



stuc

**DISABLED
WORKERS'
CONFERENCE
2024**

***THINKING DIFFERENTLY:
CHAMPIONING NEURODIVERGENCE
AT WORK***

AGENDA

21ST ANNUAL STUC DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE

SATURDAY 23RD & SUNDAY 24TH NOVEMBER 2024

CHAIRPERSON: CAROL WOOD (NASUWT)

CAMPAIGNING FOR A BETTER DEAL

**NASUWT WELCOMES ALL
DELEGATES TO THE
21ST ANNUAL STUC DISABLED
WORKERS' CONFERENCE**

**GOOD LUCK TO THE CHAIR:
CAROL WOOD, NASUWT**

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CONFERENCE SESSIONS

**SATURDAY
23RD NOVEMBER**

10:00am - 12:45pm

1:45pm - 4:30pm

**SUNDAY
24TH NOVEMBER**

10:00am - 1:00pm

CONFERENCE AGENDA

- i) Secretary's Welcome
- ii) Address by Chairperson
- iii) Announcements
- iv) Consideration of Reports and Motions
- v) Speakers
- vi) Election of Committee 2024/25
- vii) Vote of Thanks and Close of Conference

Secretariat to the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee:

Linda Somerville, STUC Deputy General Secretary

Tracey Dalling, STUC Equality Policy Officer

Daniel Schirn, STUC Committees and Admin Officer

STUC EQUALITY CONFERENCES

A - Z GUIDE

AMENDMENT

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

CONGRESS

STUC Congress is the STUC annual conference which formulates policy and shapes the main priority campaigns for the whole 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 submitted by affiliated trade unions or trades union councils to be debated at conference or congress. 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.

OBSERVER

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

POLICY

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

SECONDER

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

STANDING ORDERS

The rules for the conference - they note how the debate will be conducted, voting will take place and any other procedures that need to be followed. The standing orders also note the composition and deadlines for motions and amendments.



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CONFERENCE GREETINGS

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CONFERENCE GUIDE

WHO ATTENDS THE DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE?

- Trade Unions with membership of up to 10,000 - 6 delegates
- Trade Unions with membership over 10,000 - 6 delegates plus one for every 10,000 members or part thereof
- Trades Union Councils - up to 6 delegates

Observers / Visitors sit together in a separate section of the Conference Room and are not allowed to vote. Also in attendance are STUC staff and exhibitors.

HOW LONG DOES THE CONFERENCE LAST?

The Conference lasts two days. It normally opens at 10:00am on the first day (with registration from 09:30 am), closing at approximately 4:30 pm. It assembles at 10.00 am on the second day until approximately 1.00 pm.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS?

The Disabled Workers' 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 Carol Wood of NASUWT.

WHAT ROLE DOES THE DISABLED WORKERS' COMMITTEE PLAY AT CONFERENCE?

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee sit on the platform, together with a member of STUC staff – usually the Secretary to the Committee.

HOW IS THE DISABLED WORKERS' COMMITTEE ELECTED?

The Disabled Workers' Committee comprises 10 members in the Trades Union Section and 1 member in the Trades Union Council Section, and are nominated on the

following basis:

Trades Unions and Trades Union Councils can nominate 1 member to the general seat and / or to one of the women's seats on the Committee. Nominees must be part of the nominating affiliates' delegation to Conference.

If there are more than 5 members nominated to the Trades Union General Seats; 5 members nominated to the Trades Union Women's Seats and / or more than 1 member nominated in the Trades Union Council Section, then an election at Conference will be necessary.

Each delegation leader will receive a ballot paper and can vote up to 10 candidates from the Trades Union Section (5 from the General seats and 5 from the Women's seats); and 1 from the Trades Union Council Section. Delegations are requested to deposit completed ballot papers in the ballot box by 5.00 pm on the first day of Conference, when votes are counted by 2 scrutineers who are appointed at the start of Conference. The results are then announced on the Sunday morning of Conference. Successful candidates hold office from close of Conference for one year.

WHAT DOES THE CONFERENCE DISCUSS?

Each Trades Union and Trades Union Council can submit up to 2 motions, on topics which must relate specifically to the working lives of disabled people in Scotland. Each motion can be no more than 300 words. Motions are published in a Preliminary Agenda and Trades Unions/ Trades Union Councils are then invited to submit up to 2 amendments which can be no more than 50 words for each amendment.

Certain motions on the Preliminary Agenda, together with amendments, may be grouped into a composite motion, with the agreement of the Trades Unions/Trades

Union Councils concerned.

The Motions and amendments are included within the Conference Agenda which is given to all delegates and visitors.

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 Statement: If necessary, a Committee member will explain to Conference any particular points they wish to emphasise or 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 report on behalf of the Committee.

HOW ARE DEBATES CONDUCTED?

- i. Moving and Seconding Motion: The mover of a motion may speak for up to 8 minutes and the seconder is allowed up to 4 minutes. It is important that these times are adhered to. If business overruns allocated time, it may be necessary during the course of the Conference for the Committee to reduce speaking times.
- ii. Debate and the right of reply: Subsequent speakers on the motion are allowed up to 4 minutes. 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 4 minutes to reply to the

discussion on the motion, but no new issues may be introduced.

- iii. Moving an amendment: The proposer of an amendment is called to speak immediately after the seconder of the motion. Amendments also have to be seconded or they fail. Further amendments are called in their order on the agenda. Delegates moving amendments have no right of reply.
- iv. Group Debate: Some motions cover similar topics for discussion and may be grouped together for debate and voted on separately once moved. There are no Group Debates this year.
- v. 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, 2-4 tellers are appointed prior to Conference to count the votes in the event of a close vote.
- vi. Point of Order: Delegates can raise points of order on the conduct or procedure of the debates.
- vii. Chair's Ruling: The Chair's ruling is final.

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 Chair or Secretary of the Disabled Workers' Committee no later than 3:00pm 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 the Disabled Workers' Committee. If deemed competent they will be circulated to delegates prior to being discussed.

REPORT OF THE STUC DISABLED WORKERS' COMMITTEE

As well as discussing motions, the Conference receives the Report of the Disabled Workers' 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 Work Plan 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.



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DISABILITY JUSTICE – PART OF THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE

The Trade Union movement has a long and proud tradition of taking the lead on campaigning for equality including for disabled workers, we are also proud to have supported through our actions struggles for equality internationally. We believe in collective liberation, disability liberation being no different – tied to the liberation of others.

Inspired by the South African experience, the Boycott Sanctions Divestment Movement (BDS) has become an important organising tool for intersectional struggles worldwide, placing Palestinians at the forefront of a global fight. As an organisation focused on building solidarity with the Palestinian people through BDS, the Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign opposes all forms of discrimination and welcomes the alliance of Scottish Disabled Workers.

“When this genocide is over, we will study ‘mass disablement’ as a criminal phenomenon on its own accord”

– Francesca Albanese UN Special Rapporteur Occupied Palestinian Territories

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Scottish Union Learning is keen to work with the STUC Disabled Workers Committee to support the development of the workplace skills base of disabled workers.

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MOTIONS & AMENDMENTS

STUC DISABLED WORKERS

CONFERENCE 2024

SECTION ONE: SAFE & ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT

1. PEAK RAIL FARES

“That this Conference is deeply frustrated and disappointed with the Scottish Government’s decision to reintroduce peak fares on 27 September 2024 after it achieved 7% of the 10% target increase in passengers during the trial.

“Conference believes that peak fares are a stealth tax on workers and that re-introducing peak fares will harm the ability to truly achieve modal shift or climate change targets by encouraging private motor vehicle use for commuting through cost prohibition.

“Whilst disabled passengers can utilise a Disabled Persons Railcard to secure a third off during peak times, the reintroduction of peak fares will still see the cost of travel increase for railcard users, this is compounded by the recent reduction of the discount offered by railcards.

“The National Entitlement Card (NEC) meanwhile offers differing benefits and restrictions depending on the holder’s local council, meaning a holder in Strathclyde can use the card at anytime whilst a holder in Fife can only use the card after the morning peak, resulting in some disabled workers facing a higher increase than others for rail travel depending on their region within Scotland.

