency service just like the Police, and Fire service.

GMB'S POSITION

GMB believes that we would only ever support reform that retains the founding principles of the NHS: free at the point of use, from the cradle to the grave, provided by the State.

At an international level, GMB will take a leading role in opposing any future trade deal which may negatively impact the service of the NHS, in the same vein as we did against TTIP – CETA possibly being the new incarnation of TTIP.

GMB continues to engage in visible activism, such as the March for NHS in 2017, and working together with the TUC and sister unions. Much more needs to be done and the need to continue to build links with local communities who are standing up and fighting to retain their local NHS services is essential if we are all going to retain a NHS for future generations.

GMB will continue to campaign for the removal of reserved public contracts for mutuels – effectively privatisation by the back door in the health and other public services, and we are sceptical of the use of STPs as ways to cost cut. PFIs have been a disaster for the health service and are not a credible form of financing the public sector.

GMB will be fighting the Government's insulting pay cap and the blatant undermining of the current collective bargaining arrangements which needs to be the key campaign in every workplace across the NHS.

Organising and developing campaigns on the NHS is not just a reactive campaign by the GMB, it is through identifying the NHS as a national project that we continue to grow our membership and our industrial strength. But our efforts in organising and consolidating membership **are** just scratching the surface. We welcome the month on month sustained growth in the NHS. This is primarily down to the frontline NHS Workplace Reps who work tirelessly day in day out.

Sustained membership growth over the next year will be crucial in supporting efforts to retain hard fought terms and conditions. Similar to the decades of local government privatisation, the next phase of organising in the NHS is crucial if we are to effectively respond to the threats of the big NHS sell off. Retaining members will increasingly become a challenge if we are to grow the sector.

The GMB central campaign platform in the NHS is the effective and robust representation of terms and conditions of NHS workers. Without good conditions for workers, we will not have good services.

This is a matter of life and death for people in this country, and if the NHS goes, we will never get it back.

(Carried)

BRO. M. JACKSON (CEC, Public Services): Congress, I am responding on behalf of the CEC and proud to move the CEC Statement on the NHS. This statement lays out the GMB's concerns heading into the not too distant future. It is a statement of what we have seen happening in our NHS through the Coalition government, by the Cameron administration and what the current Government does or, rather, doesn't have planned for it. Let us be clear, Congress, that we have no confidence in a Conservative-led Government running the NHS. They do not believe in the founding principles of the NHS of Nye Bevan and the Attlee government.

From crippling austerity measures to extreme cyber attacks on IT systems, patients and workers in the Service are being pushed to breaking point under the Tory austerity agenda. Not only have the Tories proved their contempt for the NHS, but they have also proved their total incompetency in being able to run anything. Updating Windows XP is not difficult. We have taken on board the frustration of our members, not only those who are working in the NHS but across the entire union about the budgetary mechanisms that are being used in order to pave the way for more privatisation.

We are absolutely against the sustainability and transformation plans being used to force upon the NHS the austerity and privatisation measures of our services in particular. Most importantly, we have people from different nations in this country who not only need and use the NHS but they love it, too. They love it so much, Congress, that many voted to leave the European Union so that all the money we send to Brussels could be pumped back into the NHS. We were told that £350 million a week of our money would be pumped back into the NHS when we left the EU. That is what we were promised, Congress. That was the deal that was written on the side of a big red bus. The CEC Statement on the NHS commits us to holding whichever government is formed next week to account for the funding of the Service. It commits us specifically to hold the drivers of the big red bus — Boris and Nigel — to account.

Our concern will always lie with the workforce, who tirelessly give everything to the patients who they look after. The GMB's campaign platform in the NHS is an effective and robust representation of terms and conditions for NHS workers. Without good conditions for the workers, we will not have good services. It is a matter of life and death for the people in this country if the NHS goes because we will never get it back. Congress, please support the GMB Statement on the NHS.

(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Can I have that Statement formally seconded, please? *(The CEC Statement on the NHS was formally seconded from the floor)* I will now call on each region who wishes to put up a speaker. Birmingham & West Midlands? *(No response)* London?

BRO. S. JONES (London): Good afternoon, Vice President and Congress. It is lovely to be able to be in a position where I can actually support the CEC with the NHS Statement. I do a lot of representation for the NHS and I represent people in hospitals and elsewhere. The harassment and bullying that these people are subjected to — not mainly by the patients — by managers, or so-called managers, is absolutely abhorrent. We had a situation not long ago with an organisation called Sodexo, which is a private company, which continued to harass and bully a member. Because a security member of staff went to have lunch one day, forgot his wallet, he left his wallet in another pair of trousers, he was disciplined and dismissed. The GMB took stern action on this. We put it in the press, we campaigned against it and that member was fully reinstated. Let us just one example. *(Applause)* We also have private ambulance services that are not fit for purpose. They are more concerned with greed and how much money they can get out of people, with people doing 18-hour days. The list goes on and on and on. I support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, very much. I call Midland & East Coast.

SIS. D. LOVATT (Midland & East Coast): Congress, this Statement that the CEC has produced is spot on. Sustainability and transformation plans equal, basically, companies joining together, but they are really called cuts. They mean cutbacks and that means people will suffer. The other side of the coin, as has already been mentioned, is the Ambulance Service. On Bank Holiday Monday I was sat for three hours in an ambulance. I was actually escorting a patient. We could not get in. There were another seven sat on the sideways. We were sat there for ages. Then we spent all night in A&E because four wards were shut as the result of a sickness bug. That is 80 beds! So at the end of the day, this Tory Government is, basically, not producing what the NHS stood for. Instead, it is producing a very unsafe NHS. Please support this motion and get rid of these Tories. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dawn. I call Northern, North West, Scotland, Southern, South West and Yorkshire. *(No responses)* I now put the Statement to Congress. All those in favour of the CEC Statement, please show? Any against? That is carried.

The CEC Statement on the NHS was CARRIED.

SOCIAL POLICY: NHS & HEALTH ISSUES

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now move into the motions. I call motion 288, Wales & South West; composite 21, Yorkshire to move and Birmingham to second; motion 297, Birmingham; composite 22, Birmingham to move, Southern to second and Yorkshire to take priority in debate; motion 311, North West & Irish, and motion 313, London.

INVESTMENT IN NHS MOTION 288

288. INVESTMENT IN NHS

This Congress recognises the NHS is facing a decline in its financial situation and that the impact from the deficit of over £500 million last year will result in cuts to services and staff, and

that a decrease in morale amongst staff, who are currently experiencing an increase workload, stress and a decreasing ability to provide high quality care that patients need, despite their best efforts.

This Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to lobby the Government to increase investment in the NHS both now and long term, and to recognise the important links between health and social care and the need to invest in both. This is to ensure the needs of the whole population are met to the standard we should expect in a country as wealthy as the UK.

MID GLAMORGAN C&T BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

BRO. N. HOLMAN (Wales & South West): Congress, I move motion 288. President and delegates, our cherished National Health Service has, clearly, become a key policy battleground for those contesting this week's general election. NHS providers have constantly struggled to cope with increased demand due to a growing and aging population and rising costs. The sector is reporting a combined deficit of almost £2.5 billion, with the underlying shortfall probably closer to £3 billion. Between 2010 and 2015 — phase 1 of the Tory period of rule — funding rose by only 0.9% in real terms, contrasted with average increases since 1948 of 3.7%. At the same time as funding has fallen, the perfect storm has been created by reason of the increase in the number of elective care admissions. Don't be fooled by the Government's claims that only £8 billions is required to balance the books. This is simply not enough to bridge the gap.

The overwhelming evidence is that our NHS is not receiving enough money. The pressure to deliver services is immense. The finances of the Trusts are further disadvantaged by systems of fines when they miss NHS treatment targets, thus pushing them even further into deficit. The Tory Government's poor funding of healthcare means that the UK continues to fall behind other countries in terms of investment in health as a proportion of GDP. Clearly, our NHS today is under-funded and over-stretched. The choice is very simple: increase funding or cut care! Patients and communities deserve better than that, and should be guaranteed a service that is funded and staffed to meet their needs. We desperately need a budget that meets the demand for health services, sets realistic targets for efficiency savers, protect funds for transformation and properly invests in long-term sustainability. More doctors need to be trained. The pay and working lives of staff must be improved and the service must be valued by those in the corridors of power. Congress, a truly seven-day Health Service will only be possible if the Government are prepared to address the underlying and structural threats to patients' welfare that are caused by insufficient funds and staffing. It is time for action. The situation is at crisis point, and before long we will not have a Health Service that we can recognise. Next Thursday the public has a choice to make between a Health Service for everyone — Labour — or an ideologically-driven Tory policy of running it into the ground with cuts and privatisation. If Nye Bevan could fund an NHS after World War Two with a deficit, we have no excuse now. It should not be difficult to choose. Thank you.
(Applause)

SIS. J. SMITH (Wales & South West): Congress, I second motion 288. Vice President and Congress, a battery of austerity cuts, an aging population and large-scale under-investment has caused this situation to develop, with the inevitable impact

upon the morale of doctors and nurses. Chronic under-funding is evident in both hospitals and in general practice with the proportion of money shrinking, yet at the same time demand is rising. There has been a shift of hospital care into communities. GPs' workloads are stretched to breaking point. Patients have to wait for an appointment and there is a serious recruitment and retention problem in general practice, particularly with an increasing reliance on local doctors. There needs to be not only an increase in general funding levels but also the setting of spending priorities for areas where the need is greater, including social care, primary care and mental health. The money exists. It is just a question of reversing Tory cuts to corporation tax, making it easier to see a GP, taking hospitals out of financial crisis and ensuring that money is not wasted on meaningless re-organisation.

Our beloved NHS is in intensive care. It is a choice of developing or further degrading it. Let's lobby and campaign for a newer and fairer deal. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jennifer. I call them over of composite 21.

