**148th ANNUAL TRADES UNION CONGRESS**

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Held at:

**The Brighton Centre,**

**Brighton**

on:

**Sunday, 11th September 2016**

**Monday, 12th September 2016**

**Tuesday, 13th September 2016**

and

**Wednesday, 14th September 2016**

**………………………………………..**

**Congress President:**

**LIZ SNAPE**

**………………………………………….**

**PROCEEDINGS – DAY THREE**

**(Tuesday, 13th September 2016)**

**…………………………………………..**

**Conference reported by:**

**Marten Walsh Cherer Limited,**

**1st Floor, Quality House,**

**6-9 Quality Court, Chancery Lane,**

**London WC2A 1HP.**

**email:** ***info@martenwalshcherer.com***

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**THIRD DAY: TUESDAY, 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

(*Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.*)

**The President**: I call you all to order. Thank you. Many thanks, in fact huge thanks, to the *Groove Merchants*. They certainly had us grooving this morning. They have been playing for us this morning. Well done. Thank you. (*Applause*)

May I remind delegates, delegation leaders in particular, the ballot for Section C of the General Council takes place this morning. Unions eligible to vote in the section should have collected their ballot papers from the TUC information stand situated on the ground floor. Ballot papers, remember, will only be provided in exchange for an official delegate form. Please note the ballot closes midday today.

You will see that I am absolutely delighted that Angela Rayner, our guest speaker, has joined us on the platform. (*Applause*) She will be speaking a little later on. For the moment you are really, really welcome, Angela – Angie. Where did this “Angela” come from?

As I said yesterday, we are under great pressure of time because so many unions wanted to speak in debates. We have consulted the chair of the GPC on speaking times and again would urge you to respect the time limits and try perhaps not to repeat points that have already been made. Again, regrettably, it may not be good for all speakers. I now call upon Linda McCulloch to give us her report. Thanks, Linda.

**Report of the General Purposes Committee**

**Linda McCulloch** (*Chair, General Purposes Committee*): Good morning, Congress. Congress, I can report that the GP Committee has approved the following Emergency Motion: Emergency Motion 6 on the HSE Board Appointment, moved by GMB, seconded by FBU, and supported by Prospect. The President will advise when this Emergency Motion will be taken. I will report further on progress of business and any other GPC decisions when necessary throughout Congress. Thank you.

**The President**: Thank you.

**The President**: Thank you. Delegates as Linda reported, we now have agreement on a further emergency motion, Emergency Motion 6, HSE Board appointment, in the name of the GMB, seconded by FBU, and supported by Prospect. I will let Congress know when I am able to take this and other emergency motions. Congress, as you know, we missed some business yesterday and again I intend to take that as soon as I can. We will notify you of that.

Delegates, we turn this morning to Section 2 of the General Council Report, Respect and a Voice at Work, employment and trade union rights, from page 28. I am now going to call paragraphs 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7, and 2.8, and Composite Motion 7, Protecting worker and trade union rights in the EU Brexit. The General Council support the composite. It is to be moved by Unison, seconded by CSP, and supported by the RCM and FDA. We have a number of speakers so again we will see how we get on with time. Thank you, Unison.

**GC Report Section 2: Respect and a voice at work**

**Protecting worker and trade union rights in the EU Brexit**

**Jane Carolan** (*Unison*) moved Composite Motion 7.

She said: As this composite notes, the purpose of the trades union Movement is to ensure that workers’ rights are protected, maintained, and enhanced but, as the composite also notes, our trade union rights in the UK continue to be among the most restricted in Europe and, according to Prof. Keith Ewing, who may be a bit of an expert on this, only Lithuania is worse than us in terms of employment protection.

The history of our movement has been a history of struggle, from Tolpuddle and the Chartists, trade unions have always been prepared to fight for the defence of our class. That is why we have spent the last 18 months engaged in a long hard slog against the latest Tory anti-trade union legislation and having won our victories now face so-called new codes of guidance where the contents are overly prescriptive and contain advice that well exceeds the union’s legal duties imposed by the Act, so that fight continues.

Meanwhile, like the extra money for the NHS that the official Leave campaign highlighted and has vanished like snow off a dyke, any weasel words we heard from Johnson, Davis, and Fox that workers’ rights would be respected should be subjected to one simple test, how do you know when a Tory is lying: his lips are moving.

Unison believes that June’s vote was not a vote in favour of City bankers, not a vote in favour of privateers, not a vote in favour of a laissez-faire free for all. It was certainly not a vote in favour of forcing those EU nationals who have made a life here, have made a vital contribution to our public services, particularly our health service, to be expelled from this country, and this Movement must stand up for them.

It was not a vote against equalities law or a vote for racism. It was not a vote against health and safety. If anything, for many in our communities who voted to leave they saw it as an opportunity to stick it to the establishment, communities where standards of living have plummeted, where public services are decimated, where employment is described as vulnerable but should really be described as very exploitative.

We need to put those concerns at the heart of Brexit but to do that we have to be there. We need a place at the table. But for those communities, those workers, we can only make gains if trade unions have freedom and rights, negotiating better wages, holding employers dedicated to Victorian working practices to account, to protect groups like the social care workforce exploited on pay, exploited on hours, existing in a world of uncertainty with no indication of hours so no set wages, no ability to plan a budget, and who cannot complain when they find that zero hours can mean zero hours. But we can thank *The Guardian* for their advice that there are people who like them. Perhaps columnist Deborah Orr would like to step out of her writer’s bubble and explain to our people that the trade unions who fight for them are outmoded, that it is outmoded to believe in employment with fair pay and fair conditions of work. I do not think so.

The trades union Movement needs to continue to put the case for decent employment based on decent trade union rights but I think we also need to take heed of the IER manifesto for labour law. We will continue to fight against the Tory trade union attacks and we will continue to defend our class but we also want to rebalance and redress the balance of power in the workplace and we need to be ambitious. That starts with respect for the trades union Movement, respect for the right to join a trade union, respect for the right to organise, respect for the trade union right to represent its members, respect for the right to withdraw labour, or, in other words, a return to real collective bargaining. We can only be constrained by our own lack of ambition. Please support the composite. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thanks, Jane. I call CSP.

**Jill Taylor** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) seconded Composite Motion 7.

She said: Congress, we have already seen watering down of the general equality duties, loss of equal pay questionnaires, and loss of rights around harassment from third parties at work by the Conservative Government under the label of red tape. Congress, we know equalities legislation and workers’ rights will always be an easy target for any right-wing government. Those losses hit women, disabled workers, the poorest and the most vulnerable of society the hardest.

Equality treatment is a founding principle of the European Union with the right to equal pay enshrined in the treaties of 1957, long before the Equal Pay Act of 1970. As we all know, the European Union has been a driving force behind the improvement of many workers’ rights, equal pay for part-time workers, wider maternity rights, and improved parental leave, the Pregnant Workers Directive which led to a right to paid time off for antenatal appointments, with further extension of this right to agency workers in 2011.

Congress, these rights and many more that can be mentioned in three minutes are at risk as we prepare to leave the European Union. This Government will actively work on removing this so-called red tape and do so under the banner of easing the burden on business. They will do this with no thought to the workers these rights were created to protect or the impact this will have on our society as a whole. We must campaign against any efforts to repeal, amend, or dismantle workers’ rights post-Brexit. We heard on Sunday the passionate speeches delivered on Composite Motion 1 and, Congress, we must heed these words and strive to hold the leave campaigners and this Government accountable to their promise to respect the rights of workers through and beyond Brexit. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call the Royal College of Midwives.

**Jon Skewes** (*Royal College of Midwives*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

He said: You are all in the negotiation business. Would you appoint your top negotiating team to consist of Boris Johnson, David Davis and Liam Fox? I think not. What would the red lines be in those negotiations? Well, certainly get rid of freedom of movement straightaway. Then do we want to be in the Single Market or not; not quite sure about that. Is that a red line or not. Definitely the thing that they will not want to see is social protections, worker protections, that are enshrined in that Single Market.

What we would say is that we want a voice in those negotiations and it cannot just be a team of the discredited, it cannot just be a team designed to make Theresa May look good at the end of the day. It has to include the voice of workers; it has to include the voice of the rest of society. I think for this TUC that is our red line and we need to work on that in a way which is consistent from now because this is going to be a process for many a year.

Like the TUC, like many other unions represented here, we worked hard to stay in the EU in that referendum. We were not successful in that and we have to recognise the democrats; there was a result to that, and we have to work within that constraint. What we are now looking at is the future and how do we get the best deal out of Brexit for our members and for your members. One thing is for sure, we do not want hardworking midwives, MSWs, other NHS staff, other public sector workers, to pay the price of Brexit, particularly by using EU-derived employment rights and seeing their pay stagnate even further as a result of the economic crisis we think will still happen as a result of that. It is playing in the EU an essential role in protecting working people from exploitation, combating discrimination, and promoting good employment practices. everything from equal pay, maternity rights, health and safety protections, equalities, rights for agency workers, etc., etc. We know the litany of rights that we have obtained through the EU as we have been part of that process through social dialogue.

What we now I think have to make sure is that we protect existing workers here in the UK and we protect ex pats working in other EU countries. We have called for, as part of the Cavendish Coalition, certainly representing health and social care, immediate guarantees on the right to remain for midwives and for every other NHS worker who comes from another EU country. They provide vital services and you will hear later this morning the way in which actually services will be crippled in this country if we do not protect those workers.

There is a little known fact, if you were not looking at the business pages recently you will not maybe have seen this, the Chancellor, Philip Hammond, has extended those guarantees to international bankers already. It is clearly something that he is doing to try, in his view, to protect the economy, the very people who created the crisis in the first place. He will not, however, do it for NHS workers at all and that is, I think, to the Government’s shame.

It is not just employment rights; it is also pay. I talked about the way in which the NHS staff, and other public sector workers, have had their pay restricted hugely. We will be calling on the Pay Review Body to challenge that and we will be saying that our members should not be paying the price for Brexit; after all, they were promised, weren’t they, the NHS, £350m extra a year; that should go into investment in the staff of the NHS, the same as investment in the NHS. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you, Jon. Before I call the FDA, I will just let you know we have a number of speakers from Unite, the NASUWT, CWU, and Usdaw; if you could all be ready at the front, thank you. FDA.

**Vicky Johnson** (*FDA*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

She said: I am speaking in support of Composite 7 and, in particular, to explain the reasoning behind the FDA’s amendment submitted to the original motion which now forms point five of the composite.

On Sunday we debated a motion on Brexit, the process and the resources needed. This motion is considering the people who will continue to work while the process moves on and the impact on them when it is completed. Why is it necessary for us to ask for the Government to guarantee job security for EU and non-EU workers in the UK?

Following Brexit we saw some very inexcusable behaviour from a very small minority of people, which led to the perception that EU workers may no longer be welcome in the UK and the possibility that UK workers would no longer be welcome in the EU. I was approached by a member of FDA asking for assistance for him to obtain UK citizenship because he was worried that his job would be at risk if he did not get this. He had invested time and effort in his training and he wants to continue working here but he was nervous. Was he right to be nervous? It is our job to make sure that he is not.

The current uncertainty that people face means that they may start to make decisions and those decisions may include leaving the UK, which could mean that some of our public services, for example, the NHS where 11% of all staff are non-UK citizens, would move further into crisis. So, we must work and hold the Government to account to provide certainty and job security for our workers. Please support this composite. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call Unite, please.

**Jayne Taylor** (*Unite*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

She said: Congress, an emergency motion seeking support for Gibraltar and its workers from the outcome of the EU referendum was submitted to Congress but, unfortunately, was not successful in getting on the agenda. However, Gibraltar remains an important issue for Unite.

On 23rd June 2016, 84% of the total population voted by a remarkable 96% to remain within the European Union. Gibraltar and its people believed and continue to believe in the European project. Gibraltar, whilst being a British overseas territory, is not part of the United Kingdom. It is self-governing and self-sufficient. Their membership of the European Union, however, hinges on the fact that the United Kingdom is part of the European Union.

Critical to Gibraltar’s success is free access to the European Market and the free movement of labour and goods. Without these mechanisms and the means to police it, the central government in Madrid, the right-wing Partido Popular, would readopt the fascist policies of the dictator Franco, that is, a policy of cutting off Gibraltar all together from the mainland by stopping the flow of people and goods across the Gibraltar/Spain border.

Over 40% of Gibraltar’s workforce is non-resident and most travel across the land frontier on a daily basis to reach their workplaces. The Spanish Foreign Minister, Jose Garcia-Margallo has made it clear the Spanish Government’s intention is to make Brexit as painful as possible for the people of Gibraltar. He is demanding joint British and Spanish sovereignty initially, with a full transfer of power to Spain in the near future. This is a price that the people of Gibraltar are not willing to accept having expressly manifested their self-determination to remain a British territory in two separate referendums.

Gibraltar can see the positives of the EU whereas the Conservatives pin their mismanagement of the NHS, housing, and training, among other issues, on the EU. After all was said and done, Gibraltar’s aims and aspirations were hijacked by the Conservative Government. The workers of Gibraltar cannot trust a Conservative Government, nor can they trust the Partido Popular government in Spain, all the while being out of protection of the EU. This new troika is the perfect storm that Gibraltar has always wanted to avoid but it is feared that the worst is yet to come and, sadly, Gibraltar’s voice will once again be drowned out against the business interests of state.

This Emergency Motion calls on the TUC to support the rights of Gibraltar to participate fully in the negotiations, irrespective of the blackmail undertaken by the Spanish state, in order to negotiate the package that will meet the needs of all people of Gibraltar. Spain’s blackmail will not prosper. Support the composite. Gibraltar hopes to count on your support next year. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call NASUWT, please.

**Wayne Broom** (*NASUWT (The Teachers’ Union)*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

He said: The NASUWT has campaigned for many years in defence of workers’ rights and has highlighted attempts to weaken entitlements and protections, taking industrial action necessary to bring about improvements to working conditions. One area that we are particularly concerned about post-Brexit is further attacks on health and safety regulations.

Over the last 40 years the UK has made progress in protecting workers’ health and safety with the numbers of workers being killed or seriously injured at work falling substantially. Let’s not forget, however, there were still nearly 150 fatal accidents and 76,000 serious injuries in the period of 2005 for which the latest data is available, and every single one of these incidents was entirely preventable. Out of the numbers of workers suffering from work-related ill health, 1.2 million people made ill just because they went to work costing the UK economy an estimated eye-watering £14.3bn, a sum greater than the total GDP of Iceland.

Against this backdrop you would think the tightening of regulations to get those numbers down further would be a priority. Scandalously, we know that this is not the case. We did not vote to die at work. Since 2010 we have seen the watering down of many important regulations, the Education (School Premises) Regulations being one of them.

This Government’s direction of travel is clear, David Cameron said in 2012 that he wanted to kill off the health and safety culture for good, stating health and safety legislation has become an albatross around the neck of British businesses. This view is undoubtedly shared by many of those at the top of government. During Brexit Priti Patel stated that leaving the EU would be an opportunity to cut social and employment protections. At the moment, however, the axe is being held at bay, not because of the lack of will but because of successive EU directives.

Of particular importance is the 1989 Health & Safety “Framework Directive”, which established broad-based obligations for employers to evaluate, avoid, and reduce workplace risks and introduce EU-wide minimum standards. Without this and other directives all of the current health and safety protections will be seen as fair game by this Government and unscrupulous employers will seek to maximise profits at the expense of workers and their families. So-called red tape is better than bloody bandages.

 Some senior members of UKIP, such as Roger Helmer, MEP, have advocated repealing the ban on use of some forms of asbestos claiming that there is no scientific evidence of white asbestos being dangerous to health. These are the views that are now coming to the fore. The Government want to remove asbestos from the Houses of Parliament. We need it removed from all of our schools to protect staff and our children in those schools. (*Applause*) No one goes to work to be made ill, injured, or killed. We must protect our vital health and safety regulations against those who will use Brexit as an opportunity they have been looking for, for many years. Congress, please support the composite motion. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call CWU.

**Maria Exall** (*Communication Workers Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

She said: Leaving the European Union is the biggest threat to our rights and protections in the workplace that we have faced for generations and with a right-wing Conservative Government in power we have a big fight on our hands. CWU supports the proposals in the IER’s manifesto for labour law. We need effective collective bargaining and the right to strike. There is unfinished business on repealing anti-union laws from the last Labour government, and an urgent need to enhance positive employment rights to make a real difference to our members’ lives.

First, we have to deal with the immediate threat from Brexit, which affects every single worker in the UK. We wish to highlight the need to protect and improve our rights in two main areas, equality and access to justice at work. Firstly, the need to protect existing rights is nowhere clearer than in the area of current legislation on equality at work. Europe has provided or enabled effective legislation in key areas of equality, for example, the law on gender reassignment, the principle there is no limit on discrimination awards in the UK, and the provision of effective sexual orientation regulations at work.

Congress, we risk going backwards in these areas where so much progress has been made and there is a threat that we will turn the clock back on important legal improvements for women workers, including equal pay for work of equal value, part-time workers’ rights, including paid holidays and access to pensions. EU legislation also underpins UK maternity rights, including paid time off for antenatal appointments and protections for pregnant women against dismissal, not to mention parental leave, and best protection from harassment; indeed, all areas of discrimination law have the potential to be significantly watered down when we leave the EU.

The Tory vision is of the UK as a low pay, low skill, tax haven on the edge of Europe with a minimal state and no employment protection, and we risk entrenching social inequalities that take us back to the 1950s. We must fight for a better future than this.

Secondly, the CWU wish to highlight the pressing problem of access to justice at work, it is a problem that is affecting thousands of people now and it is going to get worse. The introduction of employment tribunal fees by the coalition government has priced thousands out of access to justice. For those who do make a claim, the chances of success are very low, and even when a tribunal rules in favour of reinstatement or reengagement there is no law saying an employer has to comply.