“Conference believes that the Scottish Government’s decision is short-sighted and could

cause lasting damage in workers’ confidence in the use of rail for commuting.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- write to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport calling for the removal of peak fares for rail travel, highlighting that those in possession of a Disabled Persons Railcard will face a further rise as the railcard benefit has been reduced; and
- write to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport to request that Transport Scotland review the use of the NEC across Scotland with a view to providing a consistent benefit to holders for local rail travel following the return of peak fares.”

Mover: Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

2. RAIL TRANSPORT FOR ALL

“That this Conference notes that whilst a lot of transport is devolved, rail accessibility is still a matter that is mainly reserved to the UK Government. As such, Conference notes that the change of the UK Government in Westminster presents an opportunity for the introduction of legislative changes which can improve accessibility on Scotland’s railways.

“The Department for Transport (DfT) undertook an accessibility audit of all UK railway stations in 2021 to highlight locations that needed work, which concluded in February 2023.

“Whilst progress is slowly being made with new accessible stations at Leven and Cameron Bridge, there is still much more to be done with platforms too short and current train coaches inaccessible resulting in disabled passengers

being overcarried.

“Scotrail is planning to replace 65% of its train fleet between 2027 and 2035 and this presents an opportunity for accessibility improvements on Scotrail’s trains.

“Currently, facilities for disabled persons, including wheelchair spaces are determined by The Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998. A lot has changed with train design since then and it is important that the legal minimum is appropriate for the 21st century.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- lobby the DfT to deliver on making the railways accessible following their accessibility audit and for the audit to be published in the public domain;
- publicly highlight all the stations in Scotland that need accessibility improvements and campaign for the works to be carried out when the DfT audit is published;
- lobby the UK Secretary of State for Transport to review the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 1998 and update it for the modern world; and
- write to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport to ask them to ensure that Scotrail’s new fleet is fully accessible and far exceeds the current legal minimum requirements.”

Mover: Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen

Amendment:

After the fifth paragraph insert a new paragraph:

“Conference believes that the presence of staff at stations and on trains is of vital importance for making the railway accessible and notes with concern that around two-thirds of ScotRail stations are unstaffed.”

Last bullet point, after “accessible” add:

“with a safety critical guard on board all services”

Amendment Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

3. IMPROVING DISABILITY ACCESS ON SCOTTISH ISLAND FERRIES

“That this Conference notes with concern the significant challenges faced by disabled individuals when using Scottish island ferries. Despite the vital role these ferries play in connecting island communities, many vessels remain inaccessible to those with disabilities.

“Reports indicate that ferries, particularly older ones, lack essential features such as ramps, lifts, and accessible toilets, making travel difficult and at times, impossible for disabled passengers.

“This Conference acknowledges the legal requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010, which mandate that all public transport services, including ferries, must be accessible to disabled individuals.

“However, it is evident that many ferries built before these regulations came into effect do not meet these standards.

“We call upon the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to lobby the Scottish Government and relevant authorities to prioritise the modernisation of the ferry fleet, ensuring that all new vessels are fully accessible.

“Also, we urge the implementation of interim measures to improve accessibility on existing ferries, such as installing portable ramps and providing staff training on assisting disabled passengers.

“In addition, the Scottish Government should be increasing funding for ferry services to support these necessary upgrades and to ensure that all passengers, regardless of their physical abilities, can travel safely and comfortably.

“By addressing these issues, we can promote inclusivity and ensure that our island communities remain connected and accessible to everyone.”

Mover: Communications Workers Union

Amendment:

Para 1, line 2, before ‘disabled’ insert ‘some’

Para 1, line 6, delete ‘disabilities’ and insert ‘certain disabilities and accessibility needs’.

Para 2, line 2, delete ‘essential’ and line 3 delete ‘making travel difficult and at times, impossible for disabled passengers’, and after ‘toilets’ insert ‘which are essential to some disabled

passengers, making travel difficult and at times impossible.’

Para 6, line 4, delete ‘on assisting disabled passengers’ and insert ‘for passengers who require assistance’.

Amendment Mover: Unite the Union

4. DIGNITY WHEN TRAVELLING

“That this Conference notes, where is the dignity when travelling via an aircraft and also their accompanying carers throughout their journey through the airport and when boarding the plane, and then the journey on the plane and to go through it all again when you all come out the other side.

“The signposts for disabled do nothing to protect the characteristics as they are visibly segregated from other passengers in an openly visible area.

“When on the aircraft the toilets are not big enough if the disabled passenger would need to use them, but what if the passenger does not have the use of their legs, how do they get to the toilet.

“The aisle is not wide enough for the wheelchair, so the passenger cannot use it, the chair has to go into luggage hold, or at the front of the plane depending on the dimensions of the chair, but it is not guaranteed that the chair will not be damaged.

“Conference asks that the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee:

- lobby the MP’s, MSP’s and also the airlines to find a way to assist disabled passengers when boarding a plane to go on holiday with dignity, and that dignity is also shown especially when the passenger has to use the toilet”.

Mover: GMB Scotland

5. MAKING SCOTLAND’S RAILWAYS ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

“That this Conference notes with concern that around two-thirds of ScotRail stations are currently unstaffed and that disabled people in Scotland take around half as many journeys by rail as non-disabled people.

“Conference believes that the presence of staff, at stations and on trains is vital to making the railway properly accessible.

“Conference notes that plans by the previous Conservative UK Government to close around

1000 ticket offices, including the Avanti West Coast ticket office at Glasgow Central, were scrapped after an unprecedented public outcry. Conference notes that alongside the RMT, disabled and older people’s organisations were at the forefront of this campaign.

“Conference commends members of the RMT union for their successful campaign in 2024 to defend the role of the guard at ScotRail on the Barrhead and East Kilbride lines after it was threatened by the Scottish Government owned rail operator. Conference believes that there must be no future attempts by ScotRail to extend Driver Only Operation (DOO).

“Conference further welcomes the newly elected UK Labour Government which has committed to bring the UK’s privatised rail passenger services, including cross-border operators into public ownership in an integrated railway with enhanced powers for the devolved transport authorities. Conference further welcomes Labour’s stated commitment to keeping ticket offices open and making the railway properly accessible.

“Conference believes however that to make our railways fully accessible we need mass investment in new rail infrastructure and staff to ensure that passengers can turn up and go and travel independently.

“Conference therefore reconfirms its call for Scotland’s public transport networks to be accessible for disabled and older people with properly staffed public transport networks, no cuts to ticket offices and no extensions of DOO.”

Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

6. MAKING SCOTLAND’S FERRIES ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL

“That this Conference notes that the Scottish Government has tendered a design and build contract to replace seven small ferries on the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services contract operated by public sector company CalMac Ferries. Conference also notes that the average age of the seven ships which need replacing is 34 years and that these ships are not fully accessible to disabled passengers.

“Conference believes that all life-line ferry services should be run in the public sector to the benefit of all.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to lobby the Scottish Government to:

- award the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services contract to CalMac Ferries for the long term; and
- ensure that all public ferry services and associated infrastructure are fully accessible to all passengers supported by seafarer and port staff who are appropriately trained in line with RMT’s People’s CalMac campaign.”

Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers

SECTION TWO: DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING, & HARASSMENT

7. CALL OUT DISCRIMINATION

“That this Conference notes that with the state of the UK economy (most of it left over from previous government) some people’s senses have been heightened resulting in a lot more unrest among the general public. Many feel powerless and right-wing politicians and right-wing media claim the only way they can see themselves getting control back is by bullying vulnerable people including physically disabled people who they see as weaker than themselves.

“There is also a perception of disabled people receiving benefits draining the public purse dry therefore leaving less for them. This is grossly inaccurate and unjust.

“Aberdeen TUC calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- call out this discrimination (make a statement);
- encourage trade unions and trade councils to call it out as well; and
- call upon Trade Union Councils to have speakers on this subject on their St Andrew’s Day rallies.”

Mover: Aberdeen Trades Union Council

Amendment:

Paragraph 1, line 3, after ‘previous government)’ insert ‘far-right narratives have adversely impacted the general public’s view of people with protected characteristics.’

Paragraph 1, line 9, delete ‘physically’, delete ‘who they see as weaker than themselves’ and insert full stop after ‘people’.

In final bullet point, after ‘Councils to’, remove ‘have speakers on this subject’ and insert ‘invite speakers to support disabled people and denounce the current right-wing narrative’.

Amendment Mover: STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee

8. EHRC DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

“That this Conference welcomes the EHRC Strategic Priority which expressly outlines a requirement to challenge employers where there is evidence of consistent failures to make reasonable adjustments for workers. Despite the clear purpose of the Equality Act and specifically Sections 20 and 21 of the Equality Act 2010, which require those to whom the provisions apply, to “take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take” to avoid putting disabled people at “a substantial disadvantage, we are still seeing workers with disabilities facing disability discrimination at work.

“Conference notes the fact that the TUC is working closely with the EHRC on these priorities and calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to work with the TUC Disabled Workers Committee and other stakeholders to:

- encourage affiliates in Scotland to report employers to the EHRC who are systematically discriminating on the grounds of disability.
- lobby the EHRC to push for appropriate sanctions against such employers;
- provide a report to affiliates of data relating to relevant ET cases highlighting Respondents who are repeatedly found to breach disability law so perpetual offending employers can be identified; and
- launch a campaign highlighting those employers identified in the report who are accredited as ‘Disability Confident’ to be stripped of this status.”

Mover: Communication Workers Union

9. STANDING UP FOR SITTING DOWN

“That this Conference endorses the PDA Union campaign “Standing Up for Sitting Down”. The campaign calls for pharmacy employers to provide appropriate reasonable adjustments which are regularly reviewed, and for members to know their disability rights and have confidence to ask for reasonable adjustments. Fair work dictates that employers must create a compassionate culture where there is zero tolerance for disability discrimination against any employee.

“Conference notes that 40% of PDA members, individuals that are experienced, highly qualified health care professionals, but that also happen to have a disability have been excluded, underemployed or made unemployed. This is woeful and a sad indictment of a world that does not value people who have skills and want to be active members of the workforce but need adjustments to enable them to work safely and well.

“The PDA Ability Networks’ recent disability discrimination survey found that 52% of respondents had experienced disability discrimination at work. The PDA Union call on all employers in pharmacy to comply with their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act and Scotland’s fair work legislation, whether that is as simple as providing a chair for a disabled employee who cannot stand all shift or enabling a flexible working pattern for someone with a long-term health condition who is in chronic pain.

“Employers need to ensure that there is no room for disability discrimination in the workplace, and that their managers are fully trained to understand their responsibilities and how to take appropriate action to end discrimination.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to work with the STUC General Council to support the PDA campaign and demand that employers work constructively to create a culture where pharmacists with disabilities or long-term health conditions are valued, supported and protected from discrimination.”

Mover: The Pharmacists’ Defence Association

10. TAKING ACTION TO END BULLYING AND HARASSMENT OF DISABLED WORKERS

“That this Conference is deeply concerned by the extent to which disabled workers are exposed

to bullying and harassment at work. Research shows that over half of disabled workers compared to less than two fifths of non-disabled workers experience bullying and harassment at work. Young workers, women, LGBT+ and Black disabled workers are disproportionately impacted because of their unique combination of protected characteristics.

“Whilst bullying and harassment takes many forms and affects workers differently it can have a profoundly damaging impact on mental and physical health, on a person’s personal and working life and on workplace cultures. Stereotypes about disabled people fuel discrimination and less favourable treatment. They prevent disabled people getting into work, remaining in work and getting on in work. They also have broader implications and can limit how disabled workers behave in the workplace as they seek to avoid situations and people that might put them at further risk.

“Conference asserts that harassment and bullying at work is part of a larger pattern of discrimination experienced by disabled people.

“Disabled workers, disabled people’s organisations and trade unions need to be consulted about the design and implementation of effective and preventative workplace interventions.

“Conference welcomes the important role the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee plays in setting the record straight about the contribution disabled workers make, and asks the STUC to lobby the Scottish and Westminster Governments to:

- take positive action to change the way disabled people are viewed, valued and included in society;
- consult on extending the new preventative duty to sexual harassment to other forms of harassment including disability harassment; and
- reinstate standalone protection from third party harassment and enact Clause 14 of the Equality Act 2010 providing protection against discrimination that occurs for reasons related to a combination of protected characteristics.”

Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

SECTION THREE: NEURODIVERSITY

11. NEURODIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

“That this Conference reiterates its support for neurodivergent workers in Scotland.

“Conference highlights the benefits that neurodivergent workers bring to the workplace and society across Scotland including, but not limited to, a divergence of thought and vision.

“Conference believes that employers need to consider what can and should be done to support individuals and train managers in changes they can make to support a neurodivergent individual.

“Conference notes that:

- according to the NAIT Adult Neurodevelopmental Pathways report 1 in 10 people are neurodivergent in Scotland.
- many neurodivergent workers still face unnecessary challenges in workplaces across Scotland.
- a disability employment gap of 31.9% exists within Scotland.
- neurodivergent workers in Scotland often feel excluded from the world of work.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- lobby the Scottish Government on their plans to introduce a Bill championing the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergent conditions ensuring that:
 - i. the interests of neurodivergent workers are championed.
 - ii. the voices of neurodivergent workers are heard in the development of the Government’s Bill.
 - iii. a Bill championing the rights of people with learning disabilities, autism and neurodivergent conditions is developed, delivered and implemented in full.
- facilitate the development and sharing of training, guides, and supportive practices around neurodivergence between trade

unions and employers that operate within Scotland; and

- campaign for employers to train managers to better understand the nuances of neurodiversity and to recognise that small reasonable adjustments can be made in the same way they are for visible disabilities: to make job adverts more appealing, hiring processes easier, and to allow employees to flourish in the workplace who are not ‘neuro typical.’”

Mover: Community

12. NEURODIVERGENCE WORKPLACE TOOLKIT

“That this Conference notes current research estimates 10-15% of the Scottish population is neurodivergent. NHS Scotland employs 181,157 people, which equates to around 27,173 employees who are neurodivergent. The number of neurodivergent healthcare professionals in Scotland is increasing, however exact numbers are unknown because of lack of diagnosis and fear of prejudice.

“Although ‘neurodiversity’ refers to the diversity of all individuals, it is commonly used in relation to learning disabilities, ADHD, and other neurological or developmental disorders, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

“RCM has seen a rise in member feedback and requests for assistance regarding individual neurodivergent challenges within the workplace. Challenges were mirrored within midwifery education from student members. To assist neurodivergent midwifery students and reduce challenges in navigating undergraduate courses, RCM has created a Neurodivergence Acceptance Toolkit that assists and encourages providers of midwifery education to assess all their procedures, from recruitment to accreditation, to guarantee the delivery of a comprehensive and inclusive midwifery education. It provides an accessible environment where neurodiverse students can thrive as they train.

“Many of the principles of the toolkit apply to qualified midwives and other healthcare professionals, even though the target audience is students. Extrapolating the toolkit, would develop a Neurodivergence Workplace toolkit that implements procedures that meet standards and considers the abilities and needs of workers with neurodivergence. This toolkit is imperative

to fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce that allows neurodiverse employees to contribute distinctive perspectives and problem-solving techniques.

“RCM calls on Conference and the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to endorse and support the proposal of developing a Neurodivergence Workplace Toolkit to secure NHS Scotland’s position as a leading employer and innovator in healthcare delivery with an inclusive workforce. This can be achieved by assisting each worker in discovering their full potential and fostering an ideal workplace.”

Mover: Royal College of Midwives

13. SHORTER WAITING TIMES AND BETTER POST DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE

“That this Conference notes that autism can cause significant social, communication and behavioural difficulties that can impact all aspects of life.

“In Scotland thousands of people with suspected autism are waiting up to four and a half years just to be invited to begin their diagnostic process. Early diagnosis and intervention have been proven to contribute to positive outcomes for children and young people and are key to them receiving the right support in education, the workplace and at home.

“With a diagnosis being key in accessing many supports, entitlements and benefits this leaves people feeling let down, left out and frustrated that valuable time is being lost while they remain on waiting lists.

“Many people feel so distressed and unsupported that they have felt their only option is to seek help by paying for costly private assessments which in turn creates a two-tier health system that will see those from disadvantaged backgrounds left waiting longer.

“We acknowledge that whilst the pandemic has negatively impacted services, all children and young people deserve to have timely assessments and the vital support they need at the earliest possible stage in their development.

“Conference calls upon the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- put pressure on the Scottish Government to put additional resources into autism services

and address these appalling waiting times;

- raise awareness of and promote inclusive practices; and
- campaign to advocate for people to receive timely and appropriate supports.”

Mover: Unite the Union

Amendment:

Para 1, line 1, delete “autism” insert “societal barriers”, and, after “life” insert “for autistic people”

Para 2, line 1, before “people” insert “potentially autistic”, delete “with suspected autism”

Amednment Mover: The Educational Institute of Scotland

SECTION FOUR: CUTS

14. IMPACT OF EDUCATION CUTS

“That this Conference notes with grave concern the impact of Education cuts, including those by Glasgow City Council, which are having an adverse effect on the health and wellbeing of teachers and the ability to provide quality education to learners, including those with additional support needs.

“Conference believes that these cuts compound the difficulties caused by large class sizes, insufficient time for teachers to prepare, and a systemic lack of resourcing for additional support needs provision, and contribute further to the high levels of workplace stress for the education profession.

“Conference further believes that underfunding results in an overstretched workforce and a lack of flexibility within the workplace, which may in turn impact disabled people’s access to reasonable adjustments, making this a health and safety matter as well as a disability equality issue, for both teachers and learners.

“Conference notes research by the EIS showing that violent and aggressive behaviour has increased significantly across schools in Scotland, putting education staff at risk of workplace injury and highlighting the imperative for additional funding to address the underlying

causes of harmful behaviour.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- issue a statement in support of Glasgow EIS campaign “Teachers Make Glasgow”, condemning the cuts to Education, most notably a reduction of 450 teacher jobs;
- use the recent research from the education sector on violent and aggressive behaviour towards staff, to inform any ongoing and future work related to Health and Safety, and within campaigning on protections related to workplace injury.”

Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland

15. CREATIVE SCOTLAND

“That this Conference notes the closure and subsequent reinstatement of Creative Scotland’s Open Fund for Individuals, Access to Music and Strengthening Youth Music funds, all within a few weeks, represents a precarious landscape for musicians in Scotland, particularly those who are disabled and/or young.

“Justified through the Scottish Government’s decision to freeze all non-contracted, non-essential spending, essential work and learning opportunities tied to funded projects and programmes have been significantly impacted. This also follows delays to funding decisions earlier in the year, which saw both organisations and individuals deeply impacted.

“The global pandemic, Brexit, cost of living and arts funding crises have had a profound impact on disabled musicians’ ability to create and deliver projects, and earn a living from this work.

“Disabled musicians often face ableism and barriers to employment opportunities and are navigating some of the most challenging conditions simply to be able to work and earn a living. The precarity of these vital funds removes a significant avenue towards working and earning.

“Years of standstill funding and underinvestment has meant that the creative industries, organisations, and individuals who practise within it desperately need stability now more than ever.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to lobby Scottish Government to:

- raise public revenue and increase investment in the arts and cultural sector through the STUC’s progressive taxation recommendations;
- provide ringfenced, sustainable funding, for disabled musicians in Scotland, and establish a targeted fund for disabled musicians to provide more robust financial support to cover accessible equipment, training and other requirements for disabled musicians and creative freelancers;
- commit to ensuring that disabled musicians are not overlooked or disadvantaged in the forthcoming review of Creative Scotland; and
- ensure the needs of disabled musicians and creative freelancers are represented in all discussions on arts funding and policy.”

Mover: Musician’s Union

16. FAILURE TO SUPPORT ASN IN SCHOOLS

“That this Conference notes that resources and specialist provision for learners with additional support needs, such as neurodivergent conditions, learning disabilities, and physical disabilities that impact learning, are reducing, whereas, with better diagnostic tools, the number of learners being identified as requiring support in learning is increasing.

“Conference notes that in many schools, 48% or more learners now have an identified support need for learning.

“Conference believes that:

- presumption of the mainstream and integration masquerading as inclusion is not working;
- children with severe and complex needs, including multiple neurodivergent conditions, are likely to have a disability within the definition of the Equality Act 2010 and should be able to access education as part of the wider Single Equality Duty;
- specialist provision is being eroded with the closure of special schools, while the use of school buildings for enhanced supervision which are not fit for this purpose is often seen as the cheaper option and not based on the needs of children;
- children are being prevented from accessing meaningful education as is their right;

- class sizes for learners with ASN/SfL were established in 1985 and do not reflect the situation in 21st-century schools.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to campaign for:

- the end of the presumption of mainstream and integration masquerading as inclusion;
- the reopening of special centres for children with severe and complex needs, including multiple neurodivergent conditions;
- effective staffing and resources of the centres;
- sufficient and effective staffing and resources in mainstream establishments, including sufficient and effective staffing and resources to support learners with ASN;
- the right of all of our school communities to feel safe.”

Mover: NASUWT

First Amendment:

Add new bullet point after para 4, bullet point 3:

- “support to reduce class sizes from 10 to 6 and increase the ratio of staff to learners so that the resources required can be allocated to the most vulnerable learners in our schools”

Amendment Mover: STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee

Second Amendment:

Para 1, line 6, delete ‘with better diagnostic tools’

Para 3, bullet point (BP) 1 – delete ‘masquerading as inclusion is not working’ and insert ‘are sound educational principles but a lack of resourcing is impeding implementation’

Final paragraph, BP 1 - delete ‘the end’ and insert, ‘sufficient funding to support implementation’, then delete ‘mainstream’ to the end of the BP and insert ‘mainstreaming’.

Final paragraph, BP 2 - delete ‘centres for children with severe and complex needs, including multiple neurodivergent conditions’ and insert ‘schools for children whose needs cannot be adequately met in mainstream provision’

Final paragraph, BP 3 - delete ‘effective’ and insert ‘sufficient specialist’, then delete ‘the centres’ and insert ‘schools’

Final paragraph, BP 4, delete ‘effective’ and

insert ‘specialist’ in the first line; delete ‘including sufficient and effective staffing and resources’.

Amendment Mover: The Educational Institute of Scotland

SECTION FIVE: MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

17. MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY

“That this Conference believes that mental health is a workplace issue, and a disability rights issue.

“Conference notes that discrimination, stigma and bias associated with disability issues may cause or exacerbate stress, and contribute to ill mental and physical health.

“Conference further notes that groups who are at risk of experiencing inequality and discrimination related to their protected characteristics, may need tailored support that is informed by an understanding of inequality-related trauma.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- raise awareness of the issue of mental health as a disability equality issue, for example during Mental Health Awareness week;
- consider possible avenues for peer discussion to provide support and organise around mental health for disabled workers;
- provide guidance and learning resources to Health and Safety Reps on disability and reasonable adjustments in relation to mental health; and
- campaign for the use of disability passports to include reasonable adjustments related to mental health, and ‘hidden’ disabilities”.

Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland

Amendment:

After Para 3, insert new paragraph:

“Conference notes the value of disability (or reasonable adjustments) passports so that adjustments do not need to be restated or explained and can stay with the worker when jobs change.”

Amendment Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers

18. DISCRETIONARY SICK PAY

“That this Conference agrees that, to varying degrees, the following policies and agreements can positively protect workers from losing their jobs (in particular through the misapplication of sickness absence measures):

- the counting of disability-related absences separately from sickness absence;
- the establishment of a disability leave provision;
- the utilisation of a discretionary extension of sick pay.

“Conference notes that, while some employers have a sick pay policy that includes a discretionary period which means the employer can offer better pay for some sickness circumstances, such clauses are inconsistently applied.

“Conference continues to believe the pandemic shone a light on the inadequacy of statutory and contractual sick pay provisions with many employees finding themselves unfit for work for over 12 months, certainly compounded by increased waiting times for diagnosis and treatment.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- support information sharing between affiliates to identify good practice models which assist disabled workers to maintain employment;
- provide advice and training on how to negotiate improved local policies and procedures, such as attendance, sickness, capability, and redundancy procedures; and
- provide an intersectional lens to advice on sick pay, sickness absence and disability leave models, ensuring intersectional disadvantage is acknowledged and no employee is discriminated against as a result of any protected characteristic.”

Mover: NASUWT

19. UPDATING NHS SCOTLAND ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEDICAL EXCLUSION FOLLOWING INFECTIOUS OR NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

“That this Conference notes the spread of Pertussis this year has affected many health staff at private contractor operated sites, like community pharmacies. The rising number of cases recorded may be inaccurate because many staff who have become ill do not seek help and continue to work while ill and infectious to others, because they cannot afford to be off sick on statutory sick pay of £116.75 per week, or 26% of the minimum wage. Pertussis is just one of many notifiable diseases.

“Through no fault of theirs, patient facing health and care workers are more likely to catch these infections, they are exposed to them on a daily basis by their work and should not be financially penalised if they are infected.

“Conference believes these staff should be covered by the established arrangements for medical exclusion and suspension if they contract an infectious or notifiable disease whereby employees are entitled to payment as if at work during the period of illness and infectivity.

“This is described as a supportive action that applies when there is a health-related concern that may mean an employee is a risk to themselves, colleagues or others. ‘Others’ includes vulnerable, elderly, disabled, or immuno-compromised patients that should not be exposed to significantly higher risk in health facilities by the presence of infected staff.

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to lobby the Scottish Government to update NHS Scotland’s Attendance Policy to include all workers who deliver NHS services at all sites where health and social care is provided. Including those who deliver NHS services from private contractor owned premises including pharmacies, optometry, dental and GP practices. This will enable all health and care staff to protect their fellow workers and patients receiving their services from the infection risk and entirely avoidable disease.”

Mover: The Pharmacists’ Defence Association

20. MEN MATTER TRADE UNIONS!

“That this Conference notes that suicide remains the biggest cause of death for men under 50 in Scotland. In 2022, there were 753 deaths by suicide; 80% (602) of those who took their own lives were male. This equates to 2 deaths of men and boys every day of the year. The suicide rate in Scotland remains consistently higher than in other UK nations, most recently, 13.9 per 100,000 deaths compared to 12.3 in Northern Ireland and 10.7% in both England and Wales.

“A 2023 report by Disability Rights UK noted that disabled men were three times more likely to die by suicide than non-disabled.

“Scotland’s 10-Year National Suicide Prevention Strategy (2022) entitled ‘Creating Hope Together’ is welcome, however, there is scant detail of the role Trade Unions can play.

“A Priory Study of Scottish men in employment found 77% have suffered symptoms of poor mental health. 72% have never spoken to anyone about their mental health fearing embarrassment or stigma and felt it would take suicidal thoughts or self-harm to compel them to seek professional help.

“Enough is enough - trade unions must become part of the solution. We call on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- publicise and promote the National Suicide Prevention Strategy ‘Creating Hope Together’;
- encourage brave men to come forward and champion work towards creating safe spaces within our unions where men can share and discuss their experiences of mental health;
- encourage more men in our unions to undertake Suicide Prevention Skills Training such as Safe Talk, ASIST and Mental Health First Aid;
- signpost members to support groups, such as Chris’s House, CALM, Men Matter Scotland, etc; and
- remind employers that their duty of care to employees includes well-being.”

Mover: UNISON Scotland

SECTION SIX: ACCESS

21. ACCESS FOR DISABLED JOURNALISTS TO POLITICAL EVENTS

“That this Conference notes Government and political party conferences, campaign launches, and press events provide important information that influences the decisions that voters make.

“Journalists play an important democratic role in scrutinising and reporting on new government policies, political party manifestos, activities, and announcements, and sharing this information with the public.

“Disabled people and our rights have long been marginalised by politicians and the lack of scrutiny in the media compounds this. It is vital for disabled journalists who understand those issues to have direct access to politicians to hold them to account and question their policies.

“Disabled journalists need full access to cover events and ask questions of politicians. However, political parties often neglect to consider accessibility when organising events. Appointing access coordinators would help to achieve full inclusion.

“Conference believes:

- it is crucial that disabled journalists have access to cover political events.
- the concerns of disabled people are represented more effectively by journalists with lived experience.

“Conference calls upon the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- campaign for the Scottish Government and political parties to be proactive in making their events and activities accessible, including providing remote access for disabled journalists to report and participate in Q&As.”

Mover: National Union of Journalists

22. MAKING DATA VISUALISATIONS ACCESSIBLE

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

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

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

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

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

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

Mover: National Union of Journalists

Amendment:

Insert new first bullet point, ‘adhere to the principles of creating accessible and inclusive communications and information across all platforms, events and meetings’

Insert new bullet point 3, ‘work with disabled people who have experience in creating and accessing visual data’.

Amendment Mover: Unite the Union

SECTION SEVEN: SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY

23. ADOPTING A SOCIAL MODEL UNDERSTANDING

“That this Conference recognises that the social model of disability is fundamental to eliminating discrimination and achieving equality and inclusion for disabled people. Conference notes that despite its significance, the medical model continues to dominate the law and the way in which employers understand and respond to disabled workers.

“This maintains and condones continued exclusion and inequality in the workplace. The disability employment gap is one way in which exclusion can be measured. In Scotland, although the disability employment gap has reduced, disabled people still have a significantly lower employment rate than non-disabled people. Furthermore, analysis by the DWP reveals that the declining gap in Scotland is due to adults already in work becoming disabled, rather than disabled adults moving into work.

“Employers continued focus on ‘adjusting’ the worker and rarely the workplace and removing barriers reinforces the widespread stereotype of disabled people as creating a ‘burden on business’. This shifts the onus onto the disabled worker to repeatedly demonstrate what they can’t do rather than on employers to make workplaces accessible. Disabled workers are increasingly seeing adjustments removed, including adjustments to absence levels and performance targets, leading to disciplinary action and dismissal.

“Where this happens, the failure of employers to adopt a social model understanding ‘individualises’ disabled workers’ responses to discrimination and pushes them into seeking justice via internal grievance and legal procedures where the odds are stacked against them.

“Conference asks the STUC, in consultation with the Disabled Workers’ Committee, to encourage unions to:

- make collective bargaining on disability equality a priority including ensuring reps and officials are trained on the social model;
- regularly review employer policies, practices and publications ensuring where possible they are free of medical model approaches to disability; and
- hold employers to account for failures in their duty to make reasonable adjustments.”

Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive, and Allied Workers

24. LET’S TALK ABOUT ASSISTED DYING

“This this Conference notes assisted dying is an emotive and complex issue which people hold differing and strong views about. The issue can be polarising.

“Common arguments against assisted dying are based on appealing to the rights of disabled people, and are based on religious, moral, and political arguments.

“Many surveys representing individuals, organisations, and health professionals reflect varying levels of support for assisted dying depending on the prognosis and the professionals that may assist. Some remain opposed or silent on the issue, and others have shifted their policy position to neutrality or support.

“The issue has previously been debated, and defeated, in the Scottish and UK parliaments. In May this year, Jersey’s States Assembly debated this issue and approved assisted dying for those with a terminal illness ‘causing unbearable suffering’. Scotland is progressing down a similar route with an Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill recently being introduced.

“Conference re-affirms its commitment to the Social Model of Disability. This itself raises questions as to whether support for the Social Model of Disability and support for assisted dying are mutually exclusive.

“However, the debate on assisted dying is happening, whether we’re part of that, or not. Given disabled people are among those people most vulnerable to abuse of legalised assisted dying, then isn’t it important that as disabled members we have a clear policy position, that our voice shapes public debate?

“Conference calls on the STUC Disabled Workers’ Committee to:

- develop and conduct a study of disabled workers’ views in Scotland as a starting point to an informed discussion;
- use the study’s findings as the basis for a thoughtful, respectful and considered debate with a view to achieving a Scottish policy position across our sister unions; and
- contribute to the present Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill.”

Mover: UNISON Scotland



Scotland's largest
education trade union

**Greetings from
the EIS to all
delegates and
visitors attending
the 21st STUC
Disabled
Workers'
Conference**



Working to Deliver Equality for All

The EIS is Scotland's largest teaching union, representing 80% of teachers across all sectors and all career grades. The EIS maintains its longstanding commitment to disability equality in education, including for those affected by 'hidden' or unseen disabilities. We value disabled teachers and learners and are proud to support this important Conference.

www.eis.org.uk/Equality/Disability-Equality



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REPORT TO

DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE

REPORT OF THE STUC DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2023

The 20th Annual STUC Disabled Workers' Conference was held at the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd December 2023.

The theme of Conference was 'Disabled Workers' Together: Future Proofing Accessibility and Support' and was Chaired by Tony Slaven, UNISON. 61 delegates, representing 19 Trade Unions and Trades Union Councils, and 2 visitors attended Conference.

The Conference appointed Shirley Johnston, Unite the Union, and Davie O'Donnell, RMT, as Tellers.

19 motions were debated at Conference. They focused on the travel and accessibility; equity at work; social security; accessible communication; and inclusive policies.

There were three emergency motions submitted, titled 'Tightening of the Work Capability Assessment'; 'The Devastating Impact of the Gaza Crisis for Disabled People'; and 'ADHD Medication Shortages in Scotland'.

On Saturday 2nd December, Roz Foyer, STUC General Secretary, opened and welcomed all delegates to Conference.

Throughout the day Conference heard and debated motions on sections travel and accessibility; equity at work; social security; and accessible communication. Conference also held two afternoon workshops; one on reasonable adjustments facilitated by committee member Julie Ferguson, EIS along with Eireann McAuley, STUC; the other from Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry Project, Let's Be Heard.

Also in the afternoon Conference welcomed a keynote address from Gary Clark, STAMMA, and former STUC Disabled Workers' Committee Vice Chair.

On the morning of Sunday 3rd December, Conference welcomed another keynote speaker, Mike Arnott, STUC President before continuing debating motions. Conference watched a recording from Raza Sadiq, Chair of the STUC Black Workers' Committee and UNISON member, on the work of UNISON'S Year of the Black Worker.

All 19 motions and 3 emergency motions at Conference were carried.

The Conference was supported and promoted throughout with tweets, photos, and voxpop videos on social media, using the hashtag #STUCDWC23

Conference elected the following to serve as members of the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee for the year 2023/24:

- Margaret Boyd, GMB Scotland
- Julie Ferguson, The EIS
- Margaret Gilmurray, UNISON Scotland
- Steven McGurk, Community
- Gwen McNeil, RMT
- Tony Slaven, UNISON Scotland
- Tony Sneddon, CWU
- Carol Wood, NASUWT

Margaret Gilmurray and Tony Slaven, both UNISON, were nominated to contest the election to the STUC General Council seats reserved for Disabled Workers at the STUC Annual Congress 2024.

Tony Sneddon, CWU, Gwen McNeil, RMT, and Margaret Boyd, GMB, were elected to the STUC Disabled Workers' Conference delegation to STUC Annual Congress 2024 along with Margaret Gilmurray, and Tony Slaven, both UNISON, who took the seats reserved on the delegation for nominees to STUC General Council.

Ewing Hope, Unite, and Richard Hardy, Prospect,

continued to represent the STUC General Council on the Disabled Workers' Committee.

STUC DISABLED WORKERS' COMMITTEE 2023/24

Following the Disabled Workers' Conference, the Disabled Workers' Committee developed a workplan which was presented to, and endorsed by, the STUC General Council.

Margaret Gilmurray, UNISON Scotland, was elected to serve as Chair of the Committee, and Steven McGurk, Community, was elected to serve as the Vice-Chair. Following Conference Eddie Baines, Prospect, and John McCue, ASLEF, were co-opted onto the committee.

In early 2024, unfortunately Margaret could no longer serve as Chair and, after further committee discussion, Carol Wood, NASUWT, was appointed as Chair.

The Committee workplan incorporated a number of priority areas, campaign, and themes including:

- Long Covid
- UK and Scottish Covid-19 Public Inquiries
- Disability Pay Gap and Fair Work
- Reasonable Adjustments
- Accessible and Inclusive Transport
- Social Security Benefits
- Inclusive Workplaces
- Inclusive and Accessible Communication and Policies
- Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council Bill (SEIAC Bill)

Reasonable Adjustments

The Committee continued its work on conducting a survey with the view to creating a publication of the results along with recommendations. The survey close with 163 respondents. The Committee assessed the findings, and a publication was launched at STUC Disabled Workers' Conference 2024.

Long Covid and the Covid-19 Public Inquiry

During the Committee term it was agreed the Committee's work on Long Covid and the Covid-19 Public Inquiry would concentrate on supporting ongoing STUC campaigning and direct involvement in both Inquiries. Members of

the Committee have also directly contributed to the Inquiry through their trade unions.

Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council Bill (SEIAC Bill)

Despite the Bill falling in the Scottish Parliament in April 2024, Tony Slaven continues to participate and report back from the subsequent working group on Employment Injury Assistance.

Safe and Accessible Transport

Steven drafted a letter to Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Transport, in October 2024 with a response received in November 2024. The incoming Committee will follow up.

Social Security Benefits

A letter was drafted to Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice in October 2024 with a response also received in October 2024. The incoming Committee will follow up.

Inclusive and Accessible Communication and Policies

Julie is on the Cross-Party Group on Deafness and reported back to the Committee.

EVENTS

STUC LGBT+ Workers' Conference 2024

Carol Wood, NASUWT, spoke as a guest speaker on behalf of the Committee at the STUC LGBT+ Workers' Conference in May 2024.



University and College Union
Scotland

Greetings from UCU Scotland to delegates at the 2024 Disabled Workers' Conference

www.ucu.org.uk/join

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REPORT OF THE DISABLED WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES ON THE STUC GENERAL COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE STUC GENERAL COUNCIL 2024

Disabled Workers Conference Representatives on the STUC General Council:

- Margaret Gilmurray, UNISON Scotland
- Tony Slaven, UNISON Scotland

Both representatives ensured at the STUC General Council that the issues faced by disabled people were highlighted and integrated for action into the agenda of the General Council.

As in previous years the cost of living crisis was raised as a major issue, and again this was noted as having a significant impact on people with disabilities. We will continue to lobby the Scottish Government to make sure the maximum use of social security powers to assist with heating, food, and other essentials.

A publication is being prepared by the STUC Disabled Workers' Committee on reasonable adjustments and this will be launched at the annual Conference. This is following a survey which was carried out and findings reviewed by the Committee were reviewed the findings. The publication will help provide a guide for workplace representatives.

Long Covid was discussed at General Council meetings, and the need for this to be classed as a disability. It was noted the importance that we continue to work with Long Covid groups and be made aware of issues raised by people living with Long Covid. The STUC is providing evidence to the Covid Inquiry, with input from the Committee.

The representatives highlighted to the General Council further campaigns in line with the

Committee's workplan including:

- Accessible and inclusive transport – this was raised and noted again that disabled people still do not have acceptable public transport. We continue to lobby the Scottish Government to provide safe and affordable transport.
- Disability Pay Gap – the representatives noted the Committee continue to campaign and lobby to reduce this in Scotland which has the largest disability pay gap in the UK.
- Employment Injury Assistance – the representatives noted ongoing work in establishing this following the fall of the Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council Bill in April 2024.
- Cross-Equalities – the representatives noted the commitment to build relations and support joint-equalities work.



SOLIDARITY TO ALL AT THE
21st Annual
STUC
DISABLED WORKERS
CONFERENCE

***AND THE ONE MILLION PEOPLE WHO
IDENTIFY AS DISABLED IN SCOTLAND***

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REPORT OF THE DISABLED WORKERS'

CONFERENCE DELEGATION TO

STUC CONGRESS 2024

127TH STUC ANNUAL CONGRESS 15 – 17 APRIL 2024

CAIRD HALL, DUNDEE

STUC Disabled Workers' Delegation:

- Margaret Boyd, GMB Scotland
- Margaret Gilmurray, Unison Scotland
- Gwen McNeil, RMT
- Tony Slaven, Unison Scotland
- Tony Sneddon, CWU

The 127th STUC Annual Congress took place in the Caird Hall, Dundee over the period Monday 15 to Wednesday 17 April 2024.

The theme of Congress for 2024 was 'Workers Winning Together' and was chaired by Mike Arnott (Dundee Trades Union Council) President of the STUC for the year 2023/2024. The Civic welcome was given by Councillor Bill Campbell, Lord Provost of Dundee City Council; and Stuart Fairweather, of Dundee Trades Union Council provided the Trades welcome.

Just under 350 delegates representing Trade Unions, Trades Union Councils and the Disabled Workers', Black Workers', LGBT+ Workers', and Youth Conference delegations attended Congress.

STUC Congress Speakers

Several guest speakers contributed to Congress over the three days providing fraternal greetings and keynote addresses.

These included:

- Councillor Bill Campbell, Lord Provost, Dundee City Council

- Stuart Fairweather, Chair, Dundee TUC Council
- Anas Sarwar, Leader of the Scottish Labour Party
- The First Minister of Scotland, Humza Yousaf
- Shavanah Taj, General Secretary, Wales TUC
- Lorna Glen, Chair of the STUC Women's Committee

An International session took place on the Tuesday afternoon on the crisis in Gaza. Congress heard contributions from 1 guest speakers including Husam Zomlot, the Palestinian Ambassador to the UK and Shaher Saed, General Secretary of Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions.

A Civic Reception, hosted by Dundee City Council, took place in the Caird Hall at the close of Congress on Monday 15 April.

Congress Reflections

The Disabled Workers' delegation played a full and active part in Congress again, starting with a meeting on the evening prior to Congress to affirm support for each other over the course of the three days. The delegation felt that the session on Gaza was particularly powerful and overwhelmingly supported by delegates. The delegation reflected that Congress was well organised and that debates were thorough although speaking times were reduced on the final day to allow all motions, including emergency motions, to be taken. They noted that overall the event was a positive and productive one which provided an excellent platform for robust discussion, sharing learning, and collaboration.

STUC Congress Awards

The STUC Union Rep Awards were presented by Humza Yousaf, First Minister of Scotland, on Monday 15 April, to:

- Rachel Rogers, Kerry McCrone and Seona Hart of the Fire Brigades Union with the STUC Equality Award;
- Dan Connolly and David Foote, Prospect reps at Babcock Marine in Rosyth with the STUC Organising Award;
- Tony Bakhsh, a GMB Health and Safety Rep at North British Distillers, Muirhall, with the STUC Frank Maguire Award for Health and Safety;
- John McAlinden, Communication Workers' Union, with the Helen Dowie Award for Lifelong Learning; and
- Ross Henderson, RMT, with the Learner of the Year Award.

Following presentation of the awards, the First Minister addressed Congress.

General Council Nominees for 2024/2025

The new General Council for 2024/2025 was elected at Annual Congress and Margaret Gilmurray, Unison Scotland, and Tony Slaven, Unison Scotland, were elected to serve as the Disabled Workers' representatives on the STUC General Council until Congress 2025.

The Disabled Workers' Committee would like to thank Margaret and Tony for their contributions to the General Council 2023/24 on behalf of disabled workers.

Disabled Workers' Motion to Congress

119 motions were put forward to the 2024 STUC Congress on a wide range of subject matters. The STUC Disabled Workers' Conference submitted one motion in line with the Committee's Workplan priorities and emerging themes from the Disabled Workers' Conference 2023, which called on the General Council to reaffirm its support of the establishment of a Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council; support organisations like the PFA in campaigning for sports related head injuries to be classified an industrial injury; continue campaigning for long-covid to be classified as an industrial injury; and to advocate for illnesses and diseases which disproportionately affect women to be included in the Advisory Council charter. The motion was

composited with an amended motion from PFA and Musician's Union into Composite M, which the delegation seconded, and was carried.

Composite M - Industrial Injuries

"That this Congress notes that certain social security powers, including industrial injuries benefits, were devolved from the UK Government to the Scottish Government through the Scotland Act 2016; and that the delivery of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit is expected to become the full responsibility of the Scottish Government by March 2026.

"Congress further notes the Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council (SEIAC) Bill was introduced by Mark Griffin MSP on 8 June 2023 and subsequently scrutinised by the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.

"Congress agrees that the current UK system of employment injuries assistance (EIA) is not fit for purpose and is inadequate, discriminatory, and unfair. Moreover, only 7% of claims for industrial injuries benefit are made by women and the system was designed for men's work and systematically ignores the illness and disease women experience at work, and new modern and emerging workplaces injuries and disease.

"Congress notes the increasing number of former professional footballers who have been diagnosed with neurodegenerative conditions in the last ten years, because of repetitive head impacts.

"Research conducted by Dr. William Stewart a professor and researcher of Glasgow University's School of Psychology and Neuroscience showed that professional footballers suffer as a cohort an "approximately three and a half times higher rate of death due to neurodegenerative disease than expected". This varies depending on where you played on the pitch, with defenders being up to five times more likely. Dr Stewart's research published in 'The New England Journal of Medicine' compared the causes of death of 7,676 former male former professional football players who were born between 1900 - 1976 against those of more than 23,000 matched individuals from the general population.

"The clarity that the research offers is welcome. It demonstrates that increased risk is linked inextricably to the sufferers' former footballing careers. The increased link of brain injuries

comes directly from their previous employment and activities that were a routine part of their job. This is an industrial injury.

“Congress recognises the progress and work done by the STUC and affiliates to campaign for and build support for the SEIAC Bill and to build a fairer system in Scotland.

“Congress is therefore disappointed that following scrutiny, the general principles of the SEIAC Bill did not receive support by the Scottish Parliament Committee.

“Congress calls on the General Council to:

- Reaffirm commitment for the development of a Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council; and accelerate lobbying of the Scottish Government for this.
- Continue to campaign for long-COVID to be treated as an industrial injury.
- Support PFA Scotland, who are supporting MSP Micheal Marra’s demands of the Scottish Government to:
 - Classify brain injury in football as an industrial injury. Give those ex-pros access to the benefits and care they need and have earned;
 - Fund further research into the practical and preventative support that is needed within the game at all levels; and
 - Establish a working group to consider the issues around brain injury and dementia, including in the grassroots and women’s game.
- Support MP Ian Blackford’s cross-party attempt in Westminster to ensure the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council recognise dementia in footballers as an industrial injury.
- Support the Musicians’ Union in campaigning for musicians to be included on the list of jobs eligible for Employment Injuries Assistance for occupational deafness and for the scheme to be extended to self-employed workers who suffer in the same way as employees.
- Advocate for illnesses and diseases, especially within the care system, which disproportionately affect women to be included in the Advisory Council charter.”

The Disabled Workers’ Congress representatives also supported other STUC Equality Conference motions and participated in activity throughout the duration of Congress.

The STUC General Council issued Statements on Palestine and Military Spending. A copy of the Statements can be found on the STUC website.





LIST OF EXHIBITORS

ACTION ON ASBESTOS

Action on Asbestos is a charity that provides practical advice and emotional support to those terminally ill, or severely disabled with an asbestos condition. We provide a benefits advice service (includes appeal representation and completion of all application forms), support groups throughout Scotland and give talks to medical professionals and anyone who may need more information on the dangers of asbestos. The charity campaigns vigorously on any injustice placed upon its members. All services provided by the charity, including legal advice, is given free of charge.

For advice and information please contact Phyllis Craig on 07484903292, or phyllisc@actiononasbestos.org.uk

ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BLIND PEOPLE (RNIB) SCOTLAND

The Royal National Institute of Blind People Scotland supports blind and partially sighted people of all ages to live as fully and independently as possible. It provides advice, support, training, equipment and transcribes books and other materials. RNIB Scotland also campaigns to improve the lives of people with sight loss.

Web: RNIB.org.uk/Scotland

Facebook: [@RNIBScotland](https://www.facebook.com/RNIBScotland)

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

Instagram: [@RNIBScotland](https://www.instagram.com/RNIBScotland)

SCOTTISH HAZARDS

Scottish Hazards campaigns for improved worker health and safety throughout Scotland and joins with others internationally to campaign for improved working conditions throughout the world. We provide information, advice and support to individual workers and groups of workers in Scotland who are not unionised and have inadequate access to Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) expertise. We also provide support and advocacy for families who have lost loved ones through work.

Web: <https://hazards.scot>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ScottishHazards

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

SCOTTISH PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Scottish PSC is an organisation that works for Palestinian freedom, equality and justice. Key to our solidarity work is to respond to the Palestinian Call for a campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) modelled on the anti-apartheid movement against South Africa.

Our work with trade unions is of fundamental importance to building this campaign.

Become a member of Scottish PSC and affiliate your Trades Council, Union/Branch - we need your help to intensify our efforts to promote Palestinian rights and oppose complicity in Israeli apartheid and genocide.

Facebook: [/scottishpsc](https://www.facebook.com/scottishpsc)

Twitter/X: [@scottishpsc](https://twitter.com/scottishpsc)

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

THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

Thompsons Scotland are a trade union law firm. We stand up against injustice, mistreatment, and injury in the workplace. We are at the forefront of cases involving discrimination, unfair dismissal, industrial disease and health and safety breaches. Unlike other lawyers we do not see the courts as the only means of achieving a goal for our clients. If the courts cannot assist we campaign for change and we are proud to have secured many important legal reforms over the years.

Facebook: [/Thompsons.Solicitors.Scotland](https://www.facebook.com/Thompsons.Solicitors.Scotland)

Twitter: [@Thompsons_Sols](https://twitter.com/Thompsons_Sols)

CONSTITUTION OF THE STUC

DISABLED WORKERS' CONFERENCE

1. Title of Conference

The Annual Conference of Disabled Workers' representatives of Trades Unions and Trades Union Councils shall be known as the "Scottish TUC Disabled Workers' Conference".

2. Date of Annual Conference

The Conference shall meet annually, normally in the month of November or December, over two days.

3. Basis of Representation

Each organisation affiliated to the Scottish TUC shall be invited to appoint delegates who must be disabled. In addition, each affiliate may send officials to accompany its delegation. The basis of representation shall be as follows:

- Trade Unions with membership of up to 10,000: 6 delegates
- Trade Unions with membership over 10,000: 6 delegates plus one for 10,000 members or part thereof
- Trades Union Councils: up to 6 delegates

4. Disabled Workers' Committee

There shall be a Disabled Workers' Committee composed as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| ● Trade Unions | 10 places |
| ● Trades Union Councils | 1 place |
| ● General Council | 2 places |

The General Council members elected to the Disabled Workers' Seats on the STUC General Council and nominees from the Disabled Workers' Conference to the STUC General Council – if they have not been elected to the Committee in any of the above categories – shall be additional members of the Committee, with rights equal to all other members.

a) The Trades Union and Trades Union Council places shall be elected by ballot of all delegations to the Conference. Ballot papers will be issued to delegation leaders.

b) In the Trade Union Section, the ten candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected, with the proviso that at least five women must be elected in the Section. In the event that there are fewer than five women nominees for election, the Committee shall fill the vacant places by co-option. In the event of a tied vote in the ballot, the tied candidates shall be put to a re-ballot. In the event of a further tie, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote(s).

c) Each Trade Union shall be entitled to nominate up to two candidates (one male and one female) for election to the Trades Union Section of the Committee. Candidates must be members of the Union's delegation to the Conference.

d) In the Trades Union Council Section, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. In the event of a tied vote in the ballot, the tied candidates shall be put to a re-ballot. In the event of a further tie, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

e) Each Trades Union Council shall be entitled to nominate one candidate for election to the Trades Union Council Section of the Committee. The candidate must be a member of the Council's delegation.

f) The General Council shall appoint one male and one female representative as observers to the Disabled Workers' Committee.

g) The Disabled Workers' Committee shall elect from among its own number a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson: the members nominated by the General Council shall not be eligible for election to these positions. The gender of the Chair shall alternate at least every 2 years.

h) On the death or resignation of a member of the Disabled Workers' Committee, or should that year's Committee have vacant places, the Committee shall fill the vacancy by co-opting the highest unsuccessful eligible candidate. In the event that there is no such candidate, the position shall be filled by co-option.

Conduct of Elected Disabled Workers' 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 Disabled Workers' 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. Delegation to Annual Congress

The Disabled Workers' Conference shall elect a delegation of not more than four representatives, two male and two female, to attend the Annual Congress of the Scottish TUC. Two additional delegation places will be automatically reserved for the Disabled Workers' Conference nominees for the Disabled Workers' Seats on the General Council, making a total delegation of six. Each affiliated Trades Union and Trades Union Council shall be invited to nominate one member for the General place and one woman for the place reserved for Disabled Women Workers. Nominees shall be delegates to the Annual Disabled Workers' Conference.

On the death or resignation of a member of the Disabled Workers' Delegation to Annual Congress, or should a vacancy arise following the Conference elections, the Committee shall fill the vacancy by co-opting the highest unsuccessful eligible candidate. In the event that there is no such candidate, the position shall be filled by co-option.

6. Nominees for Disabled Workers' Seats on the STUC General Council

The Disabled Workers' Conference shall elect nominees to stand for election at the Annual Congress for the Disabled Workers' Seats on the General Council.

Each affiliated Trades Union and Trades Union Council shall be eligible to nominate one member for the General Seat and one for the Seat reserved for Disabled Women Workers. Successfully elected nominees must be delegates to the Disabled Workers' Conference and will automatically be given a place on the Disabled Workers' Delegation to Annual Congress.

Ballot papers shall be issued to delegation leaders. In the event of a tied vote in the ballot, the tied candidates shall be put to a re-ballot. In the event of a further tie, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

On the death or resignation of a member of an elected nominee for the Disabled Workers' Seat on the STUC General Council, the Committee shall fill the vacancy by co-opting the highest unsuccessful eligible candidate. In the event that there is no such candidate, the position shall be filled by direct election and nomination to the STUC Congress.

7. Voting

Each delegation shall be entitled to vote according to the number of delegates registered.

The election of the Disabled Workers' Committee, the Disabled Workers' Delegation to Annual Congress and the nominees for the Disabled Workers' Seats on the STUC General Council shall be by card vote. All other voting shall be by show of hands, except where a card vote is called.

8. Motions

a) Motions for the Annual Conference Agenda (not exceeding two from each affiliated body) must be signed by the Secretary of the organisation submitting them and must reach the Scottish TUC at least ten weeks before the date of the Annual Conference.

b) Such motions shall be sent to each affiliated Trades Union and Trades Union Council 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 will be decided by the Disabled Workers' Committee.

c) All amendments to the motions submitted by affiliated organisations (not exceeding two from each body) must reach the Scottish TUC by a date to be decided by the Disabled Workers' Committee. Such amendments must be signed by the Secretary of the organisation submitting them.

d) Notwithstanding the aforementioned provisions, the Disabled Workers' Committee or any affiliated organisations shall be permitted to submit emergency motions for consideration by the delegates to the Annual Conference. Any emergency motions submitted for the Conference will require to be signed by an appropriate official (Secretary, Chairperson or Delegation Leader) of the originating organisation, prior to, or immediately following the opening of the Conference.

9. Childcare Facilities

Appropriate childcare facilities for the children of delegates shall be available, if requested. Any such request shall be made in writing at least three weeks in advance of the opening of Conference.

10. Standing Orders

Hours of Meeting:

- First Day 10.00 am – 1.00 pm
2.00 pm – 5.15 pm
- Second Day 10.00 am – 1.30 pm

Conference Chairperson

The Conference will be presided over by the Chairperson of the Disabled Workers' Committee.

Appointment of Tellers and Scrutineers

The appointment of three Scrutineers and four Tellers shall be made by delegates at the start of the Annual Conference.

Limitation of Speakers

No more than eight minutes shall be allowed for the mover of a motion and no more than four 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.

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.

Chairperson's Ruling

The Chairperson's ruling may only be overturned by a vote of at least two-thirds of delegates to the Annual Conference who are present and voting.