CLOSURE OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BEDS COMPOSITE 21

C21. Covering Motions:

292. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BEDS Birmingham & W. Midlands Region

294. CLOSURE OF ACUTE HOSPITAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BEDS

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

CLOSURE OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE BEDS

This Congress believes the campaign and trend to close community hospital beds has had a negative impact on the NHS.

Barnsley Hospital closed more beds in November 2016, in a period of the year when beds are so desperately needed. This resulted in record breaches in A + E 4 hour wait in December and January and there is no end in sight to the problem.

The 4 hour target is set to ensure that hospitals admit patients in a timely manner and get them to the specialities that they need.

When patients get to hospital that are ill and hope that they are going to be helped by an organisation which they have funded by taxation and National Insurance contributions.

In the present climate patients are likely to be kept waiting in unsuitable conditions in ambulances, on corridors, or anywhere a trolley can be squeezed into until a bed can be found. During the time that they are waiting for a bed their health is deteriorating and they are suffering unnecessarily. Sometimes not just for 4 hours but for 12, 16 or even 24 hours! The 4 hour wait is a crucial target in the NHS and a good indicator in how well the hospital is delivering its care.

There are multiple reasons for organisations not being able to achieve the target, however, closing acute beds is bound to have a negative effect on the hospital's ability to provide safe effective care to our patients.

We therefore call on Congress to lobby the appropriate bodies to review this situation with a view to free up badly needed facilities.

This Congress supports a GMB campaign to lobby the government and individual organisations to stop the closure of hospital beds.

(Carried)

SIS. S. YOUNG (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move composite 21: Closure of NHS beds. Barnsley Hospital closed more beds in November 2016 in a period of the year when beds are desperately needed, which resulted in record breaches in A&E four-hour waits in December and January, and there is no end in sight of the problem.

On a personal level, I can give you the reality of that. I've got 24 years' experience of working in the NHS and I've never seen it so busy. Sometimes we are running over 100% capacity to make sure that patients get the best possible care. It is not safe and it is not easy working on a ward today. However, in the last year, I've had experience on the other side of the fence with my parents, and now I ask you to listen.

Mum's final admission to hospital was through A&E by paramedics in the middle of the night. We waited eight hours in A&E. There were five patients in resus. All the bays were full, the waiting area was a breaking point and a patient suffering from mental health problems was brought in, but her needs were so great that the staff could not cope and the police were called to help. It was just after 8 o'clock in the morning when she was seen and admitted. The hospital is taking patients from a wider area due to cuts and closures at smaller hospitals, such as Barnsley, but there are no more beds, staff or funding. The wards were also full, yet the care was brilliant. The compassion and comfort when we needed it could not be faulted in the end.

In February it was dad's turn in A&E. I was horrified. A&E was full, patients were stacked in the aisles between the bays out into the main A&E corridor, all the way out the ambulance bay where paramedics were also queuing and the waiting room was, once again, full to bursting point. The frailty unit, where we were to be admitted, was full because patients were too ill to go home, but there insufficient nurses. A nurse was apologising to patients for keeping them waiting before attending to them, and it took 12 hours from being rushed in to finally being admitted. Yet Jeremy Hunt and this Government don't give a shit! They say that waiting times don't matter. Well, it does matter and it has to stop. Of course, it will stop with Labour in power. We've got to return a Labour Government on Thursday. Patients should not be left to suffer on trolleys waiting for up to a day to be seen and admitted to the correct speciality ward. The risk of deteriorating when stuck on a trolley is very high.

The four-hour wait is a good indicator of how well a hospital is delivering safe care, and there are many reasons why that time limit is not being met as an important target. However, the closure of acute beds is proved to be having a negative effect on the NHS's capability of providing safe and effective care to patients.

Congress, I call upon the CEC and the GMB to lobby MPs to stop the closure of hospital beds and, indeed, hospitals throughout the UK and invest in our NHS. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sarah. Secunder?

BRO. P. JACKSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am supporting the speaker from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire, speaking on composite 21: National Health Bed Closures.

One of the most emotive issues debated cross-party during the campaign prior to Thursday's election is the state of our National Health Service. It is pointless debating who did what in the past or who is to blame for the demise in the standards, but the answer is not to close cottage hospitals. Recently, we have heard what has been labelled "Lack of care and neglect through their way" is a take on the slogan "Our care their way". All these closures have done is exacerbate the NHS bed deficit, and whoever came up with the idea must be quite bonkers. By pulling funding, the clinical commissioner groups may have been slammed by the local action campaigns, but they still insist it is for the best. The reckless abandonment that these planned cuts have caused is especially frightening to the older frail patients, who are quite at home with community care. Three hundred of these hospitals have provided a different type of care to the high-centralised care in acute hospitals. Let us not forget that the hard working and dedicated fund-raisers who have kept lots of these places stocked and running for years. As we see the whole process in disrepute and disarray, we need to stop what is happening and save our hospitals in the community before it is too late. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Motion 297.

MENTAL HEALTH MOTION 297

297. MENTAL HEALTH

This Congress deplores the cutbacks in the General Practitioners Mental Health budget.

We urge the relevant committees within the GMB to pursue a reversal of this trend.

R35 ROCESTER JCB GENERAL BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Referred)

BRO. P. JACKSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move motion 297. The issue of mental health awareness may be high on the agenda of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, but the Government are nowhere near understanding the pledge to reform and tackle the stigma and to invest £1 billion by 2012, which has, in real terms, been reduced by £1.9 million in Walsall alone. 40% of its trusts in England have been forced to reduce budgets, and they are all saying that none of their extra funding promised has materialised. So while the stigma still exists, the health provision is not as forthcoming as is promised.

57% of clinical commissioning groups plan to reduce their spending on mental health issues. Teresa May, our Prime Minister, has promised to spend record levels. Luciana Berger MP has questioned the deficit and lack of funding, and there are concerns that the funding is not reaching the frontline. For three years she has been submitting freedom of information requests to ask the clinical commissioning groups

what percentage of their budgets are being expended on the frontline. Thank you.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder? (*The motion was formally seconded from the floor*) Thank you. I call composite 22.

NHS CUTS, PRIVATISATION AND THE NHS REINSTATEMENT BILL COMPOSITE 22

C22. Covering Motions:

298.	NHS CUTS AND PRIVATISATION	Southern Region
301.	CCG AND STPS IN THE NHS	Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region
302.	NHS REINSTATEMENT BILL	Birmingham & W. Midlands Region

NHS CUTS, PRIVATISATION AND THE NHS REINSTATEMENT BILL

The National Health Service has since its birth provided a cost effective, universal health service, free at the point of need to all people irrespective of their background, circumstance or ability to pay.

Over recent years however this founding vision has been systematically eroded. The Health and Social Care Act 2012, has enforced a commercialised model on the NHS in England and conveniently removed many of the Secretary of State's responsibilities.

This Congress believes that against the backdrop of continued cuts and closures, private companies seek to gain even more of a foothold within the NHS. Continued pay restraint has seen the value of NHS salaries drop by 14% since 2010 and the increase of 25,000 nurses and 3,500 midwife vacancies in NHS England alone. The Tories demands for yet more austerity represents a real risk to the safety of patients.

This Congress calls for Clinical Commissioning Groups to do what it says on the tin and commission health services in its local community.

The government led strategy to cluster these groups together and develop Sustainability and Transformation Plans is abhorrent. The development of these plans has one consideration, which is to save money

This Congress is appalled that under the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STP) NHS in England is being starved of funds, dismantled and privatised. These plans are being used as a smokescreen for more cuts and privatization. They will see 44 footprint areas being set up nationwide and this is a serious attempt to drive back NHS spending to pre 2000 spending levels which would see the NHS have one of the lowest spending levels in Europe.

As part of these plans, commissioners and providers are expected to come together to draw up drastic cuts to balance the books by 2020.

The saving of money is an already overstretched system which is causing the patients, that the NHS serves, unacceptable delays and distress and leads to unsafe levels of care provision and ineffective patient care.

On 13th July 2016, the NHS Reinstatement Bill was successfully presented in the House of Commons, by Margaret Greenwood, Labour MP for Wirral West. The Bill is scheduled for a second reading on Friday 24th February 2017.

This congress believes that campaigning to reinstate the founding vision is critical and that only a change to the law can stop the damage that sees the NHS as we know it in intensive care.

We demand that all politicians of all political parties who claim to care about the NHS and local hospitals, to do what is morally right and openly support for this bill at every stage. This would re-establish the Secretary of State's legal duty as to the National Health Service in England to provide the key NHS services throughout England, and declare the NHS to be a "non-economic service of general interest".

There is a mood to fight against attacks on the NHS as we have seen in campaigns in Huddersfield, Leicester and Gratham. Two Labour Councils have refused to sign up to the STP plans. The GMB calls upon its members and supporters to oppose STPs at every opportunity and our MP's and Councillors to do everything in their remit to prevent STPs from processing their evil Plans and calls on the National union to draw up a campaign to fight the STPs up to and including industrial action.

We resolve to work with other unions to fight STPs, affiliate to the Health Campaigns Together", support all calls for national action on the NHS, call on Councils to refuse to back STPs that propose cuts and privatization

(Carried)

BRO. S. ROBERTSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I move composite 22. Brothers, Sisters and comrades, over the past 25 years the founding vision of the NHS has been eroded and dismantled and now it has been killed off. In this general election we will be voting for the future of the NHS, which is in critical care and on life support. Only a change of Government or a change in the law can save it.

The Health and Social Care Act in 2012 was tantamount to a death sentence of the NHS. Make no mistake about it. If the Tories have their way, there will be no NHS. It has already been broken up into 44 regional areas called "Footprints", each of which is charged with coming up with sustainability and transformation plans. This nasty Tory plans, if allowed to go ahead, will be the final nail in the coffin of the NHS. To justify £22 billion worth of austerity cuts, we have seen closure to services and the continued sell off to big corporations. These plans and cuts will lead not only to the death of the NHS as we know it, but it will cause thousands more of unnecessary preventable deaths to the service users, who are us.

The NHS Reinstatement Bill will need to be re-presented in the Commons. If this Bill was passed, it would repeal the Health and Social Care Act and stop the effects of the STPs. In the last Parliament, Margaret Greenwood, who is the MP for Wirral West, had All-Party support, apart from the bloody Tories, and, quite shockingly, despite having the support of 56 SNP MPs, she was only publicly supported by around 40 Labour MPs. What is that all about? I know at times the Labour Party can't agree the colour of shite, but surely this Bill deserves to be backed by every MP with half-an-ounce of moral fibre. The Tories, hypocritically, keep telling us that they care about the NHS. Our local Banbury MP, Victoria Prentis, is for ever bleating on about how she loves the Horton General Hospital and telling us that she is championing the fight to keep the acute services there. Then she refuses to condemn STPs, back the Bill or even acknowledge that it is her party's policies that are behind the downgrades and

the threats in the first place. We need to call out these folk for what they are — lying, devious scumbags.

The GMB must call on every member, every branch, every region, every union and every MP to do everything in their power to back the Bill and stop these evil STPs putting on a “Do not resuscitate” sign over the NHS.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Stephen, will you wind-up, please?

BRO. ROBERTSON: I move. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Southern to second.

SIS. A. WILSON (Southern): Congress, I am first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* NHS cuts, privatisation and the NHS Reinstatement Bill. This Congress believes that against the backdrop of continued cuts and closures, private companies seek to gain even more of a foothold within the NHS. Continued pay restraint has seen the value of NHS salaries drop by 14% since 2010 and the increase of 25,000 nurses and 3,500 midwife vacancies in NHS England alone. The Tories demand for yet more austerity represents a real risk to the safety of patients. The Sustainability and Transformation Plans are being used as a smokescreen for more cuts and privatisation. These plans will see 44 footprint areas being set up nationwide and this is a serious attempt to drive back NHS spending to pre 2000 spending levels which would see the NHS have one of the lowest spending levels in Europe.

As part of these plans, commissioners and providers are expected to come together to draw up drastic cuts to balance the books by 2020. There is a mood to fight against attacks on the NHS as we have seen in campaigns in Huddersfield, Leicester and Grantham. Two Labour Councils have refused to sign up to the STP plans.

This branch resolves to work with other unions to fight STPs, affiliate to the “Health Campaigns Together, support all calls for national action on the NHS, call on councils to refuse to back STPS that propose cuts and privatisation.

We call on the national union to draw up a campaign to fight the STPs up to and including industrial action. I second and seek your support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Audrey.

NHS BED SORES MOTION 311

311. NHS BED SORES

This Congress calls upon the Quality Care Commission, NHS, care professionals and organisations to commit to addressing the challenge of bed sores and its impact on people.

Sadly in 2012 there were 96 deaths where bed sores were the underlying cause of death. A further 771 deaths mentioned bed sores as a contributing factor. Congress, this is too high a cost. The effective care and treatment of patients can help avoid the majority of these deaths

or contributing factors. The prevalence of bed sores can also point to failures of proper care and handling procedures for the elderly, infirm and those with restricted mobility.

The cost to the health budget of bed sores and associated conditions is significantly running into millions per annum for the NHS budget. The cost to the patient is also too high with longer recovery times, difficult care procedures and longer periods of hospitalisation for people.

We ask the GMB to support the Campaign to improve the recognition and treatment of bed sores early and to ensure proper training for care staff and health professionals is implemented especially where we have members in the care sector.

We ask the GMB to lobby the Care Quality Commission and other care oversight bodies to include scrutiny of bed sores within their quality assessment of care homes and NHS establishments. This will help to identify poor practice and the failure of quality care. Bed sores is a quality of life and care quality issue which needs urgent attention.

Finally, we encourage care professionals to help with this important issue and to ask for proper training or to highlight bad care practice in areas where they work in order to significantly reduce this unnecessary burden on people and costs to the NHS.

M53 BRANCH
North West & Irish Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. SMITH (North West & Irish): Congress, moving 311. I presume that not many of you in this pavilion, if you had not read this motion and not been involved in issues with bed sores within your family, would realise the importance of the motion. Yes, we are living longer. The longer we live, the possibility that somewhere in your life you could be confined to your bed. This is where the problem starts if not taken on board right from the beginning. Very sadly, I do believe that in 96 deaths bed sores were the underlying cause, and they were a contributing factor to 771 deaths.

I first experienced this problem was with a member of my family, and what makes it more difficult is that my nephew was a generation younger than myself. He suffered tremendously with pain during the final months of his life. When the time came to treat him for bed sores, it was too late. He was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis at the age of 21, and he finished up being one of these 771 deaths at the age of 39. I never, ever want to see a person suffer like he did. Yes, he did have multiple sclerosis, but two years bed-ridden would not have helped with bed sores.

The problem with bed sores is being ignored by the Government. Lack of funding, the high cost of effective treatment and the high cost to the NHS budget is running into millions. This problem needs address urgently. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Joseph.

PROSTATE CANCER MOTION 312

312. PROSTATE CANCER

This Congress notes that prostate cancer is the biggest form of cancer amongst men and trans women in the UK, with the charity Prostate Cancer UK estimating that 1 in 8 will suffer from prostate cancer at some time in their lives. This figure rises to 1 in 4 if you are a member of the black community or have a history of prostate cancer in the family.

Congress calls on the Central Executive Council to support Prostate Cancer UK and promote awareness in GMB communications, in particular publicising PSA testing. In addition Campaign for national screening programmes for prostate cancer to be implemented across the UK.

CARDIFF 1 BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

(Motion 312 was formally moved and formally seconded by Wales & South West Region)

IDIOPATHIC PULMONARY FIBROSIS MOTION 313

313. IDIOPATHIC PULMONARY FIBROSIS

This Congress recognises the devastating effects of Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF), a fatal lung disease, little understood and with no known cause, rapidly on the increase with a preponderance of incidence in the UK's industrial areas and calls on the GMB to lobby the Government to commit more resource for research and improved medical care pathways. We also call on the GMB to lobby the Labour Party to support this campaign.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. Z. AZLAM (London): Congress, I move motion 313 on Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. Respiratory diseases are among the leading causes of death worldwide. Many people will have heard of asthma or lung cancer, but there is an even more devastating disease called idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, or IPF. IPF now kills more people in the UK than leukaemia, brain or stomach cancer, yet few people have heard of it. When my father was diagnosed with IPF in 2009, there was absolutely no information or help available. Astonishingly, on the internet there wasn't even a medical description of the disease.

So what is IPF? IPF is a chronic and fatal disease of unknown cause in which the lungs become progressively scarred such that breathing becomes very difficult. Fighting for every breath, coughing and recurring chest infections results in patients, typically, have frequent hospitalisations. As the symptoms worsen, they have to rely on oxygen therapy to aid breathing. In fact, they are dying and need palliative care until the end of their lives. We don't know what causes this severe disease and there is no cure, yet IPF is massively on the rise in the UK, and it is unknown as to why. It strikes rapidly and 50% of the people die within three years of diagnosis. Whilst this disease can strike anyone, there is a greater risk of developing IPF for workers in heavy industry, such as factories or farms. The disease is prevalent in the UK's north-west area.

Currently, around 32,000 people live with IPF in the UK. The latest research shows that this number is increasing by 6,000 new patients every year. Incidentally, over 5,000 patients also die each year. Despite this, medical research into IPF is chronically under-funded. IPF causes more deaths than some cancers, yet the funding is disproportionate. For instance, the Government invest £32 million into leukaemia research each year, and just over half-a-million, or only 2% of that figure is spent in IPF research. Clearly, more needs to be done.

This Congress recognises the devastating effects of IPF, a fatal lung disease, little understood and with no known cause, rapidly on the increase with a preponderance of incidence in the UK's industrial areas. We call on the GMB to lobby the Government to raise awareness, to commit more resource for research and improved medical care pathways. We also call on the GMB to lobby the Labour Party to support this campaign. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. I now call upon Martin Jackson of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to speak on behalf of the CEC.

BRO. M. JACKSON (CEC, Public Services): President and Congress, responding on behalf of the CEC on motions 297, 311 and composite 22. I would like to thank delegates for a lively debate on the NHS and some very personal comments from our delegates. I would like to give a personal thanks to all of them.

We are aware that in March NHS England diverted £800 million of NHS funds that had been ear-marked to improve mental health services to help fill the black hole and stabilise NHS finances. We also know that record numbers of GP practices have closed due to GPs retiring, practices merging or GPs and their teams no longer being able to cope with the growing patient demand without necessary funding.

Although GMB opposes any cuts to NHS funding, this is a part of the bigger debate on how we can afford a modern health and care system. We would seek to refer motion 297 to be dealt with and researched by our Public Services National Committee.

On motion 311 we have heard the problems faced by some patients who have developed bed sores, which are preventable. Our qualification is that this is all part of the imbalance in the staff/patient ratio, which has meant that with shortages of staff on wards patients are, unfortunately missing out on some essential care. These are not isolated incidents, delegates. This is throughout the NHS. Be assured that we continue to campaign to increase staffing levels within the NHS.

You will find that if we have another five years of Tory Government we will not have an NHS, and whatever is left of it will become a Mid-Staffs happening everywhere throughout the country.

Finally, on composite 22, on NHS cuts, our updated CEC Statement clarifies our position that STPs are mechanisms for saving money. We continue to resist all cutbacks, the reduction in the number of hospital beds or closures of our A&E departments. The CEC qualification is that we cannot back campaigns which call for

industrial action but we will continue to oppose the STPs and any privatisation of the NHS.

In addition, all requests for affiliation are referred to the CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee to ensure that they are in line with the aims and values of the GMB.

Therefore, Congress, please agree to refer motion 297 and support composition 22 and motion 311 with the qualifications that I have laid out. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Martin. Does Wales & South West accept the statement on motion 288? *(Agreed)* Does Birmingham and Yorkshire regions accept the statement on composite 21? *(Agreed)* Does Birmingham accept reference on motion 297? *(Agreed)* Do Southern, Yorkshire and Birmingham accept the qualification on composite 22? *(Agreed)* Does North West & Irish accept the qualification on motion 311? *(Agreed)* I will now put motion 288, composite 21, motion 297, composite 22, motion 311, motion 312 and motion 313 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Those against? They are carried.

Motion 288 was CARRIED.

Composite 21 was CARRIED.

Motion 297 was REFERRED.

Composite 22 was CARRIED.

Motion 311 was CARRIED.

Motion 312 was CARRIED.

Motion 313 was CARRIED.

CEC CHARTER ON SOCIAL CARE

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to the CEC Charter on Social Care. Can I ask Julia Brady to move the CEC Charter.

GMB CONGRESS 2017

CEC CHARTER FOR THE CARE SECTOR



GMB “WE CARE” KEY DEMANDS

In accordance to the CEC Special Report to Congress in 2016, GMB have expanded and begun to implement the recommendations contained within the report and this Charter summarises those. Our campaign sets out GMB's key demands for care workers and the sector. These are the base set of principles that organisers and activists should engaging members, employers, local authorities, and government on to improve the conditions of the sector.

Fair Terms and Conditions

- Recognition that Care Workers are Public Sector Workers

- Working towards a living wage to be set at £10 per hour as agreed at GMB Congress 2014
- Job security for all members; an end to zero hours contracts
- Decent sick pay, pensions and overtime pay, and the recognition of the nature of unsociable hours
- Pay for Travel Time and Travel Expenses

Workplace

- Protection in the event of unfair accusations; dignity and fair treatment at work
- Adequate staffing levels for the number of residents in homes and service users
- A safe, healthy and secure workplace

Apprenticeships and Training

- Quality apprenticeships for those wanting to have a career in the care sector, and not to be exploited as cheap labour
- Campaign for proper training and support in order to professionalise the industry and reduce the high turnover rate of care workers

Funding the Care sector

- We will hold Government to account over the Spring Budget 2017 promise of allocating an additional £2bn to the Adult Social Care budget
- Funding must help relieve the strain on the NHS facilities are currently under. It is currently subsidising the care sector by looking after patients waiting for spaces in care facilities to become available
- We must ensure that Local Authorities are delivering on their social care obligations

Service Users

- Elimination of the 15 minute care slot
- Allow Care Workers to have the time to care for their clients
- Reverse the austerity measures placed on service users which limit the funding for their personal care

(Carried)

SIS. J. BRADY (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and moving the CEC Charter on Social Care. This charter is our central focus point for the *GMB We Care Campaign*. It is our key demand document that we

will be working from to improve the working conditions for those employed in the sector and, importantly, to build on our membership base within this workforce. This set of demands is built upon a charter included within the CEC Special Report to Congress on Social Care in 2016. The demands in this document cover some important issues raised by a number of motions on the agenda.

Funding for care in the UK has been slashed and burned by recent governments, and local authorities are highly concerned about delivering their obligations on care for their constituents. The lack of funding has meant that the NHS has had to take on more responsibility for social care. This means that the essential resources in hospitals, like beds, are being used to look after those waiting to be transferred to appropriate facilities. We are demanding that the Government's pledge of injecting £2 billion into the adult social care budget is spent properly and that they honour their promise. This is an emergency injection of money and we will expect to be fighting for more money to be allocated to the sector in the future.

This week's election will also determine how we will be working with the Labour Party on this matter even in government or as part of the shadow team. We will ensure, in any case, that our activists in the social care sector get an audience with the Party to discuss and press upon the issue that our members are facing at work. Importantly, the key demands place importance on the conditions and professionalism on the workforce. We cannot have our loved ones properly cared for if our workers are not treated properly themselves. This means that working hours, pay, expenses, leave, contract security and training have to improve, and improve soon to reduce the high turnover rate of staff and raise the standards of care provided.

We will be working with our membership to campaign on these principles. The CEC urges Congress to support the CEC Charter for the care sector and endorse the key demands laid out in this document. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I will now call upon a speaker from each region who wishes to put up a speaker. Birmingham? *(No response)* London?

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): Congress, I am speaking in support of the Care Campaign 2017. Working in the care sector for 30 years, I am pleased to support the GMB's campaign for raising the standard for care workers. Care workers have taken two hits. Not only have they had insufficient pay rises, but a lot of care companies have reduced their salaries, so any rise will be in the negative. To add to that, zero-hour contracts do not attract any extra payment beyond 37 hours unless they are given a choice. They don't get sick pay, but the managers will because sick pay is discretionary. I know all too well in my work that unfair activations are usually used to get rid of staff who do not fit in. Health and safety in the workplace is essential. If staff phone in sick, it usually means that staff work short-handed, and managers encourage staff to ostracise the staff for being sick. People are usually paying for an inadequate service. Training is usually done on a computer so there is no way that they can interact with their colleagues, which means better outcomes for the training. Many years of bed blocking is still going on. I have worked with the elderly. Luckily for me, I worked when they were allowed to be looked after. Also in the care homes they used to have ambient people. Now all we have is poor people who have to be looked after with not enough staff. I support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Cathy. Midland? (*No response*) Northern? (*No response*) North West & Irish?

SIS. L. MERCER (North West & Irish): I am supporting composite 23: Social care. GMB has many members who work in or receive social care in some way. I find in my own branch that people who work in social services and social care are joining the GMB on a weekly basis. This Congress calls on the CEC to work with the Labour Party to speak with these members and to ask their opinion on what type of care service is needed and how it should be provided, not for profit, but for those people who need care. The workers within the care sector must be made to feel valued, because many of them come out and work day and night on minimum wage and have zero-hour contracts. The funding for this project should not come from the NHS budget or from that of local government, who are already stretched to the limit.

My parents are receiving social care at the moment. We worked it out the other day. They are paying £200 a week for social care, but the care workers who they have are not being paid that amount on the hourly rate, so where is the rest of the money going? It is nowhere near the amount that they are paying. It is going on people who are very well off and are from private companies that run these businesses. Social care and care for the elderly, and for anybody else who needs care, should be brought back into government responsibility. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. GMB Scotland? (*No response*) Southern? (*No response*) Wales and South West? (*No response*) I will now put the CEC Charter to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

The CEC Charter on Social Care was CARRIED.

INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I now move to composite 17. Yorkshire to move and Northern to second.

CHALLENGING THE EXPLOITATION OF SOCIAL CARE WORKERS COMPOSITE 17

C17. Covering Motions:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 192. | PROTECTING SOCIAL CARE WORKERS | Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region |
| 193. | EXPLOITATION OF CARE WORKERS | Northern Region |

CHALLENGING THE EXPLOITATION OF SOCIAL CARE WORKERS

Those at the lowest levels of care provision are those who most frequently engage with those receiving care. Poor conditions (including poor pay) mean that there is a natural seeking of financial improvement and a consequent drift from the sector. It is blackmail to say 'This is a vocation so pay shouldn't matter'. A steady change of care staff is bad for the recipients as familiarity and time are needed for the establishment of relationships and the development of communication and sensitivity to forms of need.

Many of those going to people's homes have to travel at their own expense and are not paid for time spent travelling. A social worker doing a home visit would not be expected to accept a deduction from their salary for the time spent between the office and the client's home! A good structure of employment may provide an incentive for people to stay and develop skills if they know these skills will be recognised and rewarded.

This Congress expresses its alarm at the scale of underpayments of the National Minimum Wage in the Care Sector.

Congress notes that in 2016 a total of 3,400 Care Workers received back pay due to them being paid below the Minimum Wage. Furthermore, that the campaigning group The Resolution Foundation estimates that 160,000 care jobs are paid an average of £815 a year below the Minimum Wage and that much of these underpayments involve carers who were not paid for the time they took travelling between jobs, or who were underpaid for the hours they spent delivering live-in care.

The introduction of the private sector as a major provider (and in some areas the only provider) of such care has inevitably meant that a layer of non-productive profit has had to be factored into the cost of provision, so that funding for such care is reduced from the start.

The private sector's involvement has led to a reduction of available beds, as private companies have sought to make profit and by the provision of their homes have encouraged the closure of council homes, so that, when private homes have closed (owing to unprofitability, not lack of need) there has been no alternative provision available. This means there will be a severe shortfall in the number of beds available to meet predicted need in the next few years. Shortage of beds in this sector has meant also that the number of 'step-down beds' available to the NHS has been reduced, and this has contributed to the 'bed blocking' found in hospitals.

Local authorities are in a position to adjust provision to the predicted demand in terms of numbers and social needs of a given area. While supported living (sheltered housing but with greater support of various kinds) is now seen as a way forward, there will always be a need for residential care for those with chronic physical or mental health problems and for those requiring respite care. Without an impact on the resourcing of the service, this cannot be provided while there is a requirement that profit be derived from the service.

It would be impractical to legislate against private provision, and certain kinds of provision outside the public sector by charitable bodies have always had an honoured place in the system. (Not only does this include the homes founded by or run by religious bodies. It also includes such specialist facilities as are found in Sue Ryder Homes or the special clientele of such as the Star and Garter homes.) Nevertheless, the funding of local authority provision of a high standard will force the private sector to improve its provision or give up. It will, in short, use the Tory argument about the value of competition as a way of improving services against the private sector.

Congress believes that Government's financial squeeze on local authorities who commission domiciliary care can only add to the pressure on our member's workload and pay and calls upon an incoming Labour government to ensure local authorities have funds to provide residential, supported and sheltered accommodation and home care.

This Congress commits GMB to seeking for all engaged in the provision of residential and domiciliary care

- (a) the payment of the living wage;
- (b) fair terms and conditions of employment;

- (c) payment for time spent travelling between the homes of those under care, not merely payment for time spent in the house, and
- (d) such structuring of employment as will provide adequate and recognised training;

Congress therefore resolves to:-

- a) Seek out test cases to challenge exploitation in the Care Sector, and
- b) Organise regional conferences that bring together our Care Sector members to promote the GMB and plan union recruitment.

(Referred)

SIS. M. O'NEILL (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move composite 17: Challenging the exploitation of Social Care Workers. Vice President and delegates, we are calling on the GMB to protect all care workers, whether in residential or domiciliary care for the payment of the Living Wage and the terms and conditions that are fair, open and honest, with a training programme that is also recognised. Travelling time is part of a care worker's working day and should be recognised and not just time spent in the homes of those who need care. This is also to be requested in payment. There is no such thing as a lower level of care. If you need care, then that person is vulnerable and there is need for support, so there is no such lower level.

The turnover of staff in the care industry is at an all-time high. Why? Because all levels of care pay is so low. Little or no training is given. Local councils have been suppressed by the Government that care little for the care sector workers or care about those who actually need the care themselves. Councils are continually squeezed by the Government, making it impossible to keep an in-house service. When care is outsourced to the independent sector, it is often unregulated and profit is put before people. One reason for low-paid wages for care workers is because independent companies do not have to pay for unsociable hours. They all pay a flat rate. These are vital enhancements that normally make up care workers' pay, and what we all want is the Living Wage. Standards of care cannot be maintained at current levels, and forecasts are that standards are only going to get worse. This Government relies on the body of the unpaid carers, families and friends who should be paid as of right.

The Care Bill falls short on many parts, but it falls short massively for those who actually need it. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Moya. I call the seconder. Northern? *(The composite was seconded formally from the floor)* Thank you. I now call on Julia Brady to give the CEC response.

SIS. J. BRADY (CEC, Commercial Services): Vice Chair and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on composite 17. Whilst most of the composite is sound and supported within the Charter, we are asking for the composite to be referred as we would need to assess the measurement and the practicality of seeking out these test cases. We continually challenge the Low Pay Commission to make the care sector a targeted area as we know that our members are paid only for the work

they do. Therefore, Congress, please support the key demands of the CEC Charter for Social Care, and please agree to refer composite 17. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Julia. Do Yorkshire and Northern accept the reference on composite 17? (*Agreed*) I will put it to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

Composite 17 was REFERRED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, we are nearly to time now, but we have about 30 minutes left if we continue. I would like your permission to continue and get today's business out of the way. All those in favour, please show? Any against? Tough! (*Laughter*)

I now call on motion 315, Northern to move, and composite 23, North West & Irish to move and Northern to second. Thank you.

**SOCIAL POLICY: SOCIAL CARE
SPENDING ON SOCIAL CARE
MOTION 315**

315. SPENDING ON SOCIAL CARE

This Congress notes GMB policy of a taxpayer funded social care provision. Congress, however, is alarmed that the Government has sought to use the local government funding regime to direct resources to the sector.

Congress notes that there is a duty on Government to ensure that the elderly and the vulnerable are not left to the mercy of the market when they need help the most. Congress notes that the Dilnot Commission Report in 2011 recommended urgent steps to rectify structural problems within the sector.

Congress calls on the Government to urgently boost the level of resources for provision of affordable care and support within the sector, to also ensure that the sector does not continue to be characterised as a low wage sector and so that social care is given the parity of esteem that the NHS has within the eyes of the British Public.

Congress calls on the CEC to monitor this policy and asks for a report back at Congress 2018, so we can develop campaigning in this area of important social policy.

T25 NEWCASTLE & NORTH TYNESIDE GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. K. McEWAN (Northern): Congress, I am from the Northern region. I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. (*Applause*) I move motion 315: Spending on Social Care.

We know that the situation in the NHS is at breaking point. It has been starved of resources and it has undergone four major restructures in 30 years as governments have come and gone. The NHS has become a football to be kicked back and forth when it should, quite simply, be a service that is free at the point of use, with no PFIs,

no privatisation, more resources to the frontline and better co-ordination of health and social care.

Congress, social care in the Northern Region is 98% in the private sector, with only Cumbria having any care homes in the public sector, and even they are under review due to austerity. The private sector pays the minimum wage. The assets tend to be leasehold. The banks own most of them after the 2008 crash. Councils are cutting fees to providers and the providers are crying poverty. So we need a radical overhaul of social care spending so that it is free at the point of use so that the whole service is seen as one, not just a patchwork quilt version of service provision.

We need to give people dignity and care when they desperately need it the most. The way that social care has gone over the last 20 years is simply a disgrace. We have nearly total private-sector provision, with a sector that is starved of money and a Government that is not prepared to act, where councils are cutting back and where the elderly and vulnerable have to fund the care themselves. Congress, this means that we have a crisis in social care.

This crisis needs a consensus to be thrashed out in Westminster. It needs the country to understand that these services have to be paid for and the money has to be guaranteed and ring-fenced. It is not the funny money of PFI or public-private partnerships, but by using tax revenues. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Seconder? *(The motion was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you. I call composite 23.

FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CARE COMPOSITE 23

C23. Covering Motions:

- | | | |
|------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 317. | SOCIAL CARE | Northern Region |
| 321. | SOCIAL CARE | North West & Irish Region |

FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CARE

This Congress notes that GMB policy is to provide Social Care out of taxation, free at the point of use.

However, the sector is typically a minimum wage sector with residents paying for their care. Congress believes this situation needs urgent attention and asks for the Labour Party to take a lead in promoting and implementing this policy.

Not for profit but for the people who need social care and make time to be able to talk to the service users and make them feel valued. This should be funded as a service on its own, not taking money from the NHS or from the Council budget.

This Congress calls on the lawmakers at Westminster to urgently agree to bring Social Care budgets within the NHS.

This Congress calls on the CEC to work with the Labour Party to speak with our GMB members who work in social care to find out what type of care service is needed and how it should be provided

(Carried)

SIS. L. MERCER (North West & Irish): Congress, the CEC would like to propose that we work with the Labour Party to find out what our people in social care, our workers in social care and those receiving social care feel about the care that they receive and how they could improve social care to meet their needs. This will help people to feel more valued, but it will help me and you because at some stage in our lives we will need social care. At one stage in their lives, our children will need social care. Some of you are already having to use social care. Like I said before, our membership is growing within social care. Please support this composite for the CEC. Thank you, brothers and sisters. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Linda. I call Northern to second. *(The composite was formally seconded from the floor)* Thank you. The CEC is supporting both of these motions. I will put them to the vote. Motion 315 and composite 23. All those in favour, please show? Any against? They are carried.

Motion 315 was CARRIED.

Composite 23 was CARRIED.

CEC STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I call Judith Batson for the CEC, from London, to move the CEC Statement on Mental Health at Work.

GMB CONGRESS 2017 CEC STATEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AT WORK

1. Introduction

- 1.1. On any given day, 1 in 4 people in the UK are experiencing a mental health condition according to the charity Mind. GMB is well aware of the toll this takes on our members, their families, colleagues and friends. We have a substantial body of motions passed at Congress on the subject of mental health, and have long campaigned for better understanding of mental health at work, and for greater resources from Government to tackle the issues and improve people's quality of life.
- 1.2. This CEC Statement is specifically focused on occupational mental health at work. We are firmly of the belief that early intervention is critical in identifying and tackling mental health conditions, and that prevention is better than cure.
- 1.3. In the experience of GMB members, mental health at work cannot be separated from mental health in wider society. People do not have an off switch which operates in the workplace – work and home lives impact on each other. The first inkling that someone is

experiencing a mental health condition, especially before diagnosis and specialist support, is often when they experience an episode in the workplace.

- 1.4. It is critical that this issue is addressed now. Our young members are faced with a triple attack - student debt, insecure work, and non-existent housing provision – before they enter the workplace, and as they begin their working lives. We are in the position that physical health and safety was in the late 1960's – an unacceptable price being paid by workers, and one that threatens to tip into epidemic levels of mental ill-health.
- 1.5. There is a desperate need for strong leadership on mental health from central Government. We believe that the current lack of regulations around occupational mental health contributes to both absenteeism and presenteeism. There is no parity of esteem between mental and physical health. Mental health support services have been decimated by austerity cuts, with society paying the long term cost. This is completely unacceptable.
- 1.6. So our work must begin with our campaigning activity.

2. Campaigning

- 2.1. We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. Our mental health can be harmed by work, and placed at risk by mental health hazards. Yet since the Health and Safety at Work Act came into law in 1974, not a single set of regulations has been passed by any government defining how mental health in the workplace should be managed.
- 2.2. Work-related stress is the single biggest cause of sickness absence from work. Yet there is nothing in law detailing how stress should be tackled. Most mental health related absence from work is not reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) Regulations, so the vast majority of this is never reported to any government authority for investigation.
- 2.3. The CEC believes this state of affairs is untenable. We call on the next Government to introduce under primary legislation a new Mental Health at Work Act, specifying the approach and methods expected of all employers in managing mental health at work. This must require the reporting of all cases of work-related stress, or work-related stress must be added to the list of reportable conditions prescribed under RIDDOR.
- 2.4. We demand regulations bringing the HSE Stress Management Standards into law, to provide a framework for tackling stress. But regulations are valueless without enforcement, so we want the next Government to boost the resources of the Health and Safety Executive to Year 2000 levels, and once again provide this regulator with teeth and a clear mandate for enforcement and inspection.

- 2.5. This isn't just the right and moral thing for employers to do. It's plain good business. HSE estimate the total burden to society of occupational ill-health and disease (including all mental ill health) at £14.2BN per annum. The consultation document issued by the Labour Party on mental health cited the total economic cost of poor mental health at approximately £105BN per year. There is an enormous discrepancy between these two figures, and we would suggest that even the £105BN is likely to be an underestimate given the productivity loss caused by presenteeism.
- 2.6. Better employment practices to tackle this huge burden would eliminate any case for austerity at a stroke. But without an evidence base on which to outline the scale of the preventable costs, it is almost impossible to convince employers to take action.
- 2.7. The importance of regulation and enforcement cannot be overstated. The world of work in the 21st Century actively creates poor mental health by design, especially for young, migrant and low-paid workers (and of course these groups are not mutually exclusive). The days of full employment are long gone, and even the achievement of a graduate degree no longer guarantees a stable or well-paid career.
- 2.8. Instead, we have seen an explosion in the use of Zero Hours Contracts and bogus self-employment. As the UK transitions into becoming a post-industrial service economy, this 'labour market flexibility' will become increasingly commonplace until it is 'the new normal' in many sectors.
- 2.9. We have already seen a shift in sectors such as retail, logistics, health and care, security, and construction, where precarious work is the norm. For many workers, uncertain pay and wage suppression, combined with an inability to afford housing and increasing barriers to accessing social security benefits, create the instability that harms mental health, especially where there are pre-existing financial pressures such as student debt.
- 2.10. This is far beyond occupational stress, as high levels of precarious and insecure work go hand in hand with increased mental and emotional pressure on workers as they try and balance their desire for a stable personal and home life with the increasingly "flexible" and intrusive demands of work in areas of the so called "new economy". This is causing increasing levels of mental health problems triggered or made worse by work.
- 2.11. All of this potential mental health risk exists before the worker actually performs their daily role. In most sectors where GMB have members, austerity has had a profound impact on mental health, with workers expected to do more work for in real terms less pay.
- 2.12. Added to this is the impact of poor work design. Many GMB members in the logistics sector work long shifts performing repetitive activities with little to no variety, very often whilst forcibly listening to work commands to other colleagues through an

earpiece or headset. Prolonged exposure to such working environments has a serious and sustained detrimental effect on mental health.

2.13. In other sectors, such as security and across much of the Public Sector, verbal and occasional physical abuse is daily reality for workers, to the extent that most never consider to report incidents to their employers as it is simply an accepted part of the job. This creates a permanent fear culture where the likelihood of being attacked is always a live possibility. This again can only damage mental health.

2.14. This 'flexibility' is going to be the future of work for a huge number of workers as the UK economy transitions to a fully services-led, post-industrial economy. Trade unions are the only bodies who can challenge both these damaging employment practices and the misconceptions and stigma surrounding mental health at work.

2.15. The CEC therefore believes there are a number of policies that tackle these issues head on. We demand that:

- all Zero Hours Contracts should be banned;
- that the legal minimum hourly rate of pay should be £10 per hour;
- that employers who breach this law should be banned from ever receiving public contracts or subsidies of any kind;
- that a programme of publicly owned social home building should commence straight after the next election to address the chronic shortage of housing stock;
- and that all government inspection bodies should be tasked with ensuring that employment practices in their relevant sectors do not harm mental health.

2.16. The CEC was encouraged by the creation of a Shadow Minister for Mental Health. We believe that this should be elevated to a full Cabinet position by whichever party forms the next Government. The issue of mental health, especially within the workplace, must be kept high on the political agenda in the next Parliament.

2.17. This must extend beyond Westminster. The Parliaments in Stormont, Holyrood and the Senedd should be examining work-related mental health. The new Metro Mayors must use their powers to ensure that local provision and support is in place, and all Local Authorities should be ensuring that their practices are not causing mental harm.

2.18. In the meantime, GMB will continue its' campaigning activity. We are immensely proud of the efforts of GMB Young Members in raising awareness and challenging politicians to action, and we hope this will long continue. We will keep lobbying the Labour Party to specifically address workplace issues in their policy, across the UK. We will continue to work with like-minded, progressive groups on securing improvements to mental health management in the workplace – and we will continue to train and educate our activists.

3. Training and Awareness

- 3.1. The CEC believes that a key part of managing mental health in the workplace has to be involving, training and educating the workforce. It must always be remembered that training is the legal duty of the employer, and GMB expects the employer to put training in place, at no charge to the worker. This is already the case for all occupational physical health and safety risks, and we do not believe mental health should be treated any differently. Our call for parity of esteem is a total one, and it applies as much to training as it does the provision of support and care.
- 3.2. We also know that mental health and particularly stress at work are key issues for Health and Safety Representatives. These issues are increasingly covered during Stage 1 and 2 Safety Representative training, but we believe there is merit in GMB having our own training, as mental health in the workplace is an equalities issue as much as a health and safety one. Many GMB regions now offer initial one-day mental health awareness training. We believe that this serves as a good starting point for GMB members to organise and negotiate on the issue with employers. We will ensure that the best practice in these courses is shared across Regions, and that any new developments are communicated across the whole of the Union.
- 3.3. The CEC believes that there are three levels of training that should be provided by employers. The first two should be provided as a standard, with the third, Mental Health First Aid training, offered where there is organisational support for the role.
 1. Basic awareness training – offered to all employees, and focusing on the most common mental health conditions. This training is intended to help raise awareness and understanding, and to remove the stigma around mental health at work.
 2. More specific training on identifying, preventing and managing mental health risk and conditions in the workplace. This should be provided jointly for managers and Health & Safety Representatives, and should focus on

practical support for both the worker and the manager in providing reasonable adjustments for those with long-term or ongoing mental health conditions.

3. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training or similar, in-depth training where this is offered across an organisation, and workers are willing to volunteer to be trained. MHFA is never a substitute for awareness and preventative training, and should only be offered once the first two training requirements are met.
- 3.4. There is no place in such training for programmes based on concepts of resilience or wellbeing. The focus must be on recognising that people have mental health; that work contributes to the quality of their mental health; and that risks to mental health must be eliminated where possible, and controlled and managed where they cannot be eliminated.
- 3.5. Any training provider must be competent, qualified and reputable. Whilst GMB opposes the practice of resilience training in the workplace, we know that some otherwise highly reputable charities such as Mind and The Samaritans, and even the CIPD, offer such courses. The whole area of mental health has been conflated with ideas such as wellbeing, mindfulness and resilience in the past decade, and there are a huge number of training providers who deliver low quality training at high prices.
- 3.6. The CEC believes it is better to use an expert organisation, such as Mind, Mental Health First Aid England, The Samaritans or Rethink, even if they also offer resilience and wellbeing courses. The challenge for the union movement is to make the focus on mental health mainstream, rather than the feel good solutions for employers that all too often place the blame on the individual worker for not being strong enough.
- 3.7. The CEC does not believe it is appropriate for GMB to provide Mental Health First Aid training directly. MHFA has its place, but it ultimately does nothing to tackle mental health hazards before they cause harm. As trade unionists, our approach must be focussed on prevention, through risk assessment, the development of safe practices, and the close management and monitoring of mental health issues. We must use the Equalities Act and the Health and Safety at Work Act to force employers to raise their game, rather than rely on reactive programmes.
- 3.8. The CEC is not opposed to Mental Health First Aiders per se, provided that the correct level and quality of training is provided, and that those who volunteer to perform the role are given the support they need.
- 3.9. Mental Health First Aid is not the same as everyday first aid provision, which aims to stabilise the injured person until

competent medical support can be provided. MHFA also aims to signpost those with mental health issues towards professional support, but there are also claims that are made in terms of preventing or reducing mental ill-health. The CEC is extremely sceptical that this can be done by Mental Health First Aiders, and we have concerns that members will be referred to MHFAs in expectation that they can somehow 'solve' the issues.

- 3.10. We also have reservations about the way in which MHFAs are nominated. From the experience of our members, we know that some employers will effectively select workers to take the role on, rather than allow nominations from the workers themselves. GMB will not accept any system which forces workers to become MHFAs, 'Champions', or take any role that they cannot stand down from without sanction.
- 3.11. What we cannot accept under any circumstances is the 'subcontracting' of mental health management to the First Aiders. Mental health has to be managed on a whole organisation basis, in the same way that all health and safety issues are, and it is for management to manage and control mental health hazards and risks.
- 3.12. Where an employer does wish to offer Mental Health First Aid training, our expectation is that the training is provided by a competent and qualified trainer from a reputable provider, and that this is joint training with both workers and managers trained at the same time.
- 3.13. Ultimately it must be for each individual to decide whether or not they feel comfortable to undertake the Mental Health First Aid role. No pressure should be put on anyone to take the role on, and they must be free to step down at any time. The CEC will instruct all GMB officers to act where this is not the case.

4. Guidance and Support:

- 4.1. The CEC recognises that providing training is only part of the package needed to help GMB activists tackle mental health in the workplace. The initial GMB guide on mental health, published in Spring 2016, is the most requested piece of GMB guidance in many years. But we know we need to do much more.
- 4.2. We will develop further guidance, aimed at giving practical advice on how to tackle mental health and work. This will include sample policies, and will explain in detail the Stress Managements Standards approach.
- 4.3. We will also produce a specific guide on suicide risk. From recent research published by the Office of National Statistics, we know the jobs which are most likely to result in suicide. We have to better educate and organise ourselves in these sectors, to ensure that no worker feels that they cannot turn to their union in their dark times. Again, we are not and cannot pretend to be experts on the

subjects, but we can work with experts to ensure that our understanding is correct, our language is appropriate, and our activists have a basic idea of what to expect and what they can do to help.

- 4.4. We will also seek to ensure that our materials and guides are accessible and meet the needs of all GMB members, so we will look at new technologies such as video clips, webinars and podcasts to make sure our messages are received by the widest audience possible.

5. Conclusion:

- 5.1. Mental health has been in the headlines like never before. This is part due to the savage cuts that have been forced on service provision; in part because of the profile given by the appointment of a Shadow Mental Health Minister by the Labour Party; and largely because the toll from poor mental health has simply become too great to ignore.
- 5.2. We have the opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of GMB members, and use our preventative approach to organise and recruit new members into the union. This is a crucial issue for many younger people, BAME workers, and LGBT workers, and we can show our support and solidarity by making a positive difference to their mental health, and everyone in the workplace.
- 5.3. This statement is a blueprint to tackle the issues, but it is just a starting point. There is much more that can and must be done, but it can begin at our 100th Congress, with a positive statement of intent for the future.
- 5.4. So, for the reasons outlined above, the CEC recommends that:
 - Congress supports this CEC Statement, recognising that the mental health of every GMB member is better protected by our campaigning activities and preventative approach in the workplace;
 - Congress endorses the range of actions detailed in the statement, in terms of training, development of guidance, support, and education.
 - Congress authorises future campaigning and lobbying on occupational mental health, especially in terms of the root cause policies outlined in paragraph 2.15.

(Carried)

SIS. J. BATSON (CEC, Commercial Services): I move the CEC Statement on Mental Health at Work. Congress, the CEC knows only too well that the toll that mental health issues take on our members. It is a scandal that one-in-four people is

experiencing a mental health condition at any time. We understand that there are people who manage mental health conditions on an on-going, everyday basis. We also know that there are many who suffer from shorter-term bouts of stress, depression and other conditions. We believe that many of these short-term conditions are caused or made worse by work. We believe that they can often be prevented by early intervention and management of the work issues. We absolutely believe that much more can be done to prevent the next generation of workers from even greater harm.

This Statement is intended to spell out exactly where GMB stands on the key issues and to outline our proposed way forward to make real improvements for our members. Starting with campaigning, we want the next government, whoever it may be, to give parity of esteem to mental health and physical issues. We want the cuts to mental health services and provision reversed from day one, and we want a Cabinet Minister dedicated to mental health with power and authority to make changes and to make them stick.

Congress, we believe in prevention, not just care and support. So we demand new legislation to make it crystal clear to all employers what their legal duties are. As a minimum, we want the Health and Safety Executive's Stress Management Standards made into regulations. But what is really needed is a Mental Health at Work Act, specifying how employers must manage mental health in terms of both equality and health and safety. For the first time, there must be put in place reporting requirements for absence from work caused by stress and mental ill-health and stipulating how occupational health support and return-to-work processes should be provided.

We must also look at our own role in educating and training our members, so many of the motions to Congress call for training, but we must be clear on the training we can give. GMB is not a specialist mental health provider. Our expertise and competence is limited. We can and must raise awareness of issues at work, but we cannot begin to provide mental health training ourselves.

The CEC believes that it is and should remain the responsibility of the employer. It is not for us to step into the breach because the employers are failing in their legal duties. What we must do is empower our members to demand such training from their employers. This means raising awareness of the issues and explaining what GMB members can do. So the CEC proposes the development and delivery of a mental health awareness course, building on the good work and initiatives already implemented and to be rolled out across the whole of the GMB. From here activists and safety reps can negotiate with their employers to put policies and procedures in place and to bargain for training to be provided, whether it is mental health, first aid or other more specific training.

We have already published our first guide on mental health at work, but we will produce more specific guidance and practical ways to address mental health in the workplace. We will also develop guidance on suicide risks. We know there are jobs and sectors where members work which have a very high risk of suicide. We have to start giving members some basic advice on what they should do if a colleague, friend or even a member of the public says they feel like killing themselves. Congress, we have to tackle at source the conditions that may bring workers to that point. So the

Statement reconfirms our demands to empower our activists and safety reps to negotiate better policies and procedures with employers, to outlaw zero-hours contracts and bogus self-employment so no one suffers the uncertainty of insecure work and to legislate for a minimum wage of £10 an hour, so no worker has the indignity of poverty pay. Congress, support the CEC Statement, recognising that the mental health of GMB members is better protected by our campaigning activities and preventative approaches in the workplace.

This Statement is the first step in fighting crucial issues of the 21st century, such as the effect that bad working is having on our mental health. The Statement is a blueprint for GMB to start to tackle this scandal, and I commend it to you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Julia. Can I have that formally seconded? *(The CEC Statement on Mental Health at Work was formally seconded)* I will now call on one speaker from each Region who wishes to put up a speaker. Birmingham? *(No response)* London?

BRO. G. BRUNNING (London): Vice President and Congress, I am speaking in support of the CEC Statement on Mental Health at Work. A statistic that one in four people in the UK have experienced a mental health condition as highlighted within the CEC Statement makes for stark reading, as does the fact that there is no distinction between the workplace and society when it comes to mental health conditions. The Statement offers a clear direction and summarised under section 2 — Campaigning — on which we can campaign. I ask you to take these points back to your members and branches to ensure that mental health and the awareness of mental health conditions remain a key principle of this trade union.

Utilising the national and regional publications available to us, such as our own Mental Health at Work booklet, and the training courses available to representatives will better ensure and enable them to best guide and support our membership when facing issues surrounding mental health and mental health wellbeing.

We, the London Region, support the principles of the CEC Statement but would ask the CEC to go yet further, where and when possible, to ensure an increase in the rights of and support offered to those suffering with and dealing with the consequences of mental health. Please support the Statement. We support. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gordon. I call Midland, Northern, North West & Irish, GMB Scotland, Southern, Wales and South West and Yorkshire & North Derbyshire. *(No response to by any region)* I will now put the CEC Statement to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

The CEC Statement on Mental Health at Work was CARRIED.

UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY & INCLUSION

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We now move on to composite 7, North West to move and Birmingham to second. Yorkshire will take priority, if they want, in debate. This will be followed by motion 99, to be moved by Wales & South West, and then composite 8, which Yorkshire will move and Birmingham to second.

MENTAL HEALTH COMPOSITE 7

C7. Covering Motions:

96. MENTAL HEALTH FOR WORKERS	Birmingham & W. Midlands Region
97. MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN	Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region
98. MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS	North West & Irish Region
100. MENTAL HEALTH	North West & Irish Region

MENTAL HEALTH

This Congress is concerned at the alarming rise in the occurrence of mental health incidents in the UK. At a time when there has been an increase in male suicide, an increase in young people experiencing mental health conditions and a reported increase in dementia cases across the UK, we have a Tory government who are slashing funding to the NHS. They are also cutting funding to local government so that vital community services are seriously underfunded and unable to offer any additional support leaving the most vulnerable in our society with nowhere to run to for help. This is evident in every major city where many are left unable to cope and resort to sleeping rough on the streets.

This Congress urges the GMB to engage with the appropriate government departments to prioritise increased funding for Mental Health Awareness, particularly in the workplace. This Congress recognises that mental health is an issue for many people in the workplace today.

Some employers provide support for employees who declare that they are suffering, however many do not. Some workers have to wait until they are experiencing mental health to find out what level of support they can expect. Some workers, during what can be the most challenging time of their life, find out that their employer sees mental health as an excuse to 'reduce costs'.

A lot of good work has been done and the Mental Health@Work guide is a great starting point but we believe there is more we can do.

There remains an urgent need for education on this issue, not just for employers, but also our GMB workplace reps who are often the first point of contact when a mental health issue becomes apparent.

We call on training from either from GMB or in the workplace to be able to spot the symptoms and be able to support members where appropriate. We must ensure our reps have the ability to recognise the early signs of a mental health issue, not least when it comes to their own wellbeing.

Conference, we therefore call upon the GMB

- To increase the training available to our Officers, Branch Secretaries and Workplace Reps. We must make every effort to remove the stigma attached to this issue and we can only do so through education and training.
- To plan and initiate a campaign to raise awareness of mental health in all GMB workplaces in 2017 alongside its education programme of Mental Health First Aid training for reps. Part of the campaign should be a reasonable list of measures for employers, this to be used as a negotiating tool by workplace reps.

- To raise the profile of mental health in our communities and in our workplaces by working alongside other agencies and charities who specialize in mental health and homelessness. Labour has a mental health campaign, which we believe we could work with, or alongside to the benefit of our members
- To ask GMB sponsored MPs to ensure mental health is high on the political agenda.
- To work with local councils to see what practical help can be given regarding making empty buildings available on short term lease for the benefit of community based groups.

To maintain a high level of campaigning against the current Government and the constant attacks on the NHS in general with a focus on mental health services This Congress seeks to put mental health issues at the forefront of our campaigning on social care.

(Carried)

BRO. R. GUNN (North West & Irish): Congress, I move composite 7 on Mental Health Awareness. Let me begin by thanking the CEC for the Statement on Mental Health at Work. It addresses many of the issues which have been raised in composite 7. Again, I would like to thank the CEC.

Colleagues, at long last there is a recognition that mental health issues can no longer be ignored and treated as the Cinderella of the Health Service. It has long been argued that there must be parity of esteem between physical and mental health, and we must ensure that commitments made during the election campaign are honoured, and the resources in terms of staff and finances are made available.

Everyone at this Congress will have encountered mental health in some form, either personally or through a family friend or a work colleague. This motion concerns how we, as trade unionists, deal with mental health issues in the workplace. It is often the case that our GMB reps or our workplace organisers are the first people to become aware of work colleagues who are showing signs of distress and are in need of some form of support. We must strive to create an open and inclusive workplace culture which shows respect for those with mental health problems. This is the only way we can begin to remove the stigma and discrimination around this issue. The other aspect we must be mindful of is our duty of care to our own reps, who are very much in the frontline of the workplace environment.

Colleagues, this motion is asking that we review and update our training on mental health to all our reps, officers and branch secretaries. We should look at giving mental health awareness the same prominence as we give to health and safety. We all need the necessary tools and the training to deal with these issues. Let us start having the conversation now. Our members deserve nothing less. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Robert. I call Birmingham.

SIS. S. YATES (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I second composite 7. Mental health, as many will know, is an issue that can affect any of us at any time. When a worker has the courage to first admit to themselves that they are suffering from mental health problems, this is a start of coming to terms and dealing with it as this will, hopefully, then bring some positivity and the suffering can see that there is a

way forward. So having taken that important step, the last thing they need is further stress and pressure being put upon them by their employer to try and get rid of the problem, which means the worker being ousted from their job. At such challenging times, workers need support from their employer, not attacks. We need to continue to campaign and raise awareness of mental health issues. Congress, we can do this through our training and education programmes of how to remove the stigma of mental health and equip officers and representatives better to deal with such matters. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. Yorkshire?

SUPPORTING LABOUR PARTY CAMPAIGNS COMPOSITE 8

C8. Covering Motions:

101. SUPPORT FOR THE LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Birmingham & W. Midlands Region

102. SUPPORTING LABOUR PARTY CAMPAIGNS

Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region

SUPPORTING LABOUR PARTY CAMPAIGNS

Whilst workers' rights and trade union action are the most obvious ones, GMB members have been incredibly active in campaigns on other issues such as mental health and homelessness. This is because the trade union values of solidarity and social justice extend beyond the workplace.

Throughout history, trade unionists have fought against injustice in society wherever it arises and this continues to this day, where we have played our part in campaigns concerning the stigma surrounding mental health and the injustice of homelessness in modern day Britain. The campaigns mentioned above have been doing vital work, such as pressuring local councils to do more to reduce homelessness and working with MP's to raise the awareness of mental health issues.

Over the last year, GMB members have been working tirelessly with the Labour Party on a variety of important issues and the GMB Young Members Network have been working closely with the Labour Campaign for Mental Health and have a similar campaign themselves.

Congress agrees that GMB will engage fully and support the Labour Campaign for Mental Health and encourage GMB branches to support the Labour Campaign for Mental Health on a local level.

This Congress acknowledges the important role played by GMB members in these campaigns: Labour campaign for Mental Health and the Labour campaign to End Homelessness and resolves that the GMB requests to be official supporters of the Labour campaign for Mental Health and the Labour campaign to End Homelessness.

(Carried)

SIS. Y. HUSSAIN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I am a first-time delegate. I move composite 8: Supporting Labour Party Campaigns. Vice President and visitors, this Congress acknowledges the important role played by GMB members in the Labour campaign for Mental Health and the Labour campaign to End Homelessness, and calls upon the GMB to become official supporters of these campaigns. It has been proposed (1) that GMB does officially support the Labour Party Campaign for Mental Health and End Homelessness, (2) pressuring local councils and MPs to raise awareness, and (3) for GMB members to actively continue their support at the grass-roots level with the Labour Party and with the Mental Health and End Homelessness Campaign.

In the last year GMB members have worked tirelessly with the Labour Party on a variety of important issues. In regard to mental health, Congress acknowledges that one in five of the general population suffers from mental health as reported by the NHS.

Furthermore, the Homelessness Health Research Department found that 80% of homeless people reported mental health issues and 45% were actually diagnosed with a mental health condition. These are howling statistics from 2010. In fact, the suicide rate amongst the 25 to 39 year-old males has increased, too. This age group is ever increasing, given austerity, which is unacceptable. Studies have found that financial indicators are the most strong predictor in mental health, homelessness and family breakdown, a vicious cycle that contributes to increased rates of suicide. A current example of austerity, nurses are being driven to use food banks, and the list goes on under this draconian Government.

The campaigns mentioned above have been doing vital work. Throughout history trade unionists have fought against injustice in society wherever it arises. This continues to this day. We have played our part in campaigns concerning the stigma surrounding mental health and the injustice of homelessness in modern-day Britain. Therefore, pressuring local councils to do more to reduce homelessness and working with MPs to raise awareness of mental health issues are essential.

Whilst the Congress considers its support, it is vital for members to continue their active participation, and whilst workers undertaking some trade union action are the most obvious ones, GMB members will be incredibly active in campaigns on other issues, like mental health and homelessness. Firstly, the Labour Party would like the support of the GMB on the campaigns on Mental Health and End Homelessness; (2) to pressure local councils and MPs to raise awareness of mental health and homelessness, and thirdly to organise grass-root participation by GMB members on these issues. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Can I have the seconder to composite 8, please?

SIS. J. SEAR (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am a first-time delegate and a first-time speaker. *(Applause)* Congress, mental health is something we all take for granted as we all assume or hope that we will never suffer from mental health problems. It is also not high on people's agendas because it is not always a visible health issue and it is also a problem that is often kept hidden by those suffering.

Congress, mental health matters. It is real. It is not the “new bad back” as some sneeringly describe it. If you, a relative or friend is suffering from mental health, it has an affect on you all. Our Young Members’ Network is involved in the campaigns to support mental health. Mental health issues do not have a specific criteria. It can hit any of us at any time. Let’s put mental health and the Labour campaign to support mental health high on our agenda and support composite 8. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Julia. Can we have the mover of motion 99, please?

TIME TO CHANGE MOTION 99

99. TIME TO CHANGE

This Congress calls for the end of stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. One in 4 of us will suffer from a mental health problem at some time or another, and of that number a staggering 9 out of 10 people will suffer some form of discrimination or some kind of stigma.

The ‘Time to Change Wales’ is the first national campaign to end the stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems. The campaign is delivered as a partnership by three leading Mental Health Charities (Gofal, Hafal and Mind Cymru) and is funded by the Big Lottery, Comic Relief and the Welsh Government.

In Wales we start this by getting our employers and workplaces to sign up the Time to Change Wales Pledge. The pledge is a public declaration that an organisation wants to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination. It isn’t a quality mark, accreditation or endorsement; it is a commitment to deliver a realistic action plan that will lead to a reduction in discrimination within your workplace and the wider community.

In other parts of the UK the GMB should campaign to get the Time to Change up and running (the website has a message saying “We’ll be back soon!”).

SOUTH WALES POLICE BRANCH
Wales & South West Region

(Carried)

SIS. G. BRINKWORTH (Wales & South West): Congress, I move motion 99: Time to Change. Congress, we all have mental health just like we all have physical health, so I am not sure that I believe the commonly quoted statistic that one in four of us will encounter a mental health problem at some point during our lives.

Given what the term “mental health problem” encompasses, I believe that that figure is just the tip of the iceberg. The statistic I do believe, however, is that whilst having to deal with some kind of mental health problem, a staggering nine out of 10 people have reported some kind of discrimination. The stigma associated with having a mental health problem leaves people feeling isolated and often excluded from daily activities. It is harder to get or keep a job and, consequently, people are reluctant to seek help, which makes recovery slower and more difficult. Why is it that if you have a physical ailment it is just accepted, yet people with mental health conditions regularly go to great lengths to cover up that condition?

The 'Time to Change Wales' programme is supported by three leading Welsh mental health charities, including Mind Cymru, is about getting people talking about mental health, changing our attitudes about disclosure and stopping the discrimination that people face on a daily basis. This programme started in 2012 and since then there has been a 4.7% increase in positive attitudes towards mental health in Wales. The aim of the programme is to get employers to sign a pledge which is making a public declaration that we want to step up and challenge and tackle the stigma and discrimination around mental health. It is making a commitment to take realistic action that will lead to a reduction in discrimination within their organisation and, possibly, the wider communities. By changing attitudes individuals may be better able to support friends and neighbours who are experiencing problems.

Since writing this motion, the "Time to Change" programme is back up and running across the UK, so wherever you live you can take the pledge and we should be encouraging our employers to sign up to end the stigma and discrimination that people face on a daily basis. Please support this motion. It is "Time to Change". Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. A. LAW (London): Vice President and Congress, I am one of those statistics. I am one of those one-in-fours. My company, Anglian Water, has signed up to "Time to Change" four years ago. Several other big companies are involved: Everton Football Club, the Bank of England, Lloyds Bank and the Underground. So it is not a small business issue. It is a huge business issue. One of the things about "Time to Change" is that we share ideas and we talk about the stigma of mental health as if you are now getting a cold. So I promote that we sign up to "Time to Change" as a union. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Alan. I now call on Judith Batson from London Region to speak on behalf of the CEC.

SIS. J. BATSON (CEC, Commercial Services): Vice President and Congress, I am responding to composite 7 and motion 99 on behalf of the CEC, which we are supporting with qualifications.

Firstly, on composite 7, the CEC supports the thrust of the motion. The details of our response are in our CEC Statement, which addresses the issues raised in the motion. Our qualification is that, although we acknowledge increased instances of mental health issues in social care, we are not experts in recognising the range of symptoms. We would want to work with the Labour Campaign and other specialised mental health organisations to signpost for our members. Our Statement calls on employers to provide this specialised training and awareness for our members.

On motion 99, the CEC is supporting the motion with a qualification, which I will now give. The CEC is aware that "Time for Change" is supported by many large employers. The CEC also recognises that there needs to be a greater voice from one of the leaders of "Time to Change". We should support them to actively oppose the Government's Work Capability Assessment programme and for providing resilience training for employers. We understand these concerns, but the CEC believes that

there is much to be gained from working with “Time to Change”, particularly if it allows the GMB to influence the future direction of the campaign.

The qualification is that “Time to Change” is already a national campaign. It is not restricted solely to Wales, so any affiliation or pledge would be made at national level across the whole of the GMB, with regions able to participate in their areas as they see fit. Therefore, please support motion 99 and composite 7 with the qualifications I have given. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Judith. Does North West, Birmingham and Yorkshire accept the qualification on composite 7? (*Calls of “Agreed”*) Does Wales & South West accept the qualification on motion 99? (*Agreed*) I will now put composite 7, motion 99 and composite 8 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Any against? That is carried.

Composite 7 was CARRIED.

Motion 99 was CARRIED.

Composite 8 was CARRIED.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, you will be pleased to know that that brings us to an end of today’s business. Before you go, I have a couple of announcements to make. First of all, when we started this afternoon we were an hour-plus behind. Without your help and discipline, we would never, ever have pulled that back. Can I thank you all very much, indeed. You are a credit to the union. (*Applause*)

There will be a bucket collection, as reported by the SOC, as you leave the hall, organised in aid of Rotherham Great Get Together, organised by Yorkshire Region. Please give generously. Could the regional organisers please inform the SOC of the total amount raised so this can be reported to Congress.

Also, the North West & Irish Women’s Network are selling Radical Rose badges on stall 10. They are £2 each and will help raise funds to assist their network to develop.

We look forward to seeing you tonight at the President’s Night function in the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Can I say a big thank you to Pattinson & Brewer, the solicitors who are sponsoring this event. There will now be a slide show on screen. I will see you all tonight and tomorrow. Thank you very much.

Congress adjourned at 17.54 hours.