Too many people are being falsely accused of wrongdoing and denied justice, like David Mitchell, a CWU member, who went through the rigmarole of an ET, proved his innocence, won a reinstatement order, but the Royal Mail chose to ignore it. This is not good enough. The decisions of an ET should be binding on employers and workers should be guaranteed a right to reinstatement where a tribunal recommends it in cases of unfair dismissal. (*Applause*)

Congress, on the issue of Brexit we need to win our members over, including many who voted Leave. We in the union Movement need to argue that we have more in common with workers in Europe than we do with employers in the UK who exploit us. There are two sides but they are not divided by a tunnel, they are divided by class. To conclude, workers in the UK should not pay the price of Brexit and we must not allow Brexit to narrow our aspirations. We need to make the case for a workers’ Europe. We should remain an outward facing trades union Movement committed to international solidarity and supporting the struggle of working people throughout Europe. (*Applause*)

**The President**: I call Usdaw, please.

**Simon Vincent** (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 7.

He said: When the old industries started to decline in the 1980s many trade union activists, including miners, steelworkers and printers like myself, looked for work in the evolving workplaces, such as distribution. We all had skills to offer from the days of the closed shop, maybe not the skills employers wanted. Distribution quickly organised across the UK to deliver good pay and terms and conditions in an industry that works 24/7, in often harsh conditions. Once again, it gave working people the dignity of a good wage and some fantastic negotiated benefits. That was up until the introduction of free movement of labour.

Those who seek to exploit us, and there are many, Sports Direct and Amazon to name a few, could not believe their luck. The panacea that we desired from Europe, brothers and sisters, had come true for the capitalists, access to unlimited unskilled labour to exploit at will with no restriction of consequences. Agency workers were put up in 10 to a house, charged to be taken to work, and put on the next plane home if they complained. The Agency Working Time Directive, dumped by Europe in favour of the Swedish Derogation, was a charter to exploit working people. Those companies that were not organised quickly took advantage, zero-hour contracts, the minimum wage, if you were lucky, and back to the days when men and women had to put their hands up to use the toilet. For those that were organised, distribution centres were shut down rather than take the unions on, and new ones opened with lower terms and conditions, with no protection for workers that transferred from the UK or European governments.

Those in the Remain camp argue that Europe had delivered for working people on many fronts. In my workplace we over-achieved what Europe had to offer by a country mile on every front. That is probably why they shut us down. Companies can no longer see the benefit of rewarding long service; why should they? They have access to an unlimited workforce to exploit with a hire-and-fire attitude. Europe has never delivered for working people and never will. We should concentrate on what we do best, organise labour to take on these companies rather than look at the politicians to deliver for us.

Let’s not fear Brexit but embrace the new challenge. Brexit could be the new Utopia for working people. Support the motion, comrades. (*Applause*)

**The President**: I am now going to move to the vote on Composite Motion 7. Right of reply, Jane? No? Thank you. All those in favour of Composite Motion 7 please show? Thank you. And all those against? Thank you. That is clearly carried.

 \* *Composite Motion 7 was CARRIED*.

**The President**: Right, Congress, it now gives me absolutely enormous pleasure to introduce one of Unison’s own and Unison’s best, Angie Rayner, MP. (*Applause*)

Angie started out as a shop steward for care workers in Stockport, working her way to the most senior lay positions in our North West Region. In 2015, we were so proud when she was elected MP for Ashton under Lyne and has rather quickly become a senior Shadow Cabinet member in just over a year. Angela is here today to speak to us as Shadow Secretary of State for Education, Women and Equalities, issues that go to the very heart of our trade union values. Angie, I am really proud and delighted to welcome you here today. You are our friend. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**ANGELA RAYNER, MP AND SHADOW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR**

**EDUCATION, WOMEN AND EQUALITIES, ADDRESSED CONGRESS**

**Angela Rayner**: Congress, President, it is a massive great honour for me to stand in front of you today as your guest speaker because I was made in the trades union Movement, I am a product of your success, and this is really the best gig, especially as you played Stevie Wonder just before 10 o’clock. I have not done that at conference before.

Of course, the Congress and the TUC is at the heart of the labour Movement that has given me and millions like me so much. First, from my days as a care worker when I joined my workplace union, Unison, I have seen how the Movement has fought for our shared values. And, President, if you’d have told me back in 2009 when I was a delegate at Congress in Liverpool, sat with you and the other Unison delegation, just there, that seven years later I’d be speaking from the platform as an MP and as a Shadow Cabinet member, I, quite frankly, would have thought you had drunk too much at the reception the night before. (*Applause*)

Congress, I never expected to be an MP. I did not grow up in Parliament or as a special adviser, or as a family member to another MP, but today I will tell you why I have become an MP and why my experiences mean I am so glad to be asked to lead for my party on education and equalities as the Shadow Secretary of State for Education, Women and Equalities, as the first woman MP in over 183 years elected to represent my seat of Ashton-under-Lyne, and as a representative of my party, the only party for ordinary working people, the Labour Party.

Congress, I grew up on a council estate, my parents were on the welfare state, I was on free school meals, and I needed the help of my nan, and my parents needed the help of my nan to keep us afloat, who worked three jobs on many zero-hour contracts just to keep us in school uniform. By the time I was 16 I was pregnant and I had left school with no qualifications. I did not go to university. I had a job as a home carer determined to make a better life for my son. I wanted to prove the critics wrong.

That is when things started to change for me. Within a year I was a Unison rep standing up for others in the workplace, and getting a qualification in care. Education and my union was my second chance. I spent years fighting for decent pay, security, and respect for dedicated public servants, and since 2015 I have had the honour of doing so in Parliament; not bad for a girl who was told she would never amount to anything.

So, you can see why I am so passionate about education and equality, about early years, thinking back to the dedicated Sure Start workers who helped this teenage mum, about further education and union learning, a second or even a third chance for people like me, and about schools, the very places that offer opportunity and achievement to every child regardless of what is going on at home. Instead, Congress, this week we have seen the Prime Minister impose a policy guaranteed to reduce the life chances of millions of children. Yes, I am talking about the return of secondary moderns. Not so much education, education, education, but more segregation, segregation, segregation. (*Applause*)

Just weeks ago the Prime Minister solemnly promised on the steps of Number 10 to govern for the many, not the privileged few, to be led by the evidence when making decisions and to be a one-nation leader. But this is aimed not just at serving a privileged few but creating a privileged few; a policy which flies in the face of all evidence, not just some but every single aspect of evidence, and all those leading professionals in education, a policy that is about partisan politics and right-wing dogma, announced, of course, to the Tory MPs in a private little room being denied to the public. The pattern is already too clear. Yesterday, it was grammar schools. Today, it is a boundary review to gerrymander the House of Commons, even as they stack Parliament with unelected Lords. She does not want to lead a one-nation party but a one-party nation.

For all the children being set up to fail the Eleven Plus none will do what this Prime Minister has done and fail so spectacularly the tests that she set for herself, and this at a time when we have a school-places crisis, the highest rate of teachers leaving the profession in a decade, and over half-a-million children in super-sized classes.

Congress, we know what is needed, great comprehensive schools funded to international standards, pupils that are supported by our brilliant teaching assistants, and taught by world-class professional teachers. (*Applause*) It is Labour that is on the side of aspiration and achievement for children from every background.

Alongside a world-class education system we need a society that supports everyone to live a life of equality, for women, for LGBT people, for disabled people, and for black and Asian people too, and there is much more still to be done. When a majority of women have experienced sexual harassment at work, it reminds us that whatever progress we have made we must guard it very carefully and make sure it is not rolled back.

This Government talk the language of equality but acts against it, like imposing tribunal fees so that discrimination cases have plummeted and, Congress, the bosses are getting away with it! Labour is absolutely clear, we will scrap employment tribunal fees. (*Applause*) That will not just help women, it will help anyone who has been the victim of discrimination or unfair treatment at work, like BME workers, who earn less than white workers no matter how qualified they are. We must build a society free from the blight of racial inequality and discrimination and, Congress, our great Movement has the answers. The Labour Party needs your help to build a fair society that we all want and need.

I have been watching your debates this week and I have to say I am so glad to hear about your Young Workers campaign. I was one of the youngest home helps in Stockport and one of the youngest union reps. Lots of young people work in social care and childcare too, public sector and private, and they need our unions’ help; they need strong trade unions. Once again, we must be the Movement of young workers. (*Applause*)

Congress, I wanted to thank you personally for your moving tribute to our friend Jo Cox, robbed from us. We honour her memory in how we live, the examples that we set, the causes that we champion, and the lives that we change. We have more in common than divides us.

So, Congress, I hope you know that I will fight for all chances for all our children and I hope you know that I will always fight for equality. I also hope you know me a little better now, too, although I am not going to say anything about what happened at Congress when I was a delegate here. What happens at Congress stays at Congress! I am looking particularly at the Unison delegation right in front of me there.

Congress, I was made in a trade union. I am one of you. I know what it is like to represent working people and I know that you have had a difficult time and your members have had a very difficult time. I promise that I will continue to fight for you in Parliament. My strength and the strength to get up in front of the Conservative Government and to give that passion is because I know I am representing ordinary people of this country. I know that I am representing my constituents that deserve better from a nasty, pernicious, right-wing Tory dogma government. Thank you. (*Standing ovation*)

**The President**: Thank you, again, Angie, for sharing your inspiring story. We would expect nothing less than a speech like that from you. Thank you very much. We are delighted you joined us.

Right, delegates, we now return to Section 2 of the General Council Report, Respect and a voice at work, Employment and Trade Union rights, from page 28 onwards. I call Motion 18, A new deal for workers. The General Council supports the motion to be moved by CWU, seconded by GMB, and UCATT have indicated they wish to speak. Thank you. Good morning, Dave.

**A new deal for workers**

**Dave Ward** (*Communication Workers Union*) moved Motion 18.

He said: President, sisters, brothers, I thought that contribution was what real people are about, real Labour people standing up for real people that we represent, and if that is the direction that Labour is heading in we need to get behind that direction. (*Applause*)

I am here today to move a motion that CWU believe brings together all of the key things, goes to the heart of all of the key issues, and connects this Movement behind a call, a call that people will understand across this country, that is, we need a new deal for workers in this country. We need to be the people who lead that fight and that fight needs to be against the explosion of insecure employment models, it needs to be against the fact that millions and millions of people are working but are in work poverty, and it needs to be against all of the exploitation that is going on in our society.

When I talk about a new deal for workers I talk about bringing all of our causes together under one banner. I want us to stand up for young workers. It was a great thing yesterday. We have to bring through a new generation of reps. I want us to stand up for migrant workers, disabled workers, women, men, full-time, part-time, public sector, private sector, organised and, crucially, unorganised workers.

When you look at the debate that is taking place there is room for optimism but, let’s be clear, there are a lot of things that we need to pull together. It is not just about zero-hour contracts. The whole contractual status of employees at the moment in Britain is a disgrace. There are contracts that are short-term, fixed term, specific event, contracts without holiday pay, without sick pay. There is bogus self-employment. There is the provision of pensions. A whole generation of young people are not just being exploited because of what is happening in the world of work, they are not going to have decent homes and decent pensions, and we have to make this fight about the bigger causes.

I do sense there really is cause for optimism. There is a lot of talk always about women but, actually, there is evidence now, growing evidence, that we are winning. Unite’s campaign in Sports Direct gives us all the confidence to take a similar type of action. (*Applause*) I have to pay tribute to Frances, Liz, and the General Council, because with the Trade Union Act there were some key concessions that by acting collectively we fought for and achieved. Of course, there is a lot more work to do and a lot of problems, but we can face them with confidence.

What I say to the delegates in this hall today is that it is great we come here, we share our views, we talk about all of our problems, but when we leave here we have to start talking about what is the action that we are going to take to do something about it once and for all. When I look at that I think there are three things the CWU wants to put forward to all of the unions, things that every single affiliated union could work hard on and with them could bring about change.

One, let’s have common bargaining agendas through the TUC, through the General Council. We all have our individual issues but let’s think about what are the common bargaining agendas that we can all go back with to every single employer in the country and fight for workers against insecure employment. That can be done.

Two, let’s reinvigorate and redesign our Movement. Let’s get back to training local representatives to have the confidence to take action in their local workplaces, like you are beginning to see. Let’s make workplace trade unionism the model that fights back in this country. I believe there is evidence that people are up for that and that young people are gaining confidence from it.

Three, let’s make sure that we connect our industrial and political agendas. I have said this before and it is worth saying again, I am fed up with politicians, and they came from all parties in the last decade, who used to get up in front of a camera and talk about being pro-business but could never in the same sentence talk about being pro-workers. We want to see, and I believe we are seeing under Corbyn’s leadership, a chance for that debate to be linked, for us to make real progress as workers in this country.

Let’s make sure that we do all those things. How do we bring it together? Let’s work hard. What we are calling for in this proposition is similar to the march for the alternative five years ago when we had 250,000 people out on the street. In this job, like many of you, I am invited to speak at plenty of rallies but I want to speak on a platform with the trades union Movement. I want to speak on a platform with the trades union Movement in front of a million workers in this country. If Corbyn can get 500,000 people to join the Labour Party, we can get a million people out on the street in defence of workers’ rights. (*Applause*)

I am convinced, Congress, and I will finish on this, that if we promote this in the right way, if we draw these demands together, we can connect with things in this country. I can feel it, you can feel it, and this is a moment where we have to roll up our sleeves and where we have to come together for the greater good in defence of workers, not just arguing about what we do not like but arguing for what we want. Let’s get out there, let’s work to get those million people out on a demonstration next April. I move. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call GMB, please.

**Andy Irving** (*GMB*) seconded Motion 18.

He said: We have heard that the world of work and the workplace is changing rapidly and the union Movement needs to be at the forefront of this change, especially in organising workers in the 21st century. GMB is increasing its organising activity in a number of retailers who operate exclusively online or increasing their presence online. Consumers in the UK are becoming more and more dependent on ordering online and asking for delivery to their homes or for their goods to be picked up at local supermarkets and shops. The draw for the consumer on this is that deliveries are made in lightening speed for next to nothing in cost.

It is from our experience trying to organise these workers in this particular industry that a new deal for workers is essential. Conditions that our members and their colleagues are working under are despicable and something that is unimaginable in 21st century Britain. An important point raised in the motion is efficiency and performance targets which are impossible to achieve and push workers to the limit. There is significant complexity to pick rates and packaging in order to be efficient in distribution warehouses for companies shipping straight to the customer. Companies selling vast ranges of products could be making up packages containing perishable goods, books, and electronics, all in one. A lot of effort is put in to make the package of these goods in a careful professional manner in a very short amount of time.

In Amazon members have told us that they walk, on average, 13 miles a day in their warehouse with barely time for a break. If you happen to be late back from a much needed toilet break, you are given a point; three points and you are out. One worker told GMB that he turned up for a shift on Christmas Day to find that his swipe card did not work. He had been sacked. This is standard in Amazon.

In ASOS, and you will hear much more about ASOS this week, workers are discouraged from taking breaks in order to push their pick-up rate and reach their targets. Each week these become more and more unrealistic.

Our members in Marks and Spencer in Southern West have battled with constant TUPE and there is actual confusion about who actually employs them with no one taking real responsibility for their welfare and conditions.

It is essential that affiliate unions support this motion and work together to address the appalling conditions that workers face in this ever-expanding cutthroat business. Please support. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call UCATT, please.

**Tom Wormleighton** (*Union of construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) spoke in support of Motion 18.

He said: Congress, I believe it is vital that our collective movement unites behind the ideas in this motion. Regardless of our economic sector in which our members work, we all recognise the vulnerable employment the motion identifies. In my industry, construction, the union working to deliver fairness and equality in the workplace but it is not easy and it is not a task that can be won in isolation without the industrial support of our Movement and the political support from the party of workers. Too often our organisers and reps on jobs are faced with layers of contract terms embodying false self-employment, umbrella companies, agency working, zero-hour contracts and, shamelessly, we are witnessing these practices on the very largest government contracts paid for by the public purse. Workers are excluded from pension provisions that we have in the UK by auto-enrolment because they are engaged as contractors when they should be classed as employees.

Congress, for every small victory we have in the workplace we know that there are thousands upon thousands of workers who are stuck in the cycle of vulnerable employment knowing that the loss of a job and no pay for one month will tip them over the economic cliff. We need a fundamental change in our economy. We must be the agents of change working alongside progressive political parties in the UK, rebalancing our economy, with redistribution of wealth to the real wealth creators in this country, the people we represent, and in light of the Brexit decision we need to deliver a new deal for workers where the rates are bargained for collectively so that the race to the bottom in pay and conditions is defeated and a settlement for workers is reached.

We need to create a mass movement acting in our own interests. People are, frankly, fed up with the way our economy is run with low wages and erosion of employment rights. Now is the time to fight back. Things can and will get better if we join together industrially and politically. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Before we move to the vote on this, I am going to take UCU who want to raise an item under paragraph 2.2.

**Vicky Blake** (*University and College Union*) spoke with reference to paragraph 2.2 of the Report regarding casualisation.

She said: Last year Congress agreed that the TUC would organise a unified Westminster Parliamentary lobby against casualisation. We understand that it did not happen this year owing to the huge amount of resources rightfully required to fight the Trade Union Bill but we still believe that staunch and effective opposition to casualisation must be the bedrock of our unified fight for fair pay, and decent pay and conditions.

We have talked here about reinvigorating movements and we believe these questions are important to that process. The need for such a lobby has only increased with the recent figures showing that the number of people on zero-hour contracts alone has risen to nearly a million and we have reason to suspect levels of under-reporting. Casualised staff are vital to the trades union Movement and we must oppose casualisation in all its forms against a context where the only move to permanency appears to be in the determination of many employers to continue exploiting their workers.

Casualisation undercuts and undermines the labour market in every sector and our opposition to this exploitation must unite us. So, will the TUC now commit to a cross-union call to action to fight casualisation in all its forms? Will we honour this motion by comprehensively demonstrating that the trades union Movement does not accept that the most vulnerably employed should be left to languish on notions of flexibility which suit only corporations and not communities?

Questions are being asked by our members about this Parliamentary lobby. It is a huge issue affecting people’s working lives and health, and we also believe that this issue forms barriers to organisations where people are left feeling isolated and scared about speaking out on their conditions because they cannot afford to lose their work, especially in the current welfare climate.

We know that casualised staff are vital to trade unions. We know that casualisation intersects with equality issues and blights the lives of people in precarious employment, and this cannot be allowed to be the new normal. We know that we can win where we fight and the inspirational fight against Sports Direct and zero-hour contracts, and the recent movements from Wetherspoons show us this. We need meaningful workers’ rights, we need to fight for that positive future with dignity for all.

We are really asking that we come back to this lobby. The impact of trying to weave a life around the depressing reality of a precarious fluctuating contract and income should horrify us all into uniting behind a huge campaigning lobby which will bring more people into our Movement for a fair future. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you, Vicky. Can I just say on behalf of the General Council you do raise a very serious issue and the General Council will take it on board as we plan our work for the year ahead. Thank you.

Right, we are now going to move to the vote on Motion 18. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

 \* *Motion 18 was CARRIED*.

**The President**: We are now moving on to Motion 19, Umbrella companies. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by UCATT, seconded by NASUWT. They will be the only speakers in this debate. Thank you.

**Umbrella companies**

**Brian Rye** (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians* ) moved Motion 19.

He said: The trades union Movement was built on fighting workplace exploitation and protecting workers, whether it was reducing the working day, fighting for the minimum wage, or banning child labour. The very ethos of this Movement has been wherever exploitation occurs it must be challenged and defeated. In construction, and far too many other sectors, the latest form of exploitation is umbrella companies, a form of exploitation created by a multimillion pound industry that exists solely to ensure that workers are denied basic employment rights, and guarantees that employers do not have to pay National Insurance contributions or employee benefits.

Umbrella companies are clever with a simple con trick. Workers get work via an agency. They are often forced to sign up with an umbrella company. They have no choice: either you sign up or you do not get a start. The amount of pay agreed with the agency is put into their umbrella company pot. From that pot employees’ National Insurance is taken, the employer’s National Insurance is taken, and the umbrella company’s cut, roughly £20 a week, for the privilege of a payslip. If the worker is also enrolled into a pension, the employer’s contributions are also removed from the wage. Of what is left the worker may also have their holiday pay rolled up into that rate meaning that they get a small amount of holiday pay each week but absolutely nothing when they are actually on leave. Only after all these deductions are made does the worker get paid, through a payslip so complicated that even Stephen Hawking would struggle to make sense of it.

From April this year, the loophole which allowed umbrella company workers to offset expenses for travel and subsistence against tax was closed by this Government to boost their coffers and to the direct detriment of workers. Employers were let off scot-free. There is no advantage for a worker being paid via an umbrella company yet the trade association for umbrella companies continues to have the barefaced cheek to claim that workers benefit from being treated in this way. When asked how exactly can a worker benefit from a basic tax and National Insurance rate of 46 pence in the pound, there was complete silence.

It is not just the construction industry that is affected by umbrella companies. It has spread to teaching, logistics, care, and I am sure other sectors represented here. It is why we need a proper survey to assess the full extent of the umbrella company menace, as well as examining other forms of non-standard employment designed to boost the profits of bosses while denying workers their earnings, their rights, or both. We need to be realistic. Umbrella companies are the latest accountant and lawyer devised system created to avoid paying National Insurance contribution by an employer and denying workers employment rights. They are not the first and they will not be the last.

The industry which supports full self-employment is so large that each time you block off one tunnel another is immediately opened, which is why we need a two-track approach. We need to tackle umbrella companies, false self-employment, and to work industrially to challenge these forms of exploitation directly in the workplace, and to reassure workers that other ways are possible, but we also need a political solution.

As a united movement we need to challenge all political parties to take action not just to eradicate umbrella companies but to ban all forms of non-standard employment contracts. In the 21st century, is it too much to ask that workers across the UK have access to a pension, know who is actually employing them, receive the employment benefits they desire, and have employment rights? Congress, I move. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you, Brian. I call on the NASUWT.

**Ruth Duncan (***NASUWT, The Teachers’ Union)* supported the motion.

She said: NASUWT welcomes this motion, which seeks to shine a light on the exploitative practices of umbrella companies. The proposed amendment is designed to highlight the fact that the scope of umbrella companies should cover a range of different industries and sectors. The inclusion of the word “education” in paragraph 1 after “construction” has therefore been added in recognition of the increase and expansion of umbrella companies in the education sector in recent years. This ensures that the motion is inclusive and addresses all agency workers.

I started supply teaching in November 2014. I am constantly offered low rates of pay which do not reflect my extensive teaching experience. A large number of us are trapped into working for agencies which deny us basic employment rights and we are expected to pay both the agency and the umbrella company for the privilege of them finding us work. NASUWT holds supply-teacher seminars twice a year and these are very well-received and well-attended. The latest survey in March of this year revealed that 60% of supply teachers reported that they have been asked to sign a contract or agreement with an umbrella company or offshore organisation. The survey also revealed that 65% of supply teachers were offered rates of pay that were below their skills and experience.

The inclusion of the phrase “fail to tackle unscrupulous practice” in paragraph 2 is designed to highlight the fact that changes made by the Treasury from April 2016 have had very little impact on the umbrella companies themselves. The Government had the opportunity to end their profiteering practices, but failed. The new legal provisions were introduced to clamp down on unscrupulous employment intermediaries, but NASUWT is increasingly concerned that these provisions have adversely impacted on the living standards of moderate and low earners.

Finally, the insertion of the new sub-paragraph is there to ensure that the Government take seriously the concerns that many agency workers have following the decision to leave the European Union. Agency workers are vulnerable to uncertain periods of unemployment and should have reassurances from the Government about how their rights will be protected when we leave the European Union. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I am going to move straight to the vote, Congress. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against?

*\* Motion 19 was CARRIED*

 **The President:** I am now calling Composite Motion 16, the 2016 Trade Union Act. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the RMT, seconded by Unite, supported by the NUT and the FBU and I will just be calling the POA.

**2016 Trade Union Act**

**Sean Hoyle** *(National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers)* moved Composite Motion 16.

He said: We are moving Composite 16, the Trade Union Act, although I would rather call it the anti-Trade Union Act. When I was elected in January, one of the first things I did was to attend a lobby at Parliament on this Act (or Bill as it was at the time). While I was standing there, it did not pass me by that, in 1833, that same building was dealing with the Abolition of Slavery Act and here we are, 183 years later, dealing with a bill that is seeking to turn back the clock. I will tell you this: when a worker cannot withdraw their labour, they are little more than a modern-day slave. *(Applause)*

Congress, we have seen over three decades more and more anti-trade union legislation and now, with the current Act, they are talking about thresholds. This is a government with a mandate of 24% and they lecture us about thresholds. They are talking about a situation where there has to be 40% returns, which basically means that if we have a workplace of 100, 49 vote and every one of them votes for action, it is illegal. One more person can vote against the action and now the action is legal. It is a real joke.

They are also talking about opting in with political funds. We all know that, over time, it will be almost obligatory and the finances of our Movement will go down. That is without doubt.

Finally, on the picket lines now, we have to hand over the details of our activists. I heard Dave earlier in the week talking about blacklists. We are going to start a blacklist for them, aren’t we? We would be handing over the details of our activists and you cannot tell me that is not what is going to happen there.

Now, I want to talk about the POA for a moment. I see my good friend, Steve, over there. For over 22 years now, the POA have been told that it is illegal for them to take action and yet they always find a way. We should not have to find a way. The pledge from Jeremy Corbyn to repeal this Act as well as others is just one more reason why we need a Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour Party in government. *(Applause)*

While I am on the subject of the POA, in 2012, they moved a motion to consider the feasibility of a General Strike. Bob Crow, whose picture I am wearing on my chest, seconded that motion and it was carried. *(Applause)* All we got was a bus tour around the country.

Now, I will be honest. I think Frances is a breath of fresh air for the Movement, I really do – there is always a “but”, isn’t there, and here it comes – but the TUC must do more. We have got the junior doctors’ dispute at the moment and we have failed to invite anyone here from the BMA here to address us. *(Applause)* If we call for a national day of action to support them and our NHS that would send a message to this Government that their days are numbered. Last year, we had another motion and that motion was for a general strike. Peter Pickett stood up here from my union and moved it. Again, I have seen little or no action on that.

So, what are we calling for this time? Now we are calling for an urgent conference to consider the details of our various legal, political and industrial responses. That is a bit more achievable, I suppose. For me, it is a general strike. We need to send that message. We need that, Congress, and we will have that debate there.

Finally, I was at the Scottish TUC earlier this year and all of a sudden a message came, through, “We have saved check-off”. They were applauding and high-fiving each other, saying, “We have saved check-off.” I did not know whether they were talking about Star Trek 1, 2, 3 or 4, but apparently we had saved check-off. I did not celebrate so the comrades around me said, “Why aren’t you celebrating, Sean?” I said, “Look, if you tell me that I am being kicked 100 times where it hurts, I am not going to celebrate. Now you are telling me I am only going to kicked 90 times where it turns so I still ain’t celebrating.” I call it crumbs. That is what it was: some crumbs back to us. They aimed high, more than they wanted, and gained some crumbs back.

I will finish on this. We need to give the bosses a strong message and get it out there. We need to tell the bosses that they can shove their crumbs; the workers are coming for the cake. Solidarity: I move. *(Cheers and applause)*

**The President:** I understand, but for those unions who rely on check-off, that was a victory, trust me. *(Applause)*

**Tony Burke *(****Unite the Union)* seconded the motion.

He said: For almost 30 years, we have been calling for the repeal of anti-union laws and it has continued to fall largely on deaf ears, but we now have a change of direction in the Labour Party and I believe, and Unite believes, that we have an opportunity to move beyond repealing the anti-union laws and draw up a new framework of trade union rights and freedoms for workers and unions. I commend the Institute of Employment Rights’ new booklet. They have been steadfast in supporting our unions. They have produced this manifesto for a positive reform of employment rights and it is certainly worthwhile getting a copy from their stand.

This framework goes way beyond just repealing the legislation. If we are going to make progress, we need to do three things. Firstly, we have to have a right to organise and organising rights must go further than the current law with exemptions for small companies and employer-defined bargaining rights. The right to organise must include the right to access workers free from the influence of employers and US-style union busters. Congress, winning organising campaigns is important because a union presence in the workplace gives an independent voice for workers and ensures that workplaces are more equal and safer.

Secondly, we have to have a right to collective bargaining. The key impact of the anti-union laws has hastened the decline of collective bargaining across the whole of the economy. The loss of rights has seen a decline in workers’ wages over the past three decades. The restoration of sectoral and national collective bargaining will extend the benefits of union negotiations and agreements to all workers irrespective of their employment status. We have got to stop the situation we have now with bogus self-employment.

Finally, we have got to have an unequivocal right to strike. We have lost count of the number of times our unions have been served with injunctions to stop a strike or a dispute, sometimes for the most trivial reasons. You all know the old story: you wake up a high court judge, give him a tot of brandy, you show him a headline from *The Sun* and, bang, you have got your injunction. Without an unambiguous right to strike, collective bargaining is reduced to collective begging.

Congress, we must support the right to organise, we must support the right to have sectoral collective bargaining and we must have the right to strike. I second. *(Applause)*

**Jerry Glazier** *(National Union of Teachers)* supported the motion.

He said: We are very pleased to support this composite and add to it as it is an absolutely crucial motion.

Congress, the 2016 Trade Union Act is the most pernicious, draconian, anti-trade union legislation to have made UK law. It is part of a systematic attack on our union autonomy and workers’ rights across the piece.

Significantly, but unsurprisingly, this legislation has been declared to be in breach of ILO requirements determined earlier this year by the ILO committee of experts. The Act clearly contravenes ILO Convention 87 and goes further in restricting the rights of freedom of association. Specifically, the committee of experts has determined that the 40% threshold imposed for some important public services “constitutes an obstacle to the right of workers’ organisations to carry out their activities without interference.” The application of the 40% threshold to the entire primary and secondary education sector, as well as transport, was considered to be a further breach of conventions, an outrageous interference with the right to strike. Now we have to wait until June of next year to see how the Government argues in front of the ILO that it is not operating outside international law.

Congress, the lifting of the ban on the use of agency workers to break strikes is a further example of extreme anti-trade unionism, a deliberately inflammatory and seriously divisive part of the legislation, which will worsen industrial relations and strain post-dispute relationships. It is now the responsibility of us all to put the fine words of this composite motion into effective action.

President, Congress, support the composite, oppose the anti-trade union legislation and embolden the General Council to promulgate a sustained and effective campaign for its urgent repeal. I support. *(Applause)*

**Ian Murray** *(Fire Brigades Union)* supported the motion.

He said: The FBU support the composite and we are grateful to the RMT, Unite and the NUT for raising the points that they have made. The FBU adds our praise to all the TUC affiliates for the campaign against the Trade Union Act, which undoubtedly forced some change. The campaign exposed a lack of evidence for the Government’s case and exposed the punitive nature of this attack on working people.

Congress, we achieved some significant concessions as a result of determined campaigning at all levels, but nevertheless the Trade Union Act is the most serious attack on workers’ rights in Britain for a generation and challenges our Movement financially, politically and industrially. Despite the concessions, the new arrangements still include an attack on the ability of the unions to take contributions from members via check-off without incurring a financial penalty, attacks on facility time in the public sector, and a fundamental change to the way in which our political funds are administered and collected, removal of fundamental democratic powers for the certification officer and, more significantly, the Act seriously hampers the ability of workers to take industrial action by changing the rules on balloting and thresholds. To treat abstentions as no votes will impose further restrictions on workers in important public services such as firefighters. The threat of further restrictions on picketing is an attempt to intimidate workers from exercising their democratic rights to take effective industrial action and to peacefully court support within that fight.

The FBU point out that the campaign against this injustice law must continue and I would like to draw Congress’s attention to Composite Motion 18 agreed here last year. Whilst some areas of this composite have been implemented, many others have not yet been so.

Congress, the General Council should urgently convene a special meeting to discuss the matter of the Trade Union Act and coordinate and intensify our campaign against it. It should consider the full implementation of the motions to Congress from this year and from last year. It should consider an emergency plan of action to challenge the proposed new measures and it should consider what steps will be taken to support unions or groups of workers who are found to be in breach of that legislation.

The TUC should also consider convening a special congress to develop a campaign of mass opposition and developing support for live issues and disputes. Our Movement should consider all tactical options, including that of non-cooperation, as part of building our campaign. That is what the amendment to our original motion was all about. Congress, for the last two years we have been talking the talk. I am afraid, if it is needed, we are actually going to have to walk the walk.

Ultimately, Congress, let us face it, we should not be discussing working around the Act’s implementation. We should be discussing, as a mass movement, how we are going to defy it. Congress, we have done well so far in the campaign, but for future generations of our trade union Movement, we have not done well enough. We have not done well enough until the Trade Union Act is long gone and all its restrictions on the working class have had their day. Congress, support the composite. *(Applause)*

**Stephen Gillan** *(POA, The professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers)* supported the motion.

He said: Congress, I am very happy to support this composite motion. Without a doubt, there were concessions made and on a variety of issues including check-off, facility time and different things. The trade union Movement stands tall in that because most trade unions put up a fight of resistance against it, as did the TUC, Members of Parliament, the House of Lords, the Trade Union Coordinating Group and even some employers.

However, as the RMT said, this is like crumbs off the table. I speak from experience because my trade union has experienced it since 1994. We do not want the trade union Movement in the same situation that we are in where we have got to think outside the box to protect our members rather than have the basic fundamental human right under international law of being able to take strike action.

If we are hanging our hat on the ILO’s Committee of Experts saying certain things, let me tell you this from experience. We have made three applications to the ILO and each time, the ILO has ruled in our favour. However, the British government have ignored it on three occasions because they only make recommendations. I think everybody accepts that this is pernicious legislation, but we need to rise up as one united trade union Movement to make sure that we get rid of all the anti-trade union legislation and not just this Trade Union Act.

Yesterday, we saw our young workers and our young trade unionists coming through and I have to say it filled me with hope, but we cannot saddle them with this trade union legislation and accept those crumbs from the table. That is why my union, although not affiliated to the Labour Party, supports Jeremy Corbyn in his bid for the Labour Party leadership because he is committed to ridding us of the anti-trade union legislation.

I welcome the chance to stand here and warn you that, for the past 22 years, the position that we have been in has not assisted us in anything. We have had to rise within our own union to make sure that our members are protected. It is a very lonely place not being able to even ballot your members for that basic fundamental right that we all take for granted. Now, they have set the thresholds and, as our RMT colleague said, they have set it that high that it is going to make it virtually impossible for legitimate strike action.

We need to make a decision, as a Congress, how we combat that. I think we are going to have to make major decisions and have major discussions and unite the Movement so that if they attack one trade union, then they attack us all and we stand united in respect of that. Thank you, Congress. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Can we move to the vote on this composite. All those in favour, please show? All those against?

*\* Composite Motion 16* *was CARRIED*

**The President:** We now move on to Motion 21, Surveillance devices. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by UCATT and seconded by Community. Given our time, they will be the only speakers so I am sorry about that.

**Surveillance devices**

**Tracey Whittle** *(Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians)* moved Motion 21.

She said: As building workers, we get our bosses and they want to put trackers into our vans. They say it is so that they can locate where we are so that if there is an emergency, if there is a leak somewhere, they can send the nearest operative with the correct skills. They say this also reduces speeding, lowers their fuel usage and it is safer for lone workers.

They then introduced PDAs, little handheld devices, much like a phone, that give us our daily work. It tells us which jobs we have to go to, which road they are in and a brief description of the jobs. It also allows us to contact back for work if there are any further issues in the property.

It all sounds really good when you put it in the bosses’ terminology. However, in reality, our bosses use the trackers to make sure that we are at work on time, that we do not leave early and that you do not spend too long getting your materials for your job. It does not matter that there might be 20 guys in front of you waiting to get materials; you should only be in the merchants for five minutes. If you pop to the shop to get your lunch, again they question this and heaven forbid you need the loo more than once a day.

These are the different things that people within our trade union, UCATT, have faced from our bosses because they do not want us to stop working for a minute. In some areas, they have TV screens showing the tracking devices and they have got the address of where you are. It all seems really good except for the fact that it has your home address where you are parked up at night. This does not follow data protection.

The handheld device, the PDA, comes in a little box with your name on it with the password and how you access into it. We had one group of guys who had to have their national insurance numbers printed on the side of the boxes. That was their password. How is this secure under data protection? At my husband’s work, they have the same generic code, but with their name in front. They can access anybody’s account. Again, these bosses are really stupid. They are not understanding what data protection is.

The newest things coming up now are the cameras – fantastic. Yes, they will ensure that our members are not accused of an accident that they did not cause. However, they now want to face them internally into the cabs to make sure that people are not smoking, eating or drinking. If that is the case, why, in some areas, are they now putting voice recorders in them? It is so they can hear every conversation that is going on in that cab. It is ridiculous. How would they like them in their company cars? I do not think they would.

So, we know that the bosses are using and abusing these systems. We know that they are not protecting their workers’ identities. They are attempting to infringe on their privacy and we need to stop that abuse. We need all the unions to work together to set in stone what these devices can and cannot be used for. We need legislation that our bosses have to follow so they cannot infringe data protection or infringe the privacy of our workers. Lastly, when that has been put in place, every worker out there needs to know what the bosses are allowed to use these devices for to ensure that they actually question whether these things are being breached. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**Jacqueline Thomas** *(Community)* seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, I am a steel worker at Tata Steel in South Wales and I would like to take this time to tell you about an event that took place a short time ago. The events threatened industrial relations beyond repair.

The situation arose when the company suspected that a team of riggers was sleeping during the night. The riggers are a reactive team, who spend a lot of their time on shift, waiting around to be called for work. Rather than talking to the local union reps to resolve the issue, the company took the outrageous decision to deploy CCTV cameras in the rest areas. The company deployed these cameras for one reason only: it was to gather evidence to discipline and dismiss the riggers. As a consequence, 30 riggers were sacked. Those workers were thrown on the scrapheap simply because the company chose to pursue the dismissals instead of addressing and resolving the issues at hand.

There is no doubt that had HR approached the reps and consulted us on the use of CCTV cameras, the situation could have been averted. The company instead chose to prioritise detection over prevention and at what cost? It was at the cost of our members’ livelihoods and their families. This is completely unacceptable. To make matters worse, the manager, who was responsible for overseeing the riggers, received no sanction at all.

Congress, we must be clear: covert surveillance has no place in any workplace, unionised or otherwise. If surveillance is ever used then union reps must be consulted and employers must not be allowed to install cameras to gather evidence to simply sack people. It is not just about the law; this is about industrial relations as well. So, Congress, please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**Neil Derrick** *(GMB)* supported the motion.

He said: Congress, we welcome this motion. Surveillance has been a real issue of concern for our members and we campaigned vigorously last year on hidden cameras being used in care homes and the care sector. As a result, our members helped shape the guidance which the Care Quality Commission eventually issued to the industry.

We set out five questions which have to be asked and answered before cameras are installed: (1) What exactly would the purpose be of each and every camera being introduced? (2) Has a prior consent in view of the residents been secured? (3) How can the system be regulated and kept secure? (4) Who will have access to the footage and when? (5) Could the money be better spent elsewhere? The answer to that is invariably “Yes”.

Congress, as the motion states, unnecessary levels of surveillance and monitoring increases workplace stress, reduces trust and affects productivity. As we all know, unjustified surveillance by an employer is usually but a symptom of wider abuse and exploitation in the workplace. That brings me directly to ASOS, the giant online fashion retailer, whose huge warehouse and distribution sector is based in my region in Grimethorpe, on the site of the old Grimethorpe Colliery, the poorest area of Barnsley, itself the poorest borough in Yorkshire. There are 4,000 workers, currently fighting alongside the GMB, for union rights and recognition.

ASOS is the next Sports Direct. It has the highest level of invasive monitoring and surveillance I have ever seen with round-the-clock, in-your-face cameras at every workstation, repeated and frequent random searches, searches when you get to work, searches when you leave work, searches before you go to the toilet and searches when you come out of the toilet. I will tell you this, colleagues. In all those stop and searches, I can guarantee you one thing: not one worker has reached into their trouser pocket and pulled out a thick wad of £50 notes and slapped it on the table. They are earning a fraction above the minimum wage. *(Applause)*

Congress, one of our members was recently suspended for refusing the search during her lunch break. She was sat in her car, as she is entitled to do, eating her lunch. An ASOS security guard approached the car and asked her if he could search her and her vehicle. She said, “Let me finish my sandwich. I am on my lunch.” She did that and then invited the security man to do the search only to be told, “You are too late. You refused the search and we have it all on camera.” She was immediately suspended with all the stress that that brings. Luckily, she was in the GMB and we got her back to work within the week, but how many others need our help?

Congress, as with Sports Direct and the excellent Unite campaign, we have called on the Chair of the Business Select Committee to launch an inquiry into the working practices at ASOS. Our message to ASOS and to any other Big Brother employer is simple. You are watching our members, but be in no doubt: we are watching you. Support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We will move directly to the vote on this. All those in favour of Motion 21? All those against?

*\* Motion 21 was CARRIED*

**The President:** We move on to Motion 22, Surveillance and blacklisting. The General Council support the motion. It will be moved by the NUJ and seconded by Unite.

**Surveillance and blacklisting**

**Michelle Stanistreet** *(National Union of Journalists)* moved the motion.

She said: I do not need to explain the consequences and dangers of unchecked, covert and overt police and state surveillance. There are plenty of people in this room, whether personally or through their members, who have lived it, with the blight to livelihoods, the damage to individuals’ health and massive justice.

It was collaborative work in the late 1980s and early 1990s between unions, Parliamentarians and journalists that exposed and destroyed the Economic League, the most effective blacklisting operation of the post-war period, focused on targeting so-called Left Wing troublemakers and those perceived to be a threat to enterprise.

It was also journalistic endeavour that helped trigger the Information Commissioner’s inquiry, which led, in 2009, to a raid on a pretty anonymous building in the West Midlands, which was home to the Consulting Association, and the subsequent unravelling of that organisation’s role, tasked by leading construction companies to run the blacklist to end all blacklists, carried out on an industrialised scale.

At the same time that these companies have been forced to pay in recent victories by the unions involved, this Government have been ramming through legislation that will give the state new and potent powers to surveil its citizens, both individually and collectively, through the snoopers’ charter, the Investigatory Powers Bill, which is in the closing stages in Parliament as we speak.

For journalists, this ill-thought-out, knee-jerk piece of legislation is professionally devastating. One of the core principles journalists hold dear is their responsibility to protect their sources. Reporters have long been prepared to go to prison rather than be forced to give up their source or whistleblower in court. Yet this law will take away that ability. In an age of technology, the ways in which daily phone records can be deployed opens up whole new avenues for the authorities to piece together the identity of a whistleblower: phone records; metadata from smartphones that shows where a journalist has been and when; emails; even the ability to use a phone as a bugging device by remotely triggering the microphone to listen in on a meeting.

Despite international law, which upholds the vital right of a journalist to protect their source, this law will strip it away because journalists simply will not be able to assert that principle. Instead, the state will be able to access the records in secret. I do not know about you, but when I buy a phone, use it and pay my bills, I think of it as being mine. This law gives my phone provider the right to hand over all of that data that they hold on my phone account to the police. They do not even have to ask for my permission. They do not even have to tell me they are doing it.

The consequences for whistleblowing are obvious and dire. How can potential whistleblowers, who know they are in receipt of information that should be in the public domain, have faith and trust to come and forward and speak out to journalists if they know that their identities and their livelihoods cannot be protected in the process? What future stories can never come to light as a consequence?

It will also jeopardise the safety of journalists. If we are perceived as informers to the authorities or as indirect evidence-gatherers for the police, journalists can become a target. At the same time as this Bill is being pushed through under the guise of it being vital for our national security, the NUJ remains in an ongoing legal case against the Metropolitan Police, challenging the fact that six NUJ members have had their lawful journalistic and union activities monitored and recorded by the police and stored with the National Domestic Extremism and Disorder Intelligence Unit, which is supposed to be busy monitoring domestic extremism.

In their responses to this broad-based campaign we have established to lobby against this Bill, the Government repeatedly tries to position itself as caring about journalism, press freedom and civil liberties. We all know this to be hollow rhetoric. They have got form on monitoring my members and they have got form on attacking trade unionists. Like the work down to fight the Trade Union Bill, we have worked hard to neuter the worst excesses of this noxious, ideologically-driven licence to snoop. We have undoubtedly made an impact, but our key demands, including the right to a transparent judicial process, with prior notification, remains unmet. Even friendly politicians advise that we have no chance of winning, we should ditch our demands and make do with what is on the table.

The NUJ is not into ditching our principles and the fight will not end when this Government secures its passage into legislation, as they undoubtedly and imminently will. As we collectively made clear this week, this Movement digs in for the long haul and supporting this motion will help ensure that this assault on journalism and on our sources and whistleblowers will ultimately be overturned. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**Gail Cartmail** *(Unite the Union)* seconded Motion 22.

She said: As Michelle has just reminded us, in 2009, that a conspiracy against construction workers was exposed. Previous Congresses have heard harrowing accounts from decent people denied employment for the crime of fighting for safe working conditions and crucially fighting for the rate for the job.

Many delegates will know how the Consulting Association created files on thousands of construction workers and how this information was sold to 44 construction companies, who were household names: Laing O’Rourke, Carillion, McAlpine, to name but a few. Unite, with sister unions and the Blacklist Support Group, have campaigned for better law. We have won the support of many politicians in Westminster, Holyrood and the Welsh Assembly, and from Labour councils the length and the breadth of the country. This year, finally, the conspirators were dragged to the High Courts of Justice and hundreds of trade union members won financial compensation. The contractors say they are sorry, but to this day, they shy away from admitting the term “blacklisting” and still the law intended to protect workers is woefully inadequate.

Congress, we demand better law and we demand a full public inquiry into blacklisting. *(Applause)* Last July, Unite, at Fawley Oil Refinery, threatened tactical industrial action and we won equal pay for migrant workers, a rise from £48.00 to the £125.00 day rate, which was backdated to September last year. *(Applause)* With input from activists still denied work, Unite has published *Closing the net: Guidance on combating contemporary blacklisting*. While we gather evidence of contemporary blacklisting, Unite will campaign industrially, backing our activists fighting for the rate for the job and equal pay.

I mentioned Fawley Oil. In the energy for waste sector, Unite has taken the campaign for equal pay to Denmark, with solidarity from Danske Metal, our sister union, and we hope that victory may be in reach. Since the exposé in 2009, Unite fought the gang of several contractors, who put aside a £25 million fighting fund to usurp a national agreement and replace it with the so-called Besner, and we are very proud that we campaigned to return a blacklisted worker to work.

Congress, it would be naïve to think that the industry is cleansed. In all these campaigns, our activists on the front line know that their actions are watched and noted. We are saying that the litmus test today is will contractors consciously take activists on to their books? So, in conclusion, we campaign using political, legal and crucially industrial tactics. Congress, please support this motion and the call for a TUC day of action. We are calling for a law that makes the punishment fit the crime and for a full public inquiry. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. We will move to the vote. All those in favour, please show? All those against?

*\* Motion 22 was CARRIED*

**The President:** We are now going to turn to Section 3 of the General Section Report, Good services and decent welfare, and the section on health services on page 47. We have a lot of unions who have indicated to speak on this and we have a lot of outstanding business so I am going to be a bit more ruthless. On this motion, Motion 44, I will only be taking the mover and the seconder, so again I apologise to those unions who wanted to speak. Thank you.

**Future sustainability of the NHS**

**Claire Sullivan** *(Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)* moved Motion 44.

She said: I move Motion 44 on the NHS and I am now feeling under considerably more pressure to say everything that everyone else would have said.

Congress, I speak to you in a week when it feels that the issues, the challenges, the problems – whatever you call them, they are still deficits -- that are faced by the NHS may threaten to overwhelm it and us. When the commitment shown and the efforts made by the incredible NHS workforce can both fill you with hope and reduce you to tears, you know which particular creek you are up when many of those leading NHS organisations are telling you that there is simply not enough money to go round. We could do fewer things or we could do them less well or, of course, we could fund the NHS properly.

I have been working for my union, the CSP, for a really long time and consequently it is a really long time since I was one of those NHS workers. Often, people still ask me if I see myself as a physiotherapist or a trade unionist first and my reply is always the same: there is no choice and nor does there need to be. Any physio will tell you that once a physiotherapist, always a physiotherapist. It is, appropriately enough, in your very bones. The two, of course, different superficially maybe, in reality have much that unites them: a determination to help people at the times when they are most in need; a desire not only to help people, but to help them to learn to help themselves; to stand up for people when they are not able to stand up for themselves; and to treat every person as equal, no better, no worse, no more or less deserving than the next.

So, I arrived in Brighton intending to make a speech about facts, which is this one, and I find myself instead making a speech about values and beliefs: the values of equity and fairness, so dear to both the NHS and to the trade union Movement; of helping others when we are strong and being helped when we are not; the belief that the NHS achieves amazing things every day and of that we should be incredibly proud, but also the knowledge that things can only be stretched so far before they break. We can reorganise until we are blue in the face, we can work together more closely, we can strive for better coordination, for greater integration -- and all of these things do have the potential to work and to help us with the challenges ahead -- but without adequate funding, without more money, they will only ever, at best, be a very partial solution and, at worst, a distraction from the real issues that face us.

NHS staff have already had six years of pay cuts visited on them, this the reward for hugely increased workloads, rising stress levels and falling job satisfaction, this last one not because people feel less commitment to their patients, but because they worry that they no longer have sufficient resources to always give them their very, very best. There are 82,000 unfilled posts in the NHS in England alone as political pressure is brought to bear to deliver an expanded seven-day NHS with no more resources. As if that was not enough, the outcome of the EU referendum puts at risk the future of the 144,000 talented, dedicated and loved EU staff currently working in our health and social care sector.

Yet, Congress, we are a wealthy country. We can afford a properly-funded NHS. It is, in the end, a matter of political choice. Other countries less rich than Britain spend more on their health service. We can, and must, too. So, let us step up our campaign for a substantial and lasting increase in investment. Our NHS needs all of us here in this conference hall, our families, our friends, our colleagues and our communities because we need our NHS. There is no part of our public services that I do not respect, admire and care deeply for, but inevitably for me, the first among equals and the one always dearest to my own heart is the NHS. Today, Congress, unless we do something, I fear for it. I move. *(Applause)*

**Roz Norman** *(Unison)* moved the amendment to Motion 44 and seconded the motion of the CSP.

She said: Congress, as this motion points out, the state of the NHS finances could not be any worse than they are. They are absolutely deplorable. At the end of the last financial year, they were at least £2.5 billion in the red. This year, it is predicted that the deficit will be another £0.5 billion in the red. But, these are not just figures; they actually have a real impact on services. Already, we are finding that some of the services are being cut. We have seen increasing open rationing for things such as IVF treatment, dermatology services and rheumatology services, which impact greatly on members.

This week, we even had the Royal College of Surgeons speaking out. They are not renowned for openly attacking the establishment, but they have highlighted the intense pressures the NHS is under and they state that there is a perpetual winter of Narnia. The NHS is now experiencing winter on winter on winter pressures. Headline funding figures that suggest that the NHS is getting a decent increase actually mask the reality on the ground as money crucial to areas such as health education, the Care Quality Commission and public health is being ruthlessly slashed.

Unison has continued to point out that the Government’s smoke and mirrors for the NHS funding cannot obscure the truth. The NHS is being run into the ground. This is without taking into account the impact of the EU referendum, which has added a huge extra uncertainty to the services at a time when we can least afford it. It was not a surprise, was it, Congress, to know that over the weekend, the Brexit camp abandoned their ridiculous claim that the NHS would get £350 million per week if we left the EU – lies on lies.

The latest plan for NHS England is to try to get around some of these problems with the use of the so-called Sustainability Transformation Plans, known as “STPs”. That is in England and it is going to be over 44 regions. In theory at least, these should lead to some positive changes as they encourage providers of care to work together with commissioners and the local authorities, everything that the Lansley reforms and even some of the Blair ones went against.

Congress, the big problem, as always, is the lack of money. We know from painful experience of the NHS that when reform is attempted on the cheap, it means cuts. It means that patients lose out and it means that staff suffer. The fear is that the STPs will become a vehicle for cuts and it means that the Government are shielding themselves over the failure to fund the NHS adequately.

Unison’s amendment to this motion was designed to draw attention to the threats to support services and pathology initiatives and the latest attempts from the new regulations, NHS Improvement, to force the services to save further cash. As always, the answer to these problems is outsourcing. If that is the answer then it is wrong. Unison has written to all chief executives to let them know that such options should not be considered. Our union continues to resist NHS privatisation in all its forms but, Congress, it is vital that we continue to value all healthcare staff, regardless of what particular sector they work in.

Congress, to finish, let us keep up the fight for our NHS, let us demand a proper funding settlement for the NHS and let us make sure that we have got an NHS fit for the 21st century. Thank you. Please support. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We are now going to move straight to the vote on that. Can I see all those in favour? All those against?

 \* *Motion 44 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I will now call Motion 45, Continuