

# STUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2025



**“Women build bridges, not borders”**

**Chairperson:**  
Pearl Abernethy  
Community

**Secretariat:**  
Linda Somerville, STUC Deputy General Secretary  
Rachel Thomson, STUC Equality Officer  
Shona Scott, STUC Committee & Admin Officer

**stuc**

**29 & 30 October 2025**  
**Glasgow**

# WE ARE ALL EQUAL

When women stand united, workplaces change for the better.

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From tackling inequality to securing fair pay and flexible working, Community is here to back you every step of the way.

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# Chair's Welcome

As Chair of the STUC Women's Committee, it is my absolute honour to welcome you all to this year's STUC Women's Conference.

Whether you're here for the first time or have been part of this movement for many years, thank you for showing up, for taking space, and for being part of something bigger than any one of us—our collective voice as women in the trade union movement.

This conference is a vital opportunity for us to come together - across unions, sectors, and experiences - to listen, to speak out, to organise, and to drive forward the change we want to see in our workplaces and our communities.

But more than that, this is your space. A space where we centre women's voices. A space where we respect and support each other. A space where you are safe to speak your truth, to challenge injustice, and to be heard.

Let me say clearly: this is a safe and inclusive space. Harassment, discrimination, or disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated. We are here to uplift one another, to listen with care, and to stand in solidarity - because we know that real strength lies in unity.

Across Scotland, women are leading - on the shop floor, in negotiating rooms, and on picket lines. We face challenges, yes - but we also bring powerful solutions, courage, and a determination that cannot be ignored.

Over the course of this conference, you'll hear from inspiring speakers, debate key motions, and help shape the direction of our collective work. And through it all, I encourage you to speak up, listen in, and support each other with the respect and dignity every woman deserves.

On behalf of the STUC Women's Committee, thank you for being here and for the work you do every day to fight for fairness, dignity, and equality. We are so proud to stand alongside you.



Welcome to the STUC Women's Conference - let's make it powerful, purposeful, and safe for all.

Thank you,  
*Pearl Abernethy, Community*

# Conference Programme

## SESSIONS:

Wednesday 29 October	9:30 am – 12:20 pm 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Thursday 30 October	9:30 am – 12:45 pm 1:45 pm – 4:30 pm

## TELLERS:

Sara Medel Jimenez, UNISON  
Louise Bishop, EIS  
Linda Gibson, NASUWT

## AGENDA:

- i. Welcome
- ii. Address by Chair
- iii. Standing Orders Report
- iv. Consideration of Report and Motions
- v. Sororal / Fraternal Delegates
- vi. Election of Committee
- vii. Vote of Thanks and Close of Conference

## Sending solidarity to all delegates at STUC Women's Conference 2025

The Employment Rights Bill re-introduces explicit protection from third-party harassment, which is crucial to creating safer workplaces for women.

Together with the preventative duty, this will shift the focus away from women workers and back onto employers to take positive steps to end sexual harassment at work.



For more information about Usdaw action to tackle sexual harassment in the workplace, visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/callitout](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/callitout)

Joanne Thomas General Secretary | Jane Jones President

Usdaw Head Office, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay,  
Salford Quays, Manchester M50 3XZ

[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)



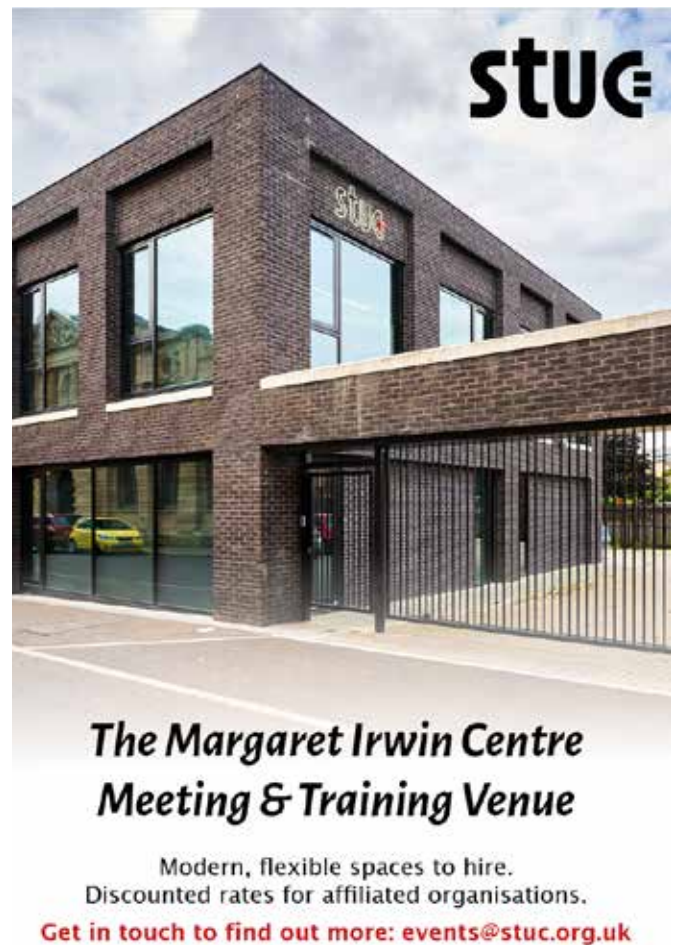
UsdawUnion     





With warm wishes to delegates at  
the STUC Women's Conference  
from UCU Scotland

[www.ucu.org.uk/join](http://www.ucu.org.uk/join)





**speaking up  
for women  
and girls**



**Standing up  
for quality  
education**

**Pushing forward  
on gender  
equality**



# Putting equality at the heart of the union



[www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Gender](http://www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Gender)

**eis**  
Scotland's largest  
education trade union

  
**STAND UP**  
**FOR QUALITY EDUCATION**

# Conference Guide

## Who attends the Women's Conference?

Each trade union affiliated to the STUC is entitled to appoint delegates on the following basis:

### *Affiliated Trade Unions:*

1 Delegate for every 500 members, or part thereof, up to 5,000 members plus

1 Delegate for each additional 5,000 members.

### *Affiliated Trades Union Councils:*

A maximum of 3 delegates per Council.

Various organisations send visitors / observers to the Conference however, they are not allowed to vote. Also in attendance are keynote speakers, STUC staff, and exhibitors.

## How long does the Conference last?

The Conference is normally held in either late October or early November and lasts two days. It normally opens at 9.30am on the first day, closing at approximately 5.00pm.

It assembles at 9.30am on the second day until approximately 4.30pm. Lunch usually lasts one hour.

## Who is responsible for Conference arrangements?

The Women's Committee is responsible for Conference arrangements, in conjunction with STUC staff.

## Who chairs the Conference?

The Chair of the Committee will also be the Conference Chair. This year's Chair is Pearl Abernethy of Community.

The Chairing of the Committee rotates amongst

members of the Women's Committee.

## What role does the Women's Committee play at Conference?

All Committee members usually attend the Conference and sit on the platform at some point during Conference, together with the Chair, Vice Chair(s), and a member of STUC staff.

## How is the Women's Committee made up?

The Women's Committee comprises up to a maximum of 16 members in the trade union section and up to a maximum of 2 members in the trades union council section. Nominees must be delegates to Conference, and are nominated on the following basis:

Unions with up to 10,000 women members are entitled to nominate one woman to the Women's Committee. Trade unions are permitted to nominate additional women to the committee for each additional 10,000 women members, up to a maximum of three nominees. Nominees must be delegates to Conference.

Trades union councils can nominate one woman for the trades union council seats on the STUC Women's Committee. Nominees must be delegates to the Conference.

Members are elected at the Women's Conference each year. If there are more than 16 members nominated in the trade union section or more than 2 members nominated in the trades union council section, then an election at Conference will be necessary.

Each delegation will receive a ballot paper and can vote up to a maximum of 16 candidates from the trade union section and 2 from the trades union council section. Delegations are



requested to deposit completed ballot papers in the ballot box by 10.00am on the second day of Conference, when votes are counted by 2 scrutineers who are appointed prior to Conference. The results are then announced after lunch. Successful candidates hold office from close of Conference for one year.

There are no ballots this year for either the trade union seats or the trades union council seats on the STUC Women's Committee.

### **Standing Orders Committee**

Matters relating to the running and business of Conference will be dealt with by the Standing Orders Committee.

The Committee will comprise up to a maximum of 3 members nominated by affiliated organisations in advance of Conference and elected at Conference. They must also be delegates to Conference.

No affiliate may nominate more than one member. If there are more than 3 members nominated, then there will be a ballot at Conference. They cannot be both members of the STUC Women's Committee and the Standing Orders Committee. One of their main duties is to oversee the competency of all motions and amendments.

This year there is no ballot for the Standing Orders Committee.

### **What does the Conference discuss?**

Each union and trades union council can submit up to 2 motions, on topics which must relate specifically to the working lives of women in Scotland and/or abroad. Each motion can be no more than 300 words.

Motions are published in a preliminary agenda and unions/trades union councils are then invited to submit up to 2 amendments which can be no more than 50 words for each amendment.

The final agenda is then distributed to delegates.

*Support:* in order to allow more time for delegates, the Committee usually (but not always) waives the right to speak in a debate on

a motion or amendment they support.

*Support with reservations:* if necessary, a Committee member will explain to Conference any reservations the Committee may have on a motion or amendment they otherwise support.

*Remit:* the Committee may seek remission of a motion before Conference. If the union will not agree to remit the motion, a Committee member will speak in opposition to it.

*Oppose:* a Committee member will speak on any motion or amendment opposed by the Committee.

A Committee member may also speak on points of explanation on a motion or amendment.

A member of the Committee will also introduce any special statement on behalf of the Committee.

### **What are Emergency Motions?**

An emergency motion must deal with issues that have arisen since the closing date for ordinary motions.

Emergency motions can be no longer than 300 words and must be signed by the delegation leader of the organisation submitting the emergency motion. Emergency motions must be submitted to the Standing Orders Committee no later than 1.00pm on the first day of Conference. Emergency motions must be a genuine emergency, otherwise they will not be approved for inclusion on the agenda by Standing Orders Committee. If deemed competent by the Standing Orders Committee, they will be circulated to delegates prior to being discussed.

### **Report of the STUC Women's Committee**

As well as discussing motions, the Conference receives the report of the Women's Committee to Conference, which reports on work of the Committee over the past year. Delegates are entitled to question the Committee on issues contained in the report. Any questions should be put in writing.

### **What happens to motions after Conference?**

Motions which are carried (now termed

'resolutions') or remitted will form the Committee's workplan for the following year. Resolutions are also referred to the STUC General Council itself and/or relevant STUC departments as part of the overall work of the STUC.

### How are debates conducted?

The mover of a motion may speak for up to 5 minutes and the seconder and any subsequent speakers are allowed up to 3 minutes.

It is important that these times are adhered to. If business over runs the allocated time, it may be necessary during the course of the Conference for the Standing Orders Committee to reduce speaking times.

A delegate is not normally allowed to speak more than once in any debate, unless permission is given by the Chair, to make a point of order or explanation.

Whether or not a motion has been opposed, the mover may be allowed 3 minutes to reply to the discussion on the motion, but no new issues may be introduced.

Moving an amendment: if amendments to motions are agreed prior to Conference, then these will become amended motions and will be voted upon as such.

However, if an amendment is not agreed, then the proposer of an amendment will be called to speak immediately after the seconder of the motion.

Amendments also have to be seconded or they fall. Further amendments (if any) are called in their order on the agenda. Delegates moving amendments have no right of reply.

Votes are taken initially on the amendment(s), thereafter a vote is taken on the amended motion if the amendment has been passed.

However, if the amendment has been defeated, then the original motion will be voted upon.

*Composited motions:* some motions on similar issues for discussion can be grouped together to form a composite motion. All affiliates included in the composite motion are asked for their opinion on whether to accept or not. If

all accept, then this composite motion will be debated and voted upon as a composite motion.

*Group debate:* some motions on similar broader topics are not composited, but taken as part of a group debate. Each motion is moved, seconded and debated individually one after another, with the vote on each motion taken at the end of the group debate session.

*Voting:* delegates must remain in their seats during a vote. Voting is by show of hands and all delegates are entitled to one vote. It is the Chair's responsibility to call the result of the vote. However, four tellers are appointed prior to Conference to count the hands raised in the event of a close vote.

*Point of order:* delegates can raise points of order on the conduct or procedure of the debates.

*Chair's ruling:* the chair's ruling is final.

*Standing Orders:* standing orders for the Conference can only be suspended if agreed by at least two-thirds of delegates to the Conference who are present and voting.



# Conference Terminology

## Amendment

A proposal to amend a motion by adding, deleting, or replacing parts of the original motion.

## Congress

STUC Congress is our annual conference which formulates policy and shapes the main priority campaigns for the organisation to follow.

## Delegate

An elected member attending conference to represent their union.

## Emergency Motion

Deals with an issue or subject that has happened since the closing date for motions. It is debated and voted on in the same way as other motions at conference.

## Formally Seconded

Any delegate can call out "Formally" to allow a motion to be debated if there is no speaker to "Second" the motion.

## Motion

A formal written proposal to be debated at conference. Delegates will vote in favour of, against or abstain at the end of the debate. A motion needs to be "Moved" then "Seconded" before it can be debated.

## Mover

The delegate who speaks first to start the debate on the motion

## Order of Business

A note of the timings of the conference and what will happen at each section i.e. Motions for debate, workshops, etc.

## Policy

Our agreed position or demands on an issue. Policy is decided by motions passed by delegates at our equality conferences.

## Second

The delegate who speaks second in the debate and in support of the motion.

## Visitor

A member attending a conference to observe but has no voting rights on motions or proposals at the conference.

# Motions to Women's Conference 2025

## SECTION ONE: Discrimination at Work, Trade Union Organisation and Employment Rights

### 1. Reforming, Improving & Extending Parental Leave & Pay Rights

"That this Conference welcomes the UK Labour Government's commitment to reviewing the current framework of statutory parental leave and pay rights.

"Unions have a strong track record of negotiating improvements to parental leave and pay rights for working parents and carers however, the scale and scope of those improvements is necessarily limited by the current statutory framework of parental leave.

"The current model of family leave entitlement does not work for millions of families. It does not support families to share caring responsibilities equally. This entrenches the discrimination that women face in the workplace.

"Conference recognises that improving parental leave and pay rights to achieve more equal parenting is a process that will take many years and require significant investment. The current review represents the start of this process.

"Conference asserts that the current system of parental rights should be replaced by a simpler, more equal system that:

- provides stronger rights for each parent;
- supports both parents to make meaningful decisions about how they combine paid work with care;
- reduces pregnancy and maternity discrimination; and
- promotes gender equality and closes the gender pay gap.

"Conference believes that at the very least pay and leave rights must be:

- accessible to all regardless of employment status and available from day one; and
- individual, stand alone, paid entitlements.

"Furthermore, any reform must not diminish but extend and improve existing rights and should be part of a package of wider reform including improvements to childcare and flexible working.

"Conference calls upon the STUC Women's Committee to continue to give this issue a high priority in their ongoing conversations with the UK Labour Government and to ensure women's voices and experiences are centred in all ongoing discussions."

**Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers**

**Amendment:**

Paragraph 5, add new bullet point 1:

supports all family types, including kinship carers



Paragraph 5, after bullet point 4, Add additional bullet point:

Supports a joined-up approach to other types of leave that working parents may rely upon;

Paragraph 6, after 'Conference believes that' delete:

'at the very least pay and leave' and replace with 'parental'

Paragraph 6, bullet point1, after 'accessible to all' add 'workers'

Paragraph 6, bullet point 1, after status, make separate bullet point 'available from day one'

Paragraph 6, add additional bullet points:

'address difficulties faced by self-employed parents; and

extend access to well-paid leave, including for single parent families, kinship carers and multiple births.'

**Mover: NASUWT**



## 2. Reasonable Adjustments for Breastfeeding

"That this Conference notes that there is no statutory right to reasonable adjustments for breastfeeding. This has led to employers often refusing to put in place the conditions recommended by the NHS and often forcing parents to give up breastfeeding earlier than planned, or delaying their return to work.

"The recommended facilities include:

- a break allowance for mothers to express milk;
- provision of a clean, warm, private room (not the toilet) for expressing;
- a secure, clean fridge to store expressed milk; and
- flexible working hours for breastfeeding mothers.

"Conference calls on STUC Women's Committee to campaign for these conditions to be adopted by all workplaces, in consultation with affiliates through collective bargaining agreements and

to lobby Politicians to have the right to these reasonable adjustments enshrined in law."

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers**



## 3. Maternity Pay & the Need for Enhanced Parental Leave

"That this Conference notes that the current statutory maternity pay is just £187.18 a week, or 90% of average earnings. This is only a 1.71% increase from last year, that makes little difference to families in Scotland that are struggling to keep afloat.

"Conference recognises that the current system in Scotland fails to support the financial stability of families, forcing many women to jeopardise their health and return to work before they are ready. Maternity pay is amongst the worse within OECD countries, and statutory paternity leave is the worst in Europe. Poor parental leave policies continue to reinforce gender stereotypes, with uptake of shared parental leave in the whole of Scotland remaining lower than in London.

"Conference believes that the UK's parental leave policy is in need of reform. Conference welcomes the UK Government's commitment to enhancing statutory parental leave and calls on the STUC Women's Committee to lobby the UK Government to:

- expand eligibility and increase statutory maternity pay to a rate more in-line with the top half of OECD countries;
- increase statutory paternity leave and pay, to be more in-line with the top half of EU countries; and
- consider 'default policy option' models which provide both partners with an equal share of leave, some of which is transferable, to promote more gender equal caring."

**Mover: Community**

#### 4. Pregnancy & Parenting in the Music Industry

"That this Conference notes that discriminatory attitudes are forcing musicians to hide their pregnancy for as long as possible to avoid losing work.

"When women do give birth, they face another set of challenges because current legislation and benefits do not protect or provide for freelancers who are pregnant or parents.

"The Musicians' Census 2023 revealed that 29% of women musicians experienced career barriers because of family/caring commitments and 15% reported finding childcare as a barrier.

"The low rate of Maternity Allowance means many women return to work before they'd like to because they can't afford enough maternity leave and fear it will damage their careers.

"Once back at work extortionate and inflexible childcare mean women have no choice but to turn down work, further damaging their careers.

"Being a mother or parent should not be a barrier to a career as a musician.

"Conference asks the STUC Women's Committee to lobby relevant Governments to:

- ensure protections for pregnant women include the self-employed;
- bring Maternity Allowance in line with Statutory Maternity Pay;
- invest in low-cost, flexible childcare;
- extend Shared Parental Pay to self-employed workers; and
- improved legislation for parents who are self-employed."

**Mover: Musicians' Union**



#### 5. Flexible Working Rights

"That this Conference welcomes the recent improvements to the right to request flexible working, including removing the length of service requirement. However, the right still operates on the assumption that workers can freely negotiate flexible working when few have little power to do so.

"The majority of Usdaw's members are women working in retail, a sector which is widely assumed to provide opportunities for flexible working. However, the experiences of Usdaw members suggest that this is often not the case.

"To ask for flexible working continues to be risky for low paid women workers because to do so means they are then seen or perceived as being unreliable or uncommitted, making them feel even less secure at work.

"TUC research has shown that one in three requests for flexible working are turned down and workers in low paid jobs have the least access to flexible working.

"The UK Labour Government's commitment to making flexible working the default is welcome as is the right to guaranteed hours and notice of shift change as set out in the Employment Rights Bill, but more needs to be done to level the playing field between worker and manager and to rid the labour market of one-sided flexibility.

"Conference calls upon the STUC Women's Committee to continue making the case for further changes to strengthen flexible working rights including:

- abolish the restriction on the number of applications an employee can make;
- extend the right to all workers;
- introduce the advertising duty, i.e. outline the flexible working options available when advertising jobs;
- reintroduce the right to a written decision, a right of appeal and the right to be accompanied to meetings;
- reintroduce the power of Employment Tribunals to make wider recommendations; and
- increase the level of penalties for non-compliance."

**Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers**

**Amendment:**

After para 2, insert new para:

"99.7% of midwives are women with caring duties. We support the NHS 'Once for Scotland' policy, but under-resourced services rarely meet requests. Safe care demands proper funding. We urge Conference to extend rights and push for a workforce capable of accommodating staff needs and delivering equitable, sustainable maternity services."

**Mover: Royal College of Midwives**



## 6. 4-Day Week

"That this Conference notes that a 4-Day Week with no loss of pay is a long-standing element of the PCS pay claim. PCS successfully campaigned and lobbied the Scottish Government to explore it, and public sector pilots were introduced.

"Private-sector companies involved in a 2022 pilot hailed it as 'extremely successful', and the majority permanently adopted a 4-Day Week going forward.

"South Cambridgeshire District Council became the first UK council to permanently adopt a 4-day week. Rigorous independent analysis showed most services got better or were maintained, with significant improvements to recruitment and retention.

"South of Scotland Enterprise and the Accountant in Bankruptcy are involved in extended pilots of a 4-Day, 32-hour week. PCS members reported that these pilots have been a success, with improvements to their wellbeing, work-life balance, and productivity. Leaders of both have spoken about how positive and successful the pilots have been. Both organisations await the Scottish Government's decision on whether they can implement the change on a permanent basis.

"The reality is that for many of our members it isn't a 'nice to have', it's essential. It's having the time for caring responsibilities and keeping on top of non-negotiables. For working women who shoulder the majority of caring responsibilities, the ability to reduce their working week without loss of pay has created a more energised and motivated workforce,

maintained and improved productivity and helped staff with caring responsibilities.

"Conference calls upon the STUC Women's Committee to:

- encourage trade unions to use the Fair Work principles to engage with employers on implementing a 4-day week;
- organise women members around a campaign to implement a 4-day week in a way that maximises flexibility and delivers a work life balance; and
- urge trade unions to ask their branches to invite a speaker from the 4-Day Week Foundation to address their members."

**Mover: Public & Commercial Services Union**



## 7. Arts Education & AI

"That this Conference notes that the Expressive Arts are one of the key elements of Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence, but arts are often the first area to suffer funding cuts, the option of using AI to make creative short cuts in order to save time and money is concerning.

"The Arts can hold up a mirror to our society and allow us to ask questions on who we are and where we are going however with AI technology blurring lines between facts and fake news, plus over-whelming volumes of information on the internet, the teaching of critical thinking within an all-round arts education is essential.

"AI-generated deepfake images, low-tech forms of disinformation impede change and progress crucially in equality and respect for women and girls. The inbuilt bias of AI (it can only learn from the input it receives) leads to a continuation of a misogynistic culture and normalisation of domestic violence, revenge porn and sexual harassment.

"AI is not going anywhere, and we must understand its shortcomings and guard against it reinforcing harmful attitudes.

"Conference asks the STUC Women's Committee to lobby the Scottish Government

to invest in AI literacy, especially among young creatives and within the Scottish Curriculum and seek to give everyone skills to use these tools responsibly and ethically. This includes understanding complex issues of copyright, ownership, and the ethical training of AI systems, particularly when using artists' works in AI datasets without consent. Encouraging collaboration between creative communities, academics, and technologists is vital to navigating the evolving landscape and ensure that it is fair and equal for us all."

**Mover: Equity**



## 8. Ethics & Responsible Use of AI in the Industry

"That this Conference notes that the rise of AI brings with it several ethical concerns and considerations that may disproportionately affect women.

"According to the Harvard Business Review, there is evidence of AI adopting gender bias, reinforcing gender stereotypes, and other outdated biases. The creative industries are lobbying against the misuse of AI, noting the risks to artists' copyright and intellectual property rights.

"Additional AI risks include plagiarism, inaccuracy of data, and authorship issues. The STANDING Together project notes gaps in the data that informs AI contributes to biases, e.g. where data feeding AI reinforces gender stereotypes or representation issues.

"It is also important to acknowledge that AI-based tools can be empowering and make creative endeavours more accessible.

"Conference calls on the STUC Women's Committee to:

- lobby relevant governments to introduce legislation that ensures an ethical minimum standard for the use and application of AI, including a rigorous licensing regime requiring a full audit trail of any copyrighted material, and appropriate remuneration for

original copyright holders;

- support creative sector unions' efforts to protect artists' intellectual property and rights amidst the rise of AI;
- endorse the Responsible Handover framework from Sense about Science; and
- endorse the Council of Music Makers' Five fundamentals for music and AI."

**Mover: Musicians' Union**



## 9. Critical Literacy Skills & Political Literacy as Resilience Against Far Right Influence

"That this Conference understands that though misogyny and prejudice are not new phenomena, the rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation enabled by social media is a contributing risk factor to increasing far-right influence.

"Conference further notes the challenges in navigating online spaces, and in having difficult conversations with individuals who are influenced by false information, including far-right misinformation which may reinforce restrictive gender norms that contribute to misogynistic attitudes and behaviours.

"Conference understands the importance of political literacy and critical literacy skills in building resilience against far-right influence.

"Conference commends TIE's Digital Discourse Initiative and calls on the STUC Women's Committee to:

- consider how it can engage with the TIE resource; and
- support the work of the STUC in undertaking the resolution passed at STUC Congress 2025 on Countering the Far Right such that it includes a strong focus on countering misogyny."

**Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland**



## SECTION TWO: Public Services/ Funding

### 10. Welfare Reform Bill

“That this Conference remains aghast at the UK Governments shocking Welfare Reform Bill.

“Despite the Bill being watered down it still aims to reduce the benefits and entitlements of disabled workers causing fear and anxiety and pushing many into poverty.

“Unsurprisingly cuts to benefits and funding will be even more detrimental to women.

“Disabled women are more likely to be in low paid work meaning any cuts to welfare benefits will reduce their overall earnings and will result in them having to consider carefully what to spend money on.

“Research shows:

- women are twice as dependent on social security, 20% of income coming from the benefits; and
- women have fewer financial assets and less access to occupational pensions there are considerably more women than men in the lowest income decile.

“There is concern for survivors of domestic abuse - the charity Refuge states that almost a third of women’s experiencing domestic abuse are disabled. They fear reduced benefits will limit the ability for women to leave abusive relationships.

“Although we welcome investment in supporting disabled people into employment the Government has remained tight lipped on details of this. Disabled women are being penalised by current systems that fail to address the inequalities and barriers faced when looking for work and being able to remain

in employed roles.

“The ‘Right to Try’ option is a perfect example of this as the scheme fails to recognise the additional stress and commitments women make when arranging childcare and additional provisions for children and cared for adults.

“Conference therefore asks the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- raise awareness on the additional struggles women workers face;
- create resources that can be utilised by reps to support women to deal with financial insecurity; and
- continue to oppose the Welfare Reform Bill actively campaigning against it and any future threats to women and disabled workers.”

**Mover: Unite**



### 11. Women, Casualisation & the Crisis in Higher Education

“That this Conference notes the ongoing crisis in Scottish higher education with multiple higher education institutions making financial savings and cutting jobs including with the threat of compulsory redundancies.

“Conference notes that, while these cuts have multiple causes including bad decisions and poor leadership by senior management and the overreliance on international student fee income, the underpinning reason for the crisis in Scottish higher education is the year-on-year underfunding of the sector by the Scottish Government, and in particular the under-funding of teaching.

“Conference notes that, as well as jobs being lost through voluntary severance and compulsory redundancies, many staff on casualised, precarious contracts face the loss of employment as jobs and contracts are not renewed. Conference notes further that these job losses are often hidden or unreported where temporary contracts are simply not renewed.

“Conference believes that staff employed on casualised and precarious contracts are critical to the functioning of the higher education sector and that they should not be used as ‘buffers’ to protect the sector and action against job losses should seek to protect all staff.

“Conference notes that women - including Black and disabled women - are over-represented among staff on casualised, precarious contracts in Scottish universities and consequently face a greater threat from this wave of ‘silent’ redundancies in the sector.

“Conference believes that the loss of these jobs represents an unseen wave of discrimination towards women’s employment and consequently calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- call on the Scottish Government to fully fund Scottish higher education;
- call on Scottish universities to include these ‘hidden’ redundancies when reporting job losses; and
- support moves to eradicate casualisation in higher education by moving staff on to more secure forms of employment.”

**Mover: University & College Union**



## 12. Action Against Assaults

“That this Conference notes with concern the increasing prevalence of violent and abusive behaviour affecting women passengers and staff on public transport and the severity of these behaviours.

“Conference understands in light of these issues, the RMT has launched an Action Against Assaults campaign. A recent survey of RMT women public transport workers found that:

- 70% had experienced workplace violence in the past year, and of those, over 85% had experienced violence multiple times;
- the most common form of violence was verbal abuse, followed by threats of violence. Over 20% had been sexually

harassed in the past year at work;

- nearly 60% were lone working when they experienced violence; and
- three-quarters thought that workplace violence had increased in the past year.

“Conference believes that proper staffing levels at stations and on trains is vital for ensuring women’s safety and understands that this was a finding of the Scottish Government’s own research.

“Conference is therefore concerned at policies presided over by Scottish Government and its publicly owned rail operator ScotRail such as ticket office cuts, attempts to extend Driver Only Operation (DOO) and lone working which undermine women’s safety. Instead, there should be a significant expansion of staffing at stations and on trains and an end to lone working.

“Conference also believes that measures to end lone working and support proper staffing levels should be accompanied by stronger legal protections for public transport workers.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- lobby the Scottish Government and all political parties to strengthen legal protections for public transport workers who are abused or assaulted at work; and
- support affiliates to campaign for proper staffing levels and an end to lone working and to support passenger and staff safety.”

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers**



## 13. Support for the Fire Brigades Union’s ‘Cuts Leave Scars’ Campaign

“That this Conference expresses its full support for the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) and its ‘Cuts Leave Scars’ campaign, which highlights the devastating impact of chronic underfunding of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) by the Scottish Government.

“Years of budget cuts have left the Service overstretched, with fire stations closing, frontline roles slashed, and resources dwindling. This has direct and dangerous consequences for public safety, firefighters, and communities, particularly those in rural and deprived areas.

“This crisis also severely limits efforts to recruit and retain women in what remains a heavily male-dominated sector. Cutting firefighter numbers denies future recruitment opportunities which is a key mechanism for shifting the gender balance within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The lack of investment in modern, inclusive facilities has meant many stations still have no appropriate designated toilets, showers, or changing areas for women firefighters. This is unacceptable in 2025. Women deserve to work in dignified, safe, and inclusive environments that reflect modern workplace standards.

“Such cuts leave scars, not only on the safety of our communities but on the morale, mental health, and working conditions of those who risk their lives daily. The Scottish Government must prioritise urgent investment to modernise the fire and rescue service estate, support recruitment from underrepresented groups, and restore vital funding to protect lives and livelihoods.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- publicly support the FBU’s ‘Cuts Leave Scars’ campaign;
- lobby the Scottish Government to reverse cuts and invest in inclusive infrastructure;
- campaign for improved recruitment and retention of women in the fire service; and
- work with affiliates to expose how underfunding disproportionately affects women in the sector.”

**Mover: Fire Brigades Union**

## **14. Nursing & Midwifery Taskforce**

“That this Conference notes that in 2022 the Royal College of Midwives published the Midwifery in Scotland five-year plan for the profession calling for all midwives and maternity support workers in Scotland to feel valued and be able to provide the highest standard of care to women and families.

“In 2023 alongside, but separate from the Agenda for Change pay offer, the Scottish Government announced that a Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce would be established to build on efforts to make Scotland the best place for midwives to come and work by developing plans for the retention of the existing workforce, as well as looking at recruitment.

“In 2025, the Scottish Ministerial led Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce report and recommendations was published. The recommendations focus improvements in work environments and working conditions; flexibility and work-life balance policies; career opportunities and access to education; manageable workload and safe staffing; productive working relationships; professional autonomy and participation in decision making; responsive management with supervision and mentoring; and education ensuring midwifery careers are attractive, flexible and accessible to new entrants and existing staff.

“The Royal College of Midwives supports the recommendations as it reflects their five-year plan.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to call on the Scottish Government to ensure investment is provided to ensure the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce recommendations are actioned to provide safe workplaces and support cultures that enable midwives and maternity support workers to thrive and develop at every stage of their career.”

**Mover: Royal College of Midwives**

### 15. Investing in Flexible Childcare for a Fairer, Stronger Economy

“That this Conference believes that if we are to ensure women have a fair and equal opportunity to engage in the labour market, we must provide childcare that is high-quality, time-adequate and affordable. Without this, the potential of thousands of skilled women continues to be restricted to the detriment of working families and the wider economy.

“Conference further believes that one of the most effective ways to do this is by supporting parents, particularly mothers with the childcare they need to return to or remain in work. The underemployment of women due to lack of childcare is a significant drag on economic growth.

“Conference notes the Scottish Government’s Early Education and Care Policy, which provides 1,140 hours a year of funded Early Learning Childcare (ELC) to all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds.

“In industries such as transport, healthcare, and other key services, shift work is essential. However, many ELC providers base their provision on office hours, which can exclude these workers. A real 24-hour economy requires planning for 24-hour childcare.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to lobby the Scottish Government to support and invest in flexible, high-quality childcare for shift workers through registered childminders, workplace nurseries, or employer-supported models.

“Conference notes that there are effective Scandinavian models which can be adapted to meet Scottish needs.

“Conference believes the time is now. Investment in flexible childcare is an investment in equality, in working people, and in the long-term strength of our economy.”

**Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs Association**

**Amendment:**

After para 4, insert new para: “Lack of 24-hour childcare harms recruitment and retention

in healthcare, transport, and other shift-based sectors, limiting women’s workforce participation and undermining essential service delivery.”

**Mover: Royal College of Midwives**

## SECTION THREE: Women’s Health, Wellbeing, and Services

### 16. Ensuring Protected Sick Leave for Women Living with Endometriosis

“That this Conference believes that women with endometriosis should be guaranteed protected sick leave to manage the chronic and debilitating symptoms of their condition.

“Endometriosis affects approximately 1 in 10 women of reproductive age, causing extreme pelvic pain, fatigue, and complications that often go unseen and misunderstood. Despite its severity, those impacted frequently face stigma, disbelief, and workplace penalties for absences due to flare-ups or treatment schedules. The lack of formal protections undermines both equity and basic human dignity.

“In Portugal as of April 2025, workers with endometriosis or adenomyosis can take up to three paid sick days per month for incapacitating menstrual pain. A medical prescription is needed but does not require monthly renewal.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work with likeminded organisations and affiliates to lobby the Scottish Government to recognise endometriosis as a legitimate medical condition that warrants compassionate and tailored workplace accommodations. The Women’s Committee are further instructed to request that



affiliates provide information of best practice where they have achieved a negotiated policy for protected sick leave for their members.

“Conference believes protected sick leave must be enshrined to ensure that women are not forced to choose between their health and their livelihood.

“Achieving this policy will reduce long-term absenteeism, improve workforce retention, and foster inclusive, supportive professional environments. We must dismantle the silence and systemic barriers that surround women’s health and affirm that their pain is real, worthy of recognition, and deserving of protection.”

**Mover: Communication Workers’ Union**



## 17. Supporting Workers with Menopause & Endometriosis

“That this Conference recognises that menopause and endometriosis are workplace issues and must be treated as such. Both conditions significantly impact physical and mental health and disproportionately affect women and people assigned female at birth in the workplace, particularly in male-dominated sectors like transport.

“Conference calls on employers to adopt clear, inclusive, and supportive policies. Minimum standards for a menopause policy should include:

- adaptations to uniforms to allow for comfort and breathability;
- training for managers and staff to recognise symptoms and respond with empathy and understanding; and
- adaptations to temperature and work environments, including access to rest areas, flexible working, and ventilation controls.

“Endometriosis must be treated as a long-term health condition, with workplace adjustments including flexible leave, phased returns, and clear, stigma-free HR guidance.

“Conference notes that some UK employers are already leading the way, for example: Network Rail has introduced menopause guidance and awareness training for managers; Transport for London (TfL) offers flexible working and support groups; ASOS and Vodafone provide paid menopause leave.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to campaign for mandatory menopause and endometriosis workplace policies across all businesses in Scotland, and for the Scottish Government - including its publicly owned companies – to be a model employer, setting a gold standard for reproductive and menstrual health support.”

**Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs Association**



## 18. Community Health Hubs

“That this Conference notes that while we welcome the Scottish Government’s approach in setting out their 10-year vision for health care in Scotland, we want recognition of how essential women’s health, and the impact of midwifery is if we are going to achieve that vision for Scotland. Forty percent of our population come through maternity services, yet it is barely seen as a key opportunity to enable women to improve their health and circumstances.

“Addressing inequalities and improving prevention are both areas that form part of the core public health work midwives and maternity support workers do as part of a woman’s life course.

“When people think about midwives, they often picture a midwife assisting a woman as they give birth to her newborn baby. Health is often focused on the future child rather than the woman and her health and the potential to improve health in the widest sense.

“Women are the main carers but are likely to live longer in poor health, therefore many are not economically active and the life expectancy for women between 30-39 is now reduced.

“Of the 50,000 women who give birth annually, 40% are from the most disadvantaged population yet we are not seeing the investment in easily accessible community health hubs with case loading public health midwives providing care that meets local needs and makes access easier so the wider factors that influence health can be addressed.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to call on the Scottish Government to invest in women’s health and prioritise accessible community health hubs to enable midwives and maternity support workers among wider third sector and culturally competent groups to provide services that ensure all women but particularly those experiencing the poorest health and social outcomes are not left behind and have equal access to services that exist to support and help them.”

**Mover: Royal College of Midwives**



## **19. Challenging Racial Stereotypes in Pain Perception Treatment**

“That this Conference is deeply concerned about the impact of racial and gendered stereotypes on how women’s pain is perceived and treated within healthcare settings.

“Black women are often stereotyped as being more able to tolerate pain or dismissed as exaggerating their symptoms, while Asian women may be perceived as overly passive or unable to cope. These harmful assumptions can lead to inadequate or delayed pain relief, particularly in high-stakes environments such as childbirth, emergency care, and post-operative recovery.

“Such treatment is not only discriminatory but dangerous. Pain management should be based on clinical need, not outdated and racist assumptions. Women of colour routinely report feeling unheard or dismissed when seeking help – especially in settings where they are far from home, without advocates or support.

“These experiences reflect wider systemic

failures, including the lack of intersectional awareness in healthcare education and professional training.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work with affiliates to:

- campaign for mandatory, intersectional training in healthcare and social care settings that addresses racial and gender bias in pain perception and response;
- work with relevant professional bodies and NHS Scotland to ensure guidance and clinical pathways explicitly acknowledge and counteract pain-related stereotypes;
- promote awareness among union reps and health professionals of these issues, including through workshops, campaigns and collective bargaining where relevant; and
- advocate for better mechanisms for women to safely report when they feel their concerns are dismissed or pain poorly managed.

“Conference believes that no woman should have her pain overlooked or disbelieved because of her race. Listening, learning, and structural change are essential to ensuring dignity and equality in care.”

**Mover: The Pharmacists Defence Association (PDA Union)**



## SECTION FOUR: Equality

### 20. Closing the Ethnicity Pay Gap for Black Women in Scotland

“That this Conference notes that the ethnicity pay gap remains a persistent and unacceptable aspect of the Scottish labour market, with workers from Black backgrounds earning significantly less than their white counterparts on average.

“Black women face some of the highest pay disparities in the Scottish labour market due to the combined effects of racism and sexism. Structural racism, discrimination in recruitment and promotion, and unequal access to training and development opportunities contribute to this gap.

“Conference believes that this results in Black women continuing to be underrepresented in senior roles, overrepresented in insecure and low-paid work, and left facing barriers to promotion, training, and fair treatment at work.

“Unlike the gender pay gap, there is currently no mandatory requirement for employers to report on ethnicity pay disparities.

“The Labour Market Statistics for Scotland by Ethnicity publication, the most recently available data for Scotland, reports that in 2019 the median hourly pay for employed minority ethnic women was £9.66 and for employed white women was £11.53, amounting to an ethnicity pay gap of 16.2%.

“At a UK level, more recent data released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), show that Black women earn significantly less than White British men and women, with some estimates showing a pay gap of over 20%.

“Conference believes that all women deserve equal pay for equal work, regardless of their ethnicity.

“Conference therefore calls upon the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- lobby the Scottish Government to publish an updated Labour Market Statistics for Scotland by Ethnicity report;
- encourage affiliates to include a call for voluntary ethnicity pay audits and targeted action plans to address disparities affecting Black women into their industrial strategies; and
- consider running a leadership school specifically targeting Black women.”

**Mover: UNISON**



### 21. Closing the Gender Pay Gap & Introducing Fair Self-Assessment for the Self-Employed

“That this Conference notes that Scotland’s gender pay gap has widened in recent years, with STUC analysis showing a jump from 6.4% in 2023 to 8.3% in 2024, reversing years of progress. This equates to 30% year on year increase, with each hour of work reflecting about £3,000 less annual earnings for women compared to men.

“Conference notes that the gender pay gap widens further for self-employed workers, with the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self Employed (IPSE) finding that self-employed women earn on average 43% less than self-employed men. This is a stark difference than the 8.6% gender pay gap between employees. Such disparity has real consequences for women’s financial and mental wellbeing and continues to reinforce persistent inequalities.

“Conference believes that being self-employed does not mean that workplace rights should be compromised. Self-employment allows many women increased flexibility and freedom at work, but this does not mean that they should lack basic employment protections.

“Conference, therefore, calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to lobby the UK Government to:

- ensure that relevant protections granted to employees by the Employment Rights Bill are extended to the self-employed; and
- encourage the UK Government to properly assess gender pay gaps for the self-employed and consider reasonable next steps in reducing them.”

**Mover: Community**



## 22. Promoting Women’s Psychological Safety Across All Workplaces

“That this Conference notes the growing disconnect between the language organisations use around psychological safety and the actual lived experiences of workers. While many employers’ reference psychological safety in policies, strategies, and leadership messaging, these commitments often fail to translate into meaningful, everyday practices.

“For many workers — particularly women, ethnic minorities, LGBT+ individuals, disabled and neurodivergent staff, and those in junior or undervalued roles — psychological safety remains an abstract ideal rather than a tangible reality.

“These groups are more likely to experience environments when speaking up is either encouraged, but the environment doesn’t allow for this; discouraged, concerns are dismissed; or vulnerability is penalised. The result is a workplace culture that fosters chronic stress, deteriorating mental health, and increased absenteeism. Without concrete action, the rhetoric of psychological safety risks becoming performative, further entrenching inequality and harm.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- recognise psychological safety as a fundamental workplace right;
- develop a Psychological Safety Charter outlining what it looks and feels like, employer responsibilities, and worker protections, to be circulated amongst affiliates;

- hold a bespoke training event on the charter for union reps to identify psychological risks to support affected members, thus enabling them to negotiate for safer, more inclusive cultures; and
- lobby the Scottish Government to include psychological safety in Health and Safety Legislation.”

**Mover: GMB Scotland**



## 23. 50th Anniversary of the Sex Discrimination Act

“That this Conference notes that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the UK’s Sex Discrimination Act, which came into force on December 29, 1975.

“This landmark legislation was designed to make discrimination on the grounds of sex or marital status unlawful, and it established the Equal Opportunities Commission (now the Equality and Human Rights Commission) to promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

“Over the past five decades, the Act, now subsumed into the 2010 Equality Act, has played a crucial role in advancing gender equality in the UK. However, while significant progress has been made, challenges remain to address persistent issues such as the gender pay gap, sexual harassment, and the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles.

“Reflecting on this milestone, it’s important to recognise both the achievements and the ongoing efforts required to ensure true equality of opportunity for all.

“Conference notes:

- despite the Equal Pay Act (1970), cases continue around ‘equal value’ work;
- a new duty on employers to prevent sexual harassment came into force in 2024, but enforcement remains uneven; and
- everyday resistance and ‘micro-revolutions’ by women have driven progress, but



systemic misogyny persists.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- consider holding a celebratory event to mark women’s progress over the last 50 years to tie in with International Women’s Day 2026
- And, to accelerate action through campaigns focusing on:
- ensuring employers establish safe reporting routes and fair investigation procedures for complaints of sexual harassment;
- expanding pay transparency through supporting the proposed new Equal Pay Enforcement Unit with trade union involvement to strengthen accountability; and
- embedding intersectional approaches to workplace equality.”

**Mover: Public & Commercial Services Union**

**Amendment:**

Para 3, after “gender pay gap,” insert “outsourcing,”

Para 5, insert new 2nd bullet point: “outsourcing locks many women into jobs with low pay, inferior conditions and no career prospects”

Para 7, insert new 2nd bullet point: “pressuring the Government to enact its “wave of insourcing” in public services as an equality issue”

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers**



## **24. When Women Win, We All Win**

“That this Conference agrees that embedding women’s equality issues within trade union campaigning is fundamental to building a stronger trade union movement.

“Conference knows that diverse and more inclusive unions can not only win for workers facing inequality and discrimination at work and in society, but as political narratives become more polarised, a strong inclusive trade union

movement is best placed to stand up for all working people.

“Conference believes that the trade union movement still has a long way to go until women are fairly represented, especially at senior levels, and that urgent action must be taken to ensure the union movement reflects the diversity of the working class.

“Conference considers that the priorities of women should form a central pillar of union campaigning for the 2026 election and calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work to ensure:

- more women are encouraged to vote;
- young women are engaged in political discourse;
- politicians are lobbied to gain manifesto commitments in relation to: equal pay, family-friendly leave, flexible working, childcare, support for women’s health, universal free school meals, action to tackle gender-based violence, gender budgeting, action on climate change and funding for public services; and
- trade union membership is promoted to a diverse group of women, recognising the strength of trade unionism lies in embedding an intersectional approach to organising.”

**Mover: NASUWT**



## **25. Neurodiverse Women in the Workplace – Highlighting the Gender Gap**

“That this Conference understands that traditionally, discussions around neurodiversity have centred on male experiences which has led to a significant gap in understanding how these conditions (such as autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia and others) affect women. This discrepancy has led to under-diagnosis or misdiagnosis of neurodivergent conditions in women, leaving many without the understanding or support they need. This extends to the workplace where women, who already face systemic gender

biases, can find those biases amplified by the lack of support available.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to campaign for:

- increased awareness of how neurodiversity presents in women and the unique challenges faced in the workplace;
- mandatory workplace training focussed on how neurodiversity intersects with gender with the aim to dispel myths, reduce stigma and promote understanding;
- comprehensive workplace policies that aim to protect neurodiverse workers;
- flexible work arrangements to support workers and accommodate individual needs and reduce unnecessary stress; and
- adoption of inclusive and objective hiring, focussed on skills rather than qualifications.”

**Mover: Aegis the Union**



## 26. EHRC Revised Position on the Provision of Facilities Post UK Supreme Court Judgement

“That this Conference notes that following the UK Supreme Court judgement in ‘For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers’, in which the central issue raised by the appeal was how ‘sex’, ‘man’ and ‘woman’ are defined in the Equality Act, the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s (EHRC) initial position, which it rushed out in the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision, stated that, ‘In workplaces, it is compulsory to provide sufficient single-sex toilets, as well as sufficient single-sex changing and washing facilities where these facilities are needed.’

“On 24th June, the EHRC formally abandoned its contention that employers must provide single sex toilets following the service by Good Law Project of its claim for judicial review. The revised position is, ‘In relation to workplaces, requirements are set out in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. These require suitable and sufficient facilities

to be provided including toilets and sometimes changing facilities and showers. Toilets, showers and changing facilities may be mixed sex where they are in a separate room lockable from the inside.’

“In the EHRC’s press release, it failed to highlight to employers the profound change in its position.

“Therefore, we call on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- actively promote this revised position publicly, particularly with affiliates;
- use their links and communication pathways to update employers; and
- develop literature as to what this means in practice, to support activists in supporting their members in the workplace.”

**Mover: GMB Scotland**

**Amendment:**

Para 4, bullet point 3, after “workplace” delete full stop, add “, when the updated EHRC Code of Practice on Employment is published.”

**Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland**

## SECTION FIVE: Harassment & Violence Against Women

### 27. Addressing Prejudice-Based Violence through Intersectional Solidarity

“That this Conference notes the reports of increases in prejudice-based violence and aggression in educational establishments, which are workplaces, including the 2023 EIS National Branch Survey on Violence and Aggression in which over half of the respondents reported that boys were more likely to exhibit ‘violent and aggressive’

behaviour towards women staff.

“Conference recognises the intersectional nature of prejudice and discrimination, and therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- liaise with the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee, the STUC Black Workers’ Committee, the STUC Youth Committee and the STUC LGBT+ Workers’ Committee to support campaigns against all forms of prejudice and build solidarity between minoritised groups; and
- work with the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee, the STUC Black Workers’ Committee, the STUC Youth Committee and the STUC LGBT+ Workers’ Committee to develop resources containing advice and guidance to support affiliates to address prejudice-based violence and aggressive behaviours in the workplace.”

**Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland**



## 28. Violence in Schools

“That this Conference notes the horrendous working conditions that affect our predominantly female members within all early years, primary and secondary school environments, in relation to violence sustained against them by pupils.

“Conference therefore asks the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- campaign and highlight school support staffs issues. Bringing to the attention of all in education and government across Scotland and the wider UK, where possible, the gross underreporting of violent incidences; and
- lobby the Government to ask of them that better protections, strategies, and supports are put in place to ensure that our members are both safe and protected from harm within the workplace.”

**Mover: Unite**

**Amendment:**

Para 1, line 1, delete “our”

Para 2, bullet point 1, after “staffs”, add “and teachers”

**Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland**



## 29. Misogyny & the Rise of the Far Right

“That this Conference expresses deep concern at the growing rise and normalisation of far-right ideologies across the UK and internationally. These movements pose a direct and dangerous threat to women’s rights, equalities, and democratic values.

“Misogyny is not incidental to far-right politics—it is central. Far-right groups promote regressive gender roles, oppose reproductive justice, and frequently scapegoat women, migrants, LGBTQ+ communities, and people of colour. They weaponise disinformation and division to erode solidarity, foster hatred, and roll back hard-won rights.

“Women, particularly those at the intersections of race, class, sexuality and gender identity, face increased online and real-world harassment as a result. Trade union women, campaigners, and politicians are being targeted simply for standing up for equality and social justice.

“We commend the many women across our movement who continue to resist far-right narratives and organise for an inclusive, anti-racist, and feminist future. The trade union movement has a critical role to play in building resilience to hate and empowering reps and activists to challenge far-right influence in workplaces and communities.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- work with anti-fascist and anti-racist organisations to raise awareness of the link between misogyny and the far right;
- develop resources and training for reps and activists to identify and challenge far-right narratives in the workplace;

- lobby the Scottish Government to recognise misogyny as a standalone hate crime; and
- promote campaigns and public education that champion inclusive, progressive, feminist values and build collective resistance to all forms of hate.”

**Mover: STUC Women's Committee**



### 30. Far Right Extremism & Misogyny

“That this Conference believes that over the last decade the Government has peddled a hostile environment agenda that has created the conditions for hatred to flourish.

“Conference notes with increasing concern the prevalence of hate speech on social media and beyond, seemingly with impunity.

“Conference is appalled to see the language of the far-right and right-wing extremist influencers permeating and becoming normalised, including amongst some of our young people.

“Conference is deeply concerned about the climate and impact of sexism and misogyny affecting the lives of children and young people.

“Conference is further concerned that women teachers are being disproportionately targeted, with increased challenges to their authority, as well as abuse and assaults.

“Conference asserts that it is incumbent on all of us to work collaboratively to challenge hate speech and particularly the intersection with other forms of discrimination such as racism, homophobia, transphobia and ableism.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women's Committee to help change the narrative by:

- engaging with affiliates to promote positive masculinity as a vehicle to challenge rigid gender norms and far-right narratives;
- providing a webinar for affiliates exploring the intersection between far-right narratives and misogyny and gender-based violence;
- lobby MSPs, in advance of the 2026 election, to ensure their manifesto commitments

seek to tackle misogyny, gender-based violence and sexual harassment in schools and at work; and

- building solidarity across STUC Equality Committees to ensure the movement remains vigilant and united against the threat of far-right populism which seeks to dismantle our values and democratic principles.”

**Mover: NASUWT**



### 31. The Threat of Incel Ideology

“That this Conference is concerned about the rise of the ‘incel’ movement in the UK. The term ‘incel’ stands for ‘involuntary celibate’, who are primarily men, who struggle to form romantic or sexual relationships despite wanting to. The movement is an online subculture, referred to as the ‘Manosphere’ where misogyny is promoted by individuals who blame women for their lack of sexual activity. Almost 1,000 references to dehumanising misogyny or violent action against women are recorded each day in this online world.

“The manosphere can often overlap with the far-right, with a belief in conspiracy theories, racism and xenophobia being a common overlap between the two ideologies.

“Conference acknowledges that the incel movement has been linked to several high-profile incidents of violence in the UK and globally. Further, there has been an increase in the number of young men referred to the Prevent scheme over the women-hating ‘incel’ ideology in Scotland.

“Conference notes with disappointment the scrapping of The Misogyny Bill by the Scottish Government. A Bill which would have given greater protections to women by expanding legislation to include new offences of stirring up hatred against women and issuing threats or invoking rape, sexual assault or disfigurement of women and girls both online and offline.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC



Women's Committee to:

- raise awareness of the incel ideology and the dangers it presents to women and girls; and
- invite a speaker from one of the organisations who specifically tackle incel culture and violence, such as Hope Not Hate, Refuge or the NSPCC to address the 2026 STUC Women's Conference."

**Mover: Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers & Firemen**



### 32. Consultation with Victims of Domestic Violence in Plea Bargains

"That this Conference acknowledges the profound and lasting harm caused by domestic violence to women and girls across Scotland. It recognises that the justice system, while tasked with protecting victims, too often sidelines their voices in crucial legal processes, including plea bargains.

"Plea bargaining can significantly reduce charges and sentences without the input or knowledge of the victim. This process can retraumatise survivors, diminish their sense of justice, and leave them feeling disempowered and ignored. In cases of domestic violence, where coercive control and silencing are already central features of the abuse, this exclusion perpetuates the harm.

"Conference believes that victims must be at the centre of the justice process. Survivors should have the right to be consulted before any plea bargain is offered to perpetrators, particularly when it involves downgrading charges related to domestic abuse. The safety, welfare, and perspective of victims must be paramount.

"Conference further recognises that meaningful consultation supports recovery and can help restore a sense of agency for survivors. It also increases public confidence in the justice system and promotes fairer outcomes.

"Conference calls on the STUC Women's

Committee to:

- campaign for legislative reform to ensure that survivors of domestic violence are consulted before plea bargains are offered;
- work with organisations who support the survivors of domestic abuse, trade unions, and legal advocates to raise awareness of this issue and demand change; and
- lobby the Scottish Government and Crown Office to develop victim-centred protocols and guidance on plea bargaining in domestic abuse cases."

**Mover: Fire Brigades Union**



### 33. Sexual Harassment

"That this Conference welcomes the excellent campaigns on sexual harassment that the STUC Women's Committee have worked tirelessly on, however there is still so much to be done.

"The Worker Protection Act 2023 was made law in October 2024, but employers are still failing miserably in their legal obligation to take all measures to prevent sexual harassment from happening in the workplace and at work events, meaning women facing and experiencing harassment are being failed.

"Unite the Union undertook a landmark survey into sexual harassment this year as part of their 'Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment' campaign, with women from all 19 sectors surveyed and the results were damning. 9.3% had been sexually harassed, 52.2% had been the recipient of sexually offensive jokes and around 4 in 10 (37.5%) had been inappropriately touched and as employers are not taking the issue seriously, women are afraid to come forward, with the survey findings showing that 73.5% of respondents did not report these incidents, meaning many perpetrators are left to offend again.

"Worker safety should be employers' highest priority, and Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women's Committee to:

- develop model standalone sexual harassment policies that affiliates can disseminate to reps to use in their workplaces;
- develop model Sexual Harassment training resources that can be adapted by reps and activists for their workplaces; and
- continue to lobby the Scottish Government to put extra legal protections in place for third party harassment and sexual harassment to be treated by the Health and Safety Executive as a workplace injury.”

**Mover: STUC Women's Committee**

**Amendment:**

At end of para 3 insert new para “Conference also notes the prevalence of sexual harassment on the railway network and the importance of the British Transport Police for women passengers and staff safety. Conference therefore notes with concern the planned cuts, leaving little to no BTP coverage in Scotland.”

Para 5, insert new 1st bullet point “campaign against cuts to BTP in Scotland;”

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers**

**Amendment:**

After bullet point 1, add additional bullet point “revisit the TUC programme of training and provide/offer training for affiliate unions’ leaderships, both lay and staff, on sexual harassment and its prevention;”

**Mover: NASUWT**

## SECTION SIX: International

### 34. Global Gender Equality

“That this Conference notes that the SDG Gender Index published in September 2024, Equal Measures 2030, found that no country has, so far, achieved the promise of gender equality envisioned by the UN’s 2030 sustainable development goals set in 2015.

“More than 850 million women and girls are living in countries rated as very poor, subjecting them to potential restrictions and abuses including forced pregnancies, childhood marriage and bans from secondary education.

“Between 2019 and 2022, nearly 40% of countries - home to more than one billion women and girls- stagnated or declined on gender equality.

“The SDG Index only rated one country as very good - Switzerland. The United Kingdom has remained at good on the same score since 2015. Some countries, including the USA and Poland, have regressed, with 14 US states enacting near total abortion bans.

“Conference calls upon the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- publicise the latest date of the SDG Gender Index as widely as possible;
- lobby the Scottish Government to encourage them to maintain their 2015 commitment that Scotland would lead the way to deliver a more equal, more just world and to keep the UN Sustainable Development goals relating to gender equality high on their agenda;
- campaign for greater participation for women in national decision-making structures and where the opportunity arises international decision-making structures; and
- consider working with the SDG Network Scotland to progress this work.”

**Mover: Unison**

### 35. The Disproportionate Impact of the Crisis in Gaza on Women & Children

“That this Conference notes with deep concern the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the disproportionate impact it has on women and children. As the primary caregivers and pillars of community life, women bear the brunt of conflict-driven displacement, poverty, and trauma. In Gaza, over two-thirds of those killed or injured are reportedly women and children, with homes, schools, and health facilities repeatedly targeted or destroyed.

“Conference recognises that the collapse of essential infrastructure - healthcare, water, sanitation, and education - intensifies gendered vulnerabilities. Women face heightened risks of sexual violence and exploitation, and maternal health services are critically lacking. Children endure chronic psychological trauma, stunted development, and restricted access to education and safety.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- condemn all acts of violence against civilians, especially those disproportionately

affecting women and children;

- urge affiliated unions to advocate for increased humanitarian aid and international protection; and
- lobby the UK and Scottish Governments to support an immediate ceasefire and a pathway toward sustainable peace, grounded in human rights and international law.

“Solidarity demands that we amplify the voices of those most silenced - and those are often women and children living through unimaginable hardship.”

**Mover: *Communication Workers’ Union***

**Amendment:**

After para 2, insert new para “On August 15th 2025, famine was declared in Gaza. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) stated “Women and girls are enduring increasingly horrific conditions in Gaza – with widespread malnutrition and disease putting the lives of pregnant and breastfeeding women and their babies at particular risk.”

**Mover: *Unison***



# Public services: the heart of a fairer Scotland



**Greetings to all delegates attending  
the STUC Women's Conference 2025**

## Scottish Union Learning

supports trade unions in developing, organising, and delivering work-related learning and skills programmes for their members that contribute to collective prosperity and wellbeing, Fair Work, and equality for workers across Scotland.

Scottish Union Learning is keen to work with the STUC Women's Committee to support the development of the workplace skills base of women workers.

**Find out more:**



[www.scottishunionlearning.com](http://www.scottishunionlearning.com)  
Email [learning@stuc.org.uk](mailto:learning@stuc.org.uk)  
Facebook @scottishunionlearning  
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# Report to Womens' Conference '25

The 97th Annual STUC Women's Conference was held on Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th October 2024 in the Grand Central Hotel, Glasgow. The Conference theme was 'Succession and Solidarity.'

The Conference was Chaired by Lorna Glen, Chair of the STUC Women's Committee / Unite the Union. Just under 130 delegates, representing twenty-two Trade Unions and three Trades Union Councils were appointed to attend the Conference.

Thirty-two motions and two composites were debated within six sections: discrimination at work, trade union organisation and employment rights; cost-of-living crisis; women's health, wellbeing, and services; equality; harassment and violence against women; and international.

Two Emergency Motions were submitted on 'Support Still Silent' by the Women's Committee, and 'Solidarity with Palestinian and Lebanese Women' by the Educational Institute of Scotland. Aberdeen Trades Union Council's motion (26) 'Still Fighting for Women's Equality 50 Years On' was remitted in favour of a statement by the Women's Committee.

Conference endorsed the appointment of Tellers: Louise Bishop (EIS), Chinny Iroegbu (UNISON) and Karen O'Neill (USDAW).

Conference was opened on the Tuesday evening with a Civic Reception, hosted by the Rt Hon Lord Provost of Glasgow and sponsored by Thompsons Solicitors. Depute Lord Provost Bailie Christie Mearns, Patricia Donnelly (Glasgow TUC) and Jillian Merchant (Thompsons Solicitors) provided opening speeches.

Mary Finn, GMB and Chair of the Standing Orders Committee, presented the first and second SOC reports to Conference on Wednesday morning. Andrea Bradley, Women's Committee member / EIS, provided the vote of thanks at close of Conference on the Thursday.

Conference received keynote addresses from:

Rozanne Foyer, STUC General Secretary

Lilian Macer, STUC President

Caroline Price, TUC Cymru

Denise Christie, STUC Fair Work Project Officer

Professor Anna Glasier, Women's Health Champion, Scottish Government

On Wednesday, delegates debated Motions from Section 1: Discrimination at Work, Trade Union Organisation and Employment Rights; Section 2: Cost-of-Living Crisis; Section 5: Harassment and Violence against Women' and Section 6: International.

On the Wednesday afternoon, Nikki Pound, TUC Women's Policy Officer, gave a presentation on tackling and preventing sexual harassment, delegates then split into workshops and discussed the TUC union rep's safer workplace checklist on preventing sexual harassment.

Conference also received contributions from Melissa Smillie and Phoebe Heaney of Duncanrig Secondary School, Jenna Fyfe of Hillpark Secondary, Holly Farquhar and Laiba Talib of Our Lady's High School in Cumbernauld, Aisha Croly and Giuliana McCaveny of Our Lady's High in Motherwell, and Marie-Claire Lock and Emma Kyle of St Andrew's Academy. Pupils from Duncanrig Secondary School,

Hillpark Secondary, Our Lady's High School (Cumbernauld), Our Lady's High School (Motherwell), Shawlands Academy and St Andrew's Academy were in attendance as part of the Unions into Schools project.

Pearl Abernethy, Vice-Chair, presented the Women's Committee Annual Report to Conference. This was preceded by a short video from the Committee's recent Women's Weekend School.

Proceeds from the Women's Committee raffle, held during the Chair's Reception on Wednesday evening, raised £690 for Chris's House.

On Thursday, delegates debated motions from Section 3: Women's Health, Wellbeing and Services; Section 4: Equality.

The undernoted were elected to serve on the Women's Committee for 2024/25:

Pearl Abernethy, Community

Selma Augestad, Educational Institute of Scotland

Brenda Carson, GMB Scotland

Annette Drylie, GMB Scotland

Heather Gilfillan, Unite the Union

Lorna Glen, Unite the Union

Jaki Lambert, Royal College of Midwives

Tara Lillis, NASUWT

June Maguire, UNISON

Kerry McCrone, Fire Brigades Union

Liz McGachey, Public & Commercial Services Union

Lyn Marie O'Hara, Glasgow Trades Union Council

Kate Powell, Aegis the Union

Kate Ramsden, Aberdeen Trades Union Council

Davena Rankin, UNISON

Joyce Stevenson, Communication Workers' Union

Following Conference, Susan Mackinnon, PDA Union, and Donna Williams, ASLEF, were co-opted to the 2 vacant positions on the Committee.

Mary Finn, GMB Scotland, Grace Hepburn, UNISON, and Irene Trench, Unite the Union, were elected to serve on the Standing Orders Committee for the 2025 Women's Conference.

### **WOMEN'S COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2024/25**

The Women's Committee met in December 2024 and appointed Pearl Abernethy, Community, as Chair; and Tara Lillis, NASUWT, and Liz McGachey, PCS, as Co Vice-Chairs. The Committee discussed and prepared a workplan taking account of the Decisions of Conference. This was presented to and endorsed by the General Council in January 2025.

The Committee agreed to prioritise the following policy and campaigning areas:

- Challenging the Far Right
- Worker's Rights and Discrimination
- Women's Health
- Organising and Campaigning for Women's Equality

### **Challenging the Far Right**

Throughout the year, the Committee:

- wrote to the Minister for Equalities regarding the protests in Falkirk and highlighting concerns around escalation in hostility towards asylum seekers and refugees; and calling on the Scottish Government to commit to a coherent and effective strategy to tackle causes of gender-based violence and weaponisation of violence against women and girls in the framing of migration.
- continued to support STUC's campaigns challenging the Far Right.
- attended the STUC's St Andrew's Day March and Rally in November 2024.
- spoke at the Sheku Bayoh vigil.



- participated in a session, facilitated by Hope Not Hate, with members of the STUC Equality Committees.
- attended an STUC roundtable meeting with affiliates on 6th September to discuss campaigning and organising strategies to combat the Far Right.
- signed Stand up to Racism's open letter: Women Against the Far Right.
- Actively supported and spoke at various counter-protests against the Far Right.
- spoke at Scottish Hazards Equality, Fair Work and Health and Safety event in December 2024.
- wrote a blog for the Scottish Women's Convention as part of 16 Days of Activism on gender-based violence at work; members of the Committee also attended Reclaim the Night events.
- wrote to the Minister for Public Health and Women's Health, and the Minister for Equalities on appropriate uniform and PPE.
- the Chair addressed the 20th Annual STUC Disabled Workers' Conference held in November 2024.

### Worker's Rights and Discrimination

Throughout the year, the Committee:





## Women's Health

During the year of reporting, the Committee:

- met with members of the STUC Black Workers' and Disabled Workers' Committee to discuss Black women's experiences of maternity and post-natal care; and learning and neurodiversity respectively.
- wrote to the Scottish Government's Women's Health Plan Team with a summary of health resolutions from the last 3 Women's Conferences; and subsequently attended an event hosted by the ALLIANCE to discuss the next phase of the Women's Health Plan.
- endorsed Maternity Action's Action Plan and letter to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade to end pregnancy poverty and strengthen maternity rights at work.
- continued to support the FBU's Fight for 52 Campaign.
- endorsed Engender's letter to Chief Constable Jo Farrell, calling on Police Scotland to publicly reject new guidelines around abortion investigation guidelines.

## Organising and Campaigning for Women's Equality

During the year of reporting, the Committee:

- held a Women's Weekend School (reported on separately).
- are, at the time of reporting, drafting a manifesto for the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections.
- supported the Poverty Alliance's Scotland Demands Better campaign.

## International Women's Day

The Chair spoke at the Scottish Women's Convention event held in the Scottish Parliament. The STUC General Secretary wrote a column in the Herald which celebrated International Women's Day and highlighted issues on violence against women, sexual harassment and safer access zones. The Committee also promoted various International Women's Day events on social media.

In preparation for International Women's Day 2026, there will be a dedicated page on the Women's Committee section of the STUC website with details and links to relevant International Women's Day events.

The Committee is also engaging with the organisers of the Edinburgh's International Women's Day March to see how best to support.



## Women's Weekend School

The Committee held its 2025 Weekend School on Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st August in the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel, Glasgow.

Just under 50 participants attended the school, which focused on enhancing conference skills.

Participants found the school to be beneficial and gained insight and support on how to become a delegate to the STUC Women's Conference in the future.





## 128th Annual STUC Congress

Tara Lillis addressed the 128th Annual STUC Congress on behalf of the Committee on Monday 28th 2025 at the Caird Hall, Dundee.



## Engagement with Other Organisations

The Committee continued to engage with relevant organisations including Maternity Action, Engender, Abortion Rights Scotland and Scottish Women's Convention.

## Women's Council of the Isles

Members of the Committee attended the Women's Council of the Isles event, hosted by the ICTU in Derry on Thursday 23rd and Friday 24th January 2025.

The event was reduced to one day due to Storm Eowyn, and the agenda condensed to allow all contributions to be made. The theme focussed on tackling extremism and the Far Right.

Arrangements are being progressed for the next Women's Council of the Isles which will be hosted by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in 2026.



# Women's Advisory Committee / Women's Committee Past Chairs

1926/27	Mr Joseph F Duncan (Scottish Farm Servants' Union)	1949/50	Miss G M Meadows (National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers)
1927/28	Mr Joseph F Duncan (Scottish Farm Servants' Union)	1950/51	Miss G M Meadows (National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers)
1928/29	Mr Joseph F Duncan (Scottish Farm Servants' Union)	1951/52	Miss Jessie Murray (TGWU)
1929/30	Mr Joseph F Duncan (Scottish Farm Servants' Union)	1952/53	Miss Jean Glass (USDAW)
1930/31	Mr Joseph F Duncan (Scottish Farm Servants' Union)	1953/54	Miss G M Meadows (National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers)
1931/32	Miss Bell Jobson (Scottish Farm Servants' Section)	1954/55	Mrs H Geddes (Union of Jute, Flax and Kindred Textile Operatives)
1932/33	Miss Bell Jobson (Scottish Farm Servants' Section)	1955/56	Miss Jessie Murray (TGWU)
1933/34	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)	1956/57	Miss Jean Glass (USDAW)
1934/35	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)	1957/58	Miss E C Kent (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)
1935/36	Mrs Rachel Devine (Jute and Flax Workers Union)	1958/59	Mrs Isa Money (AEU)
1936/37	Miss Agnes Gilroy (USDAW)	1959/60	Mrs H Geddes (Union of Jute, Flax and Kindred Textile Operatives)
1937/38	Miss Agnes Gilroy (USDAW)	1960/61	Miss Jessie Murray (TGWU)
1938/39	Miss Betty Lamont	1961/62	Miss Jean Glass (USDAW)
1939/40	Miss Betty Lamont	1962/63	Miss E C Kent (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)
1940/41	Miss Isa M Stewart	1963/64	Miss E C Kent (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)
1941/42	Miss Isa M Stewart	1964/65	Mrs Isa Money (AEU)
1942/43	Miss Bell Jobson (Scottish Farm Servants' Section)	1965/66	Miss Rita Robertson (TGWU)
1943/44	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)		
1944/45	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)		
1945/46	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)		
1946/47	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)		
1947/48	Miss Eleanor Stewart JP (TGWU)		
1948/49	Miss Agnes Gilroy (USDAW)		

1966/67	Miss Jean Glass (USDAW)	1990/91	Kathy Finn (EIS)
1967/68	Miss E C Kent (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)	1991/92	May Carlin (USDAW)
1968/69	Mrs Isa Money (Amalgamated Union Engineering and Foundry Workers)	1992/93	Mary Harrison (General Municipal, Boilermakers)
1969/70	Miss M Burns (TGWU)	1993/94	Yvonne Strachan (TGWU)
1970/71	Miss E Turley (Scottish Typographical Association)	1994/95	Helen Stevens (Institution of Professionals, Managers and Specialists)
1971/72	Miss G Wood (GMWU)	1995/96	Jane McKay (Glasgow District Trades Council)
1972/73	Mrs I Johnston (Tobacco Workers' Union)	1996/97	Agnes Tolmie (Banking Insurance and Finance Union)
1973/74	Miss E C Kent (Transport Salaried Staffs' Association)	1997/98	Elizabeth Stow (Society of Radiographers)
1974/75	Mrs Isa Money (AUEW)	1998/99	Yvonne Strachan (TGWU)
1975/76	Mrs M Burns (TGWU)	1999/2000	Agnes Tolmie (UNIFI)
1976/77	Miss G Wood (GMWU)	2000/01	Annie Thorne ((PCSU)
1977/78	Mrs M Wilson (Scottish Carpet Workers' Union)	2001/02	Linda Shanahan (FBU)
1978/79	Mrs Marion Easdale (AUEW)	2002/03	Agnes Tolmie (UNIFI)
1979/80	Mrs Mary Harrison (Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff)	2003/04	Veronica Rankin (EIS)
1980/81	Helen Tierney (AUEW)	2004/05	Janet Cassidy (RMT)
1981/82	Ina Love (NUPE)	2005/06	Sandra Kennie (UNISON)
1982/83	Jane McKay (Glasgow District Trades Council)	2006/07	Tricia McLaren (Glasgow TUC)
1983/84	Mrs M Wilson (Scottish Carpet Workers' Union)	2007/08	Cheryl Gedling (PCS)
1984/85	Mary Harrison (Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff)	2008/09	Pauline Rourke (CWU)
1985/86	M Lowe (CoHSE)	2009/10	Elaine Dougall (Unite)
1986/87	Caroline Baikie (Society of Graphical and Allied Trades '82)	2010/11	Natasha Gerson (Equity)
1987/88	Yvonne Strachan (TGWU)	2011/12	Margaret Boyd (GMB)
1988/89	Ina Love (NUPE)	2012/13	Eileen Dinning (UNISON)
1989/90	Jane McKay (Glasgow District Trades Council)	2013/14	Ann Joss (RMT)
		2014/15	Anne Dean (GMB)
		2015/16	Davena Rankin (UNISON)
		2016/17	Annette Drylie (GMB)
		2017/18	Sharon Edwards (PCS)
		2018/19	Joyce Stevenson (CWU)
		2019/21	Brenda Carson (GMB)
		2021/22	Fiona Steele (Aegis)
		2022/23	Andrea Bradley (EIS)
		2023/24	Lorna Glen (Unite the Union)
		2024/25	Pearl Abernethy (Community)

# Scotland Demands Better: Women Leading the Call for Change

Ruth Boyle  
Policy & Campaigns Manager  
The Poverty Alliance

On Saturday 25 October, the streets of Edinburgh will fill with people from every corner of the country. Trade unionists, community groups, charities, campaigners, families, and friends will come together for Scotland Demands Better, a march and rally that gives voice to the anger, hope, and determination felt by so many across our nation. It is a march for all of us – but our demands have particular relevance for Scotland's women, whose lives are too-often affected by poverty, inequality, and the erosion of public services.

The Scotland Demands Better campaign was born from a simple but powerful truth - change only happens when ordinary people stand together and demand it. Across our communities, too many of us are being cut off from life's essentials. Women know the reality of skipping meals so their children can eat, of working long hours in undervalued jobs that still don't pay enough to cover rent and heating, of struggling to secure childcare, and of caring for relatives without the right support. These are not private misfortunes – they are political choices that demand collective action.

From Shetland to Selkirk, Argyll to Angus, people in Scotland share the same basic aspirations. We want a warm, safe place to live. We want healthcare when we need it, schools that nurture our children, and public transport that connects us. We want wages that meet the cost of living, and social security that provides a foundation for the future. Scotland Demands Better is about insisting that these are not luxuries – they are rights and the building

blocks of a decent society.

The rally will call for three urgent priorities:

**Better jobs** – secure, fairly paid work for everyone who needs it.

**Better investment** – in homes, transport, public services, and our natural environment.

**Better social security** – a system that lifts people up instead of trapping them in poverty.

These demands overlap with the priorities of trade union women. We know that insecure work, wage inequality, and the crisis in care fall hardest on women. We know that austerity and cuts to local services pile extra unpaid labour onto our shoulders. And we know that real equality can only be won when society guarantees the essentials to every household.

The STUC Women's Conference has always been a space where women workers raise their voices collectively, setting the agenda for the wider social movement. Your campaigning work around school meals is a great example. The Scotland Demands Better march continues that tradition by putting women's experiences at the centre of the national conversation.

Women's unpaid labour too often holds society together during times of crisis, as we saw during the Covid-19 pandemic. Women are the majority of workers in health and social care, in education, and in many of the lowest-paid sectors. Women are the volunteers who keep food banks running and the carers who step in when public provision falls short. Yet despite our contribution, women are also more likely to



live in poverty, to rely on social security, and to be employed on insecure contracts.

That is why the participation of women trade unionists in the march is so vital. By bringing your banners, your voices, and your lived experiences, we can send a message that Scotland's women demand — and deserve — better.

The day itself will be vibrant and inclusive. We will gather at the Scottish Parliament from 9.30am on Saturday 25 October, before marching up the Royal Mile, along George IV Bridge, and into The Meadows. There, the rally will take the form of a family-friendly festival, complete with music, stalls, games, and space for discussion.

Importantly, political leaders will not be addressing the crowd. Instead, the voices that matter will be those of the people — workers, campaigners, families, and communities. We want people to take hope and inspiration from marching alongside thousands of others who share the same vision for a fairer Scotland. And for those unable to travel to Edinburgh, there will be ways to take part locally or online, ensuring that no one is excluded from the movement.

We hope the march is not just a one-off event — we hope it's the spark for an ongoing movement. The rallying cry of Scotland Demands Better is non-partisan but instead insists that governments at every level — Westminster, Holyrood, and local councils — must be held accountable for ensuring that every household can thrive. For trade union women, this is the fight you are already engaged in.

We know that real change doesn't come from politicians handing down policies — it comes from pressure built on the streets, in workplaces, and in communities. Every advance for women workers, from equal pay legislation to maternity rights, was won because women stood together and demanded better.

That is exactly what this march is about. It is about recognising that we are not alone, that our struggles are shared, and that when we

work together we can win.

When women lead, movements grow stronger. And when Scotland's women demand better, Scotland cannot ignore us.

This is our chance to show that we will no longer settle for poverty pay, crumbling services, or a social security system that punishes rather than supports. We demand better — for ourselves, our families, our workplaces, and our communities.

So, let's march. Let's rally. Let's remind everyone that Scotland's women workers are a force to be reckoned with.

Together, we will demand — and win — a better Scotland.



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FOR NEWS AND UPDATES!**



# STUC Women's Weekend School 2025

Here is a selection of feedback from this year's Women's Weekend School...

"A fantastic opportunity for like-minded women to come together in a safe, non-judgemental environment and focus on the things that really matter to us and that often go unheard."

"The school is a good place to learn about Conference as a new rep."

"A great experience to learn about motion writing and an opportunity to build confidence outwith your comfort zone in a very safe and supportive environment."

"If you get a chance to participate at one of these events- do it! A comfortable environment with some brilliant women, I have learned so much this weekend!"

"The STUC conference school demystifies many aspects of conference and arms you with all the information you need to head in with more confidence."

"A superb experience. Wonderful women working for every union. Working together to learn, all while having fun and being supported. Five stars!"

"I would highly recommend anyone attending the STUC Women's Conference to attend this school. The warm welcome and supportive environment echoes that of the conference, and it definitely reduced any fears about being a first-time speaker at conference."

"An excellent opportunity to network and learn in a safe and welcoming environment. Spending time with like-minded women is an absolute delight. It's clear that getting a bunch of women together we can put the world to rights! Now just need to get other folks to listen."

"Being provided a safe, non-judgemental space to learn, ask questions and develop new skills was invaluable. Without the opportunity, I would have continued blindly on with the union commitments I currently have without knowing what else was out there, how to access it, who to ask the questions of and what I should be bringing to my committee."

"The STUC Women's Weekend School has given me a new found sense of confidence in my public speaking skills. It is a confidence that has come from understanding my inner doubts and holding space to challenge those doubts, in a highly supportive environment."



# The 4 Day Working Week Campaign

Phil Lindsey

Head of Organising

4 Day Week Foundation

A four-day week with no loss of pay isn't just about an extra day off, it's about making work fairer, sharing caring responsibilities more evenly, and recognising that workers' health and wellbeing must come before outdated models of productivity.

Women are still disproportionately carrying the burden of unpaid caring. We know the figures: in the UK 38 per cent of women in employment work part-time, compared to only 13 per cent of men.

It isn't because women lack ambition or commitment to their jobs - it's because too many are forced to fit work around childcare, elderly care and the everyday responsibilities of running a household. This unequal division of labour continues to hold women back, while employers and society reap the benefit of women's unpaid work.

The recent Scottish Government pilot has given us proof that change is possible. Two public agencies - Accountant in Bankruptcy (AIB) and South of Scotland Enterprise - moved staff onto a four-day, 32 hour working week with no loss of pay. Services kept running, non-working days were staggered, and the results speak for themselves.

Stress and burnout fell dramatically. At South of Scotland Enterprise, just four per cent of workers said they were satisfied with their work-life balance before the trial. Nine months in, that figure had rocketed to 84 per cent. Absence due to poor mental health dropped by a quarter. Productivity didn't fall. In fact, in many areas it improved.

For those with caring responsibilities, the pilot was life-changing. Workers talked about finally being able to manage family commitments without exhaustion or guilt. A staff member working at AIB, said:

*"I honestly can't get across how beneficial it is to me personally with elderly care responsibilities. I think it must be the same for people with young children too. I'm relied upon to do things, and I now feel like I have the time to do them. Lots of things fall to me in my family, and sometimes I feel resentment towards others in the family for not pulling their weight, but I don't feel that so much now. I enjoy the time I get to have with my mum."*

Despite this evidence, the Scottish Government has so far stopped short of rolling the policy out across the public sector. Instead, it has shifted to a 35-hour standard in many areas - a step forward, yes, but not the bold leap we need. Workers deserve more than halfway measures.

For women in particular, the gains are obvious. A shorter working week helps redistribute unpaid labour more fairly, making it easier for men as well as women to share caring roles. It tackles the stigma that still surrounds part-time or flexible working, which too often leaves women side-lined in their careers. And by cutting hours without cutting pay, it removes the financial penalty women face when they are forced to reduce their hours to cope with caring demands.

Better health is another crucial benefit. Too many women suffer stress, exhaustion and burnout. The pilot proved that fewer hours



could transform wellbeing. That means fewer sick days, healthier workplaces and, ultimately, stronger unions. Research by the Women's Budget Group backs this up: shorter hours go hand in hand with narrower gender gaps in paid and unpaid work and in wages.

Trade unions have always led the fight for shorter working hours. From the battle for the eight-hour day, to the weekend, to paid holidays, every gain in working time has been won through collective struggle. The four-day week is the next frontier. It's about dignity. It's about fairness. And it's about recognising that our lives outside work matter every bit as much as the labour we give.

For women, a shorter working week is not a perk. It's a path to equality: to better health, to more choices, to a fairer balance between work and home. The evidence from Scotland's own pilot proves that it can be done. Now it's up to us, the trade union movement, to make sure it is done.

The STUC Women's Committee is right to put this issue front and centre. Together, we must press the Scottish Government to move from pilots and half measures to real action: a four-day week, with no loss of pay, for all. The evidence is clear - now we just need politicians with the guts to act on it.



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**We are proud to have stood shoulder to shoulder with women in this fight and will continue to fight for equal pay in all workplaces.**

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# Women's Specific PPE in Scotland: Generic is Not Good Enough!

Kerry McCrone  
STUC Womens' Committee  
FBU Scotland

Firefighting, rail, construction, science, and tech - just some of the industry's women often have to make do with PPE designed for men.

The "one-size fits all" approach undermines safety, comfort, confidence, and health. Having the right fit is not a cosmetic issue; it is a matter of real risk. Trade unions, including the STUC Women's Committee, are pushing for change, and recent campaigns provide both models and proof of what is possible.

*Fit matters:* When PPE does not fit correctly, it ceases to protect properly and sometimes introduces new hazards.

*Musculoskeletal strain and fatigue:* when items are too large, too heavy, or awkwardly shaped, the wearer compensates - lifting with the shoulders, bending awkwardly, over-stretching arms - increasing risk of injury.

*Reduced compliance and usability:* If boots are too big, they can slip; ill-fitting gloves reduce grip; if helmets do not sit well, people may omit or misuse PPE, avoid changing into correct size, or resort to cutting corners.

*Psychological effects:* Ill-fitting uniform or PPE can undermine the wearer's confidence, sense of belonging and professional identity, especially in male-dominated settings. This can all impact a team's performance, willingness to stay in the job, or to report safety issues.

## Evidence from Sectors in Scotland

*Firefighting:* The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has long stressed that female firefighters often struggle to get PPE that fits. A landmark benchmark is the inclusion of the female-shaped test manikin SOPHIE (System Objective



Protection against Heat In an Emergency), commissioned by the Health & Safety Executive in 2006, to ensure fire gear gets tested on female body shapes as well as male ones. Before SOPHIE, many lab and heat tests used male-shaped manikins (such as "RALPH"). In Scotland, the FBU Women's Committee have pressed for properly fitting shoes and tabards in women sizes, maternity considerations, specifically the ongoing fight for 52 weeks maternity pay (due to exposure to cancer causing contaminants) and recognition of how gender interacts with health and safety.

*Rail / Train Workers:* ASLEF has reported issues with unsuitable uniforms: glare from shirts (which may affect visibility and instrument reading), designs not trialled with female staff,

and uniform materials that may not fit all body shapes or respond to needs like modesty, comfort in heat, or maternity fit.

ASLEF has been working with employers to improve PPE and uniform to now include women specific garments and sizing.

**Construction, science, and tech:** There are reports of women in construction receiving PPE that does not fit; many report obstacles in getting sizes or styles appropriate for female bodies. In lab environments, glove sizing, coverall cut, seal integrity are recurring issues.

If employers are truly committed to creating more diverse and inclusive workforces, then they must invest in women specific PPE. It is easy to state that you want more women to join these sectors, however this requires meaningful and sustained funding where women are not an afterthought.

### **STUC Women's Committee: Action & Political Pressure**

The Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) Women's Committee plays a key role in ensuring that concerns about women's safety, including PPE, are raised with MSPs and ministers. Following the STUC Women's Conference in 2024 where a motion was moved on women's specific PPE, our Committee member Kerry McCrone has met with MP Kirsten Sullivan (Member of Parliament for Bathgate and Linlithgow) to discuss inclusive fit PPE and highlight the challenges and risks involved.

### **Remaining Challenges & What Must Be Done**

#### **Supply, cost and procurement inertia:**

Suppliers may resist producing or stocking additional sizes/designs, or cost may be used as an excuse. However, many people examples show economies of scale are possible.

#### **Standards and testing gaps:**

Even when women sizes are made available, the standards used for testing often still use male models; gaps in regulations may mean "female sizes" still do not get tested in all relevant ways.

#### **Awareness and inclusion in design process:**

Women are often excluded from procurement

decisions or trials. Proper user-testing (with women of different sizes, roles) is essential.

#### **Regulatory clarity:**

Employers need unambiguous legal requirements; if regulations explicitly require PPE to be suitable for female body shapes, enforcement becomes easier.

#### **Culture and visibility:**

In male-dominated workplaces, women advocating for correct PPE may face resistance or belittlement.

Unions and leadership must foster culture where safety concerns based on gender are taken seriously. Designing, stocking, and procuring PPE that truly protects women is not a "nice extra" — it is essential for health, safety, fairness, and equality. Scotland's trade unions, especially via the STUC Women's Committee, together with the FBU's campaigns and pressure from ASLEF, are showing that change is possible. But until better regulation, standard procurement practice, and consistent awareness of gender differences in risk (including how PPE interacts with differing body shapes, mobility, visibility, and comfort) are baked into workplace safety law and culture, many women will still be exposed to unnecessary risk.

We will continue to highlight and campaign for change. Sisters across various industries are not just protecting themselves. By campaigning for proper PPE, they are setting new standards that will protect everyone - because fit testing, better design, and more inclusive procurement benefit the whole workforce.



# Exhibitors



**Abortion Rights Scotland** is an activist organisation built by its members and supporters. We bring together individuals and affiliated organisations including trade unions, clinicians and policy makers. We campaign for free, safe, legal and local abortion services, provided and delivered by the NHS in Scotland.

**Bluesky:** [abortionrightsscot.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/abortionrightsscot)

**Web:** [abortionrightsscotland.com](https://abortionrightsscotland.com)

**Instagram:** [abortionrightsscot](https://www.instagram.com/abortionrightsscot)



**ACTSA Scotland - Action for Southern Africa** campaigns for justice and development in Southern Africa. We run stalls selling craft goods from Southern Africa. We work closely with the Nelson Mandela Scottish Memorial Foundation towards creating a permanent memorial to Mandela, his links with Scotland and his legacy and lessons for social and racial justice.

**Email:** [john.nelson@actsascotland.org.uk](mailto:john.nelson@actsascotland.org.uk)

**Bluesky:** [@actsascotland.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@actsascotland)

**X:** [@ACTSAScotland](https://twitter.com/ACTSAScotland)

**Web:** [mandelascottishmemorial.org](https://mandelascottishmemorial.org)



**Bookmarks** is the TUC's official bookseller.

We stock every book an activist could want.

Our range of books cover trade unionism, labour history, women, LGBT+, politics, economics, the environment, black struggles and much more.

**Tel:** 07767 866100



**Close the Gap** is a policy advocacy organisation working on women's labour market equality.

**Email:** [info@closethegap.org.uk](mailto:info@closethegap.org.uk),

**Bluesky:** [@closethegap.org.uk](https://bsky.social/@closethegap)

**Web:** [closethegap.org.uk](https://closethegap.org.uk)



**Fight Bladder Cancer UK** raises awareness of bladder cancer, supporting patients and families. Women in Scotland have the worst outcomes in Europe.

5-year survival rates for women:

- England 67%

- Scotland 42%

Work environments contribute to the poor outcomes. GMB already works with FBC. We welcome more trade union involvement.

**Tel:** 01844 351621 / 07793 07132

**Web:** [fightbladdercancer.co.uk](https://fightbladdercancer.co.uk)

**Facebook:** [Fight Bladder Cancer](https://www.facebook.com/FightBladderCancer)



**Flexibility Works** is a boutique consultancy and training organisation that provides practical tools, support and resources to help employers create a successful flexible working culture. We are a team of leading experts and commentators, bringing a depth of knowledge, insight and years of practical experience to help businesses and individuals thrive.

**Tel:** 0141 378 8330

**Email:** [hello@flexibilityworks.org](mailto:hello@flexibilityworks.org)

**Web:** [flexibilityworks.org](https://flexibilityworks.org)





**Labour Women's Declaration's** stated aim is to hold Labour to account on women's sex-based rights. LWD's seven-point declaration was launched in November 2019. There are over 8,500 signatories. LWD Scotland is active within the Scottish Labour Party, using the structures to campaign for women's rights in all aspects of party activity.

**Tel:** 07713 643430

**X:** @LabWomenDec

**Web:** labourwomensdeclaration.org.uk



**Scottish Union Learning** supports trade unions in developing, organising, and delivering work-related learning and skills programmes for their members that contribute to collective prosperity and wellbeing, Fair Work, and equality for workers across Scotland. Scottish Union Learning is part of the STUC - Scotland's Trade Union Centre.

**Web:** scottishunionlearning.com

**Facebook:** scottishunionlearning

**LinkedIn:** scottish-union-learning



**Scottish Hazards** campaigns for improved worker Health and Safety throughout Scotland and better working conditions worldwide. We provide advice and support to workers in Scotland who are not unionised and have inadequate access to occupational Health and Safety expertise. We also provide support and advocacy for families who have lost loved ones through work.

**Tel:** 07736167404 **Helpline:** 0800 0015 022

**Email:** info@hazards.scot

**X:** @ScottishHazards;

**Web:** hazards.scot

**Facebook:** facebook.com/ScottishHazards



**STUC Unions into Schools** delivers classroom sessions to S3 to S6 pupils on Rights at Work and the Role of Unions. Since 2005 Unions into Schools has delivered around 3000 sessions to young people and involved students and teachers in STUC Congress and Conferences.

**Tel:** 07791704682

**Email:** schools@stuc.org.uk

**Web:** stuc.org.uk/fair-unions-schools



**The Scottish Pensioners' Forum** was set up in 1992 as a campaigning organisation calling for a better deal for older people. With continued changes to welfare rights and the state pension age, many pensioners, predominantly women, face even more hardship as a result of this. Join with us to fight for dignity and security in older age

**Tel:** 0141 337 8113

**X:** @ScotPensForum

**Web:** scottishpensioners.org.uk



**The Scottish Women's Convention (SWC)**, established in 2003, ensures women's voices influence policy. We engage with women across Scotland through our events and surveys. The information gathered at these events is then compiled and reported to key decision-makers at a national and international level.

**Tel:** 0141 339 4797

**Web:** scottishwomensconvention.org





### **Thompsons Solicitors**

**X:** @TalkToThompsons

**Facebook:** Thompsons.Solicitors.Scotland

**Linkedin:** company/talk-to-thompsons/

**Instagram:** talktothompsons



### **The Ukraine Solidarity Campaign Scotland**

builds support for trade unionists, social and environmental movements in Ukraine, faced with Russia's criminal invasion, and their own neo-liberal government. We backed the recent Scottish UNISON branches delegation bringing moral and £15k financial support to Kharkiv trade unionists.

**Tel:** 07538419339

**X:** @USCScotland

**Web:** ukrainesolidarity.scot

**Instagram:** uscscotland

**Facebook:** facebook.com/USCScotland



**Trussell** is an anti-poverty charity and community of food banks, working to end hunger in Scotland and across the UK. We believe everyone should be able to afford the essentials.

**X:** @TrussellScot

**Blue Sky:** @trussellscot.bsky.social

**Web:** trussell.org.uk



At **Equate Scotland**, we make a positive difference for women in STEM, while shaping inclusive workplace cultures across organisations.

We are the national expert in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), enabling women studying and working in these key sectors to develop, by supporting their recruitment, retention, and progression.

**Tel:** 0131 455 5108

**Email:** info@equatescotland.org.uk

**Web:** equatescotland.org.uk

**X:** @EquateScotland

**Facebook:** facebook.com/equatescotland

# Constitution of the STUC Women's Conference

## 1. Title of Conference

The Annual Conference of representatives of affiliated organisations shall be known as the "Scottish TUC Women's Conference". Its purpose shall be to discuss issues which are of particular relevance to women.

## 2. Date of Annual Conference

The Conference shall meet annually over two consecutive days, in either late October or in the month of November.

## 3. Basis of Representation

The basis of representation shall be as under:

Each Trade Union affiliated to the STUC shall be entitled to appoint delegates on the following basis:

1 delegate for every 500 members, or part thereof, up to 5,000 members

1 delegate for each additional 5,000 members

Each Trades Union Council affiliated to the STUC shall be entitled to appoint no more than 3 delegates.

## 4. Women's Committee

i. General Council representation – Two members of the Committee shall be appointed by the General Council of the Scottish TUC.

ii. Elected members – There shall be eighteen elected members of the Committee on the following basis:

Trades Unions – 16 representatives

Trades Union Councils – 2 representatives

Trade Unions with up to 10,000 women members are entitled to nominate one woman to the Women's Committee. Trade Unions are permitted to nominate additional women to the Committee for each additional 10,000 women members, up to a

maximum of three nominees.

Nominees must be delegates to the Women's Conference.

## Conduct of Elected STUC Women's Committee Members

If at any time there appears to the General Council to be justification for an investigation into the conduct of an elected member of the Committee on the grounds that the activities of that member may be contrary to the objects of the STUC, or to Trade Union principles, or to the declared policy of the STUC, or on the grounds that the member has contravened or failed to obey any requirement of these rules, or on the grounds of the member's standing with his or her affiliated organisation, the STUC President may appoint a Sub-Committee consisting of three other members from the General Council to carry out such an investigation.

In the event that the member, whose conduct is the subject of this Rule is the President, the Vice President may appoint the Sub-Committee. The Committee shall thereafter investigate the alleged conduct. If, after such investigation, the Sub-Committee considers that there is a case to answer in respect of said conduct, it shall give notification to the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, and to the member concerned of the conduct complained of and of the ground or grounds of complaint.

Upon receiving such notification from the Sub-Committee, the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall, within a reasonable period, summon the member concerned to a hearing. At the hearing, the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall hear, in the presence of the member concerned, any evidence, information, or explanation presented by the Sub-Committee in respect of the alleged conduct.

Thereafter, the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall give the member concerned an opportunity of presenting such evidence, information and explanation, if any, as it wishes to present.

Upon conclusion of the hearing, the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall have the power to decide whether the member has been guilty of the alleged conduct. In the event of the member having been found guilty of the said conduct, the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall afford to the member an opportunity to present such further evidence, information and explanation as he or she wishes in relation to imposition of penalty, and shall thereafter have power to reprimand, and/or suspend the member or to recommend the removal of the member from the Committee.

The President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall notify the member concerned of his or her decision including the penalty to be imposed. The member, if dissatisfied with the decision of the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, or the penalty imposed, shall have the right of appeal to the General Council. The member's intention to appeal shall be communicated in writing to the General Secretary within seven days of the initial decision. The General Council shall hold a meeting to hear an appeal within one month of the notification to appeal having been received.

The President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall submit a report to the General Council setting out the reasons for the decision taken. The report shall also be made available to the member at the same time. The member shall have the right to be heard by the General Council. The General Council may decide to affirm or revoke or otherwise amend the decision of the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, or to affirm or revoke the penalty and may, if a recommendation to that effect has been made, remove the member from the Committee.

The decision of the General Council shall be final and conclusive. Members of the Sub-Committee appointed to investigate any case against the member and the President, or Vice President if the member concerned is the President, shall not

be entitled to be present at any stage during, or to vote, or take any other part in the deliberation of the General Council as to its findings in respect of the alleged conduct, or in respect of penalty.

### **Duties of the STUC Women's Committee**

It shall be the duty of the Committee to implement the policies agreed by the Conference, in line with the requirements of these rules. At all times, in undertaking this duty, the Committee shall recognise the sovereignty of the policies determined by the Annual Congress.

The Committee shall prepare a Report of its work for submission to the Conference and shall include in it a record of attendance of members at Committee meetings.

## **5. Standing Orders**

### **i. Hours of meeting**

The Annual Conference shall assemble at 9.30am on both days, shall conclude at 5.15pm on the first day, and conclude no later than 4.00pm on the second day.

### **ii. Conference Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the Women's Committee shall be the Chairperson of the Scottish TUC Women's Conference.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Committee shall appoint either one of the Committee's Co-Vice Chairs to take the Chair of the Conference.

### **iii. Business of the Annual Conference**

Included in the business of the Annual Conference shall be the consideration of the Report of the Women's Committee and of motions and amendments. The Report and the Agenda for the Conference shall be sent to delegates no later than two weeks prior to the Conference.

### **iv. Appointment of Scrutineers and Tellers**

The appointment of three Ballot Scrutineers (if required, if there is a Ballot for either the Women's Committee and/or the Standing Orders Committee) and three Tellers, who shall be approved by delegates at the start of the Annual Conference.

### **v. Standing Orders Committee**

Matters relating to the running and business of Conference will be dealt with by a Standing Orders

Committee. This Committee will consist of three members nominated by affiliated organisations in advance of Conference and elected by Conference. Nominees, who must be delegates to Conference, cannot be both members of the STUC Women's Committee and the Standing Orders Committee, and will be elected by delegates from affiliated organisations to the Women's Conference. No affiliated organisation may nominate more than one member.

The Secretary to the Women's Committee will be the Secretary to the Standing Orders Committee.

#### vi. Limitation of Speakers

No more than five minutes shall be allowed for the mover of a motion and no more than three minutes for each subsequent speaker.

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

#### vii. Closure

The Previous Question, Next Business, or the Closure of the Debate may be moved and seconded only by those delegates who have not previously spoken during the debate and there shall be no speeches on such motions. Should the Closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply in accordance with Standing Order 5 (vi).

#### viii. Voting

The method of voting at the Scottish TUC Women's Conference on all matters, except the election of representatives to serve on the Women's Committee and the Standing Orders Committee, shall be by voice or show of hands.

#### ix. Suspension of Standing Orders

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

#### x. Chairperson's Ruling

The Chairperson's ruling shall be final.

### 6. Motions

i. Motions for the Annual Conference Agenda must be signed by the Secretary of the organisation sending them and must reach the General Secretary

of the Scottish TUC at least ten weeks before the time fixed for Annual Conference, the maximum number of motions submitted by an affiliated organisation being two. Individual motions must not exceed 300 words. Motions submitted for debate must be on issues of particular relevance to women. The competency of motions shall be determined by the Standing Orders Committee.

ii. Such motions shall be sent to each affiliated organisation entitled to be represented at the Conference as soon as possible after the closing date for their submission. The order in which subjects shall be discussed shall be decided by the Women's Committee.

iii. All amendments to motions submitted by affiliated organisations must reach the General Secretary of the STUC by a date to be decided by the Women's Committee. Such amendments must be signed by the Secretary of the organisation submitting them. Individual amendments to motions must not exceed 50 words. The competency of amendments shall be determined by the Standing Orders Committee.

iv. Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Women's Committee or any affiliated organisation shall be permitted to submit an emergency motion for the consideration of delegates to the Annual Conference.

Any emergency motion must be submitted by 1.00pm on the first day of Conference. Each emergency motion must not exceed 300 words. The competency of any such emergency motion shall be determined by the Standing Orders Committee.





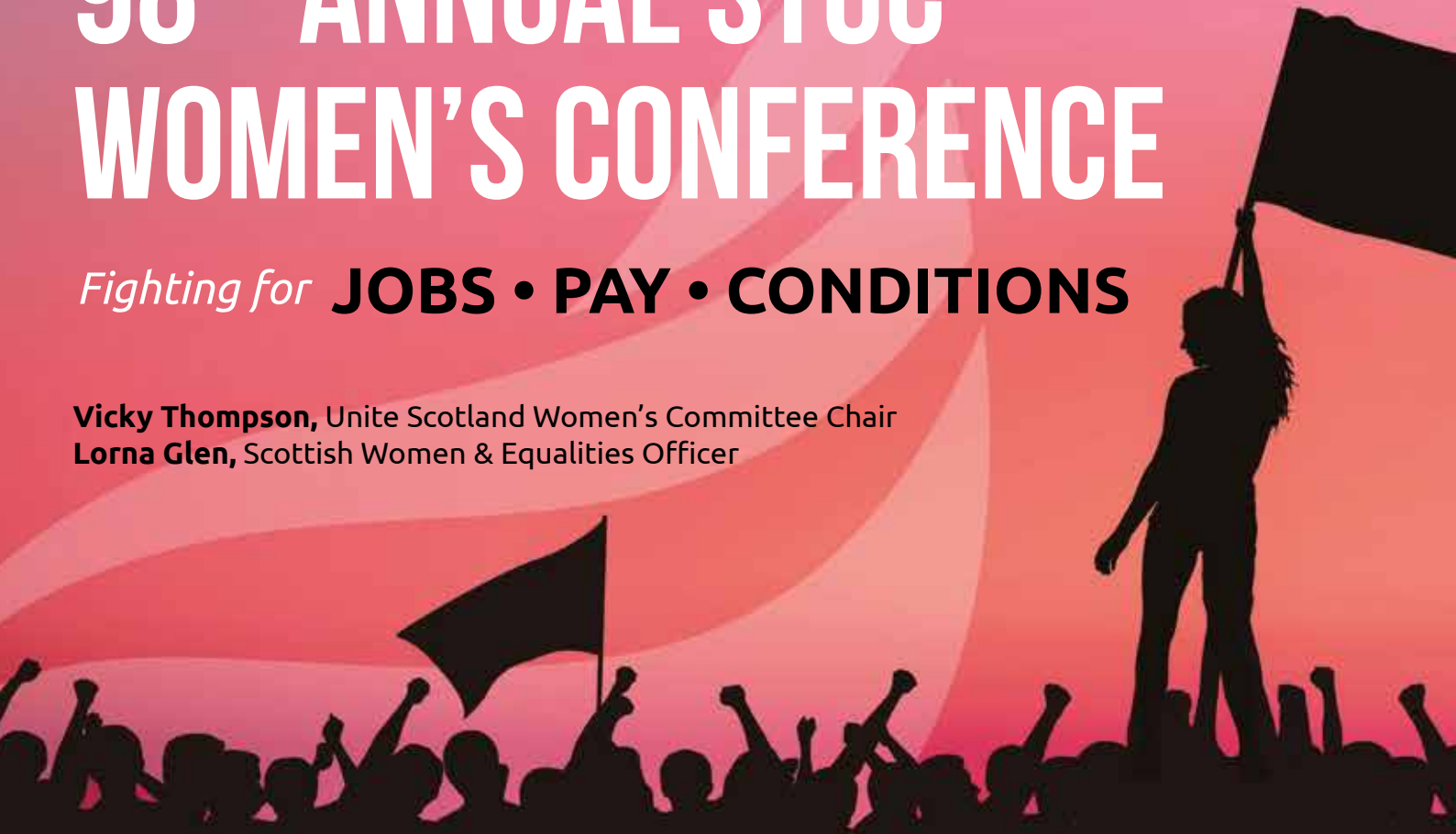
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**Vicky Thompson**, Unite Scotland Women's Committee Chair  
**Lorna Glen**, Scottish Women & Equalities Officer



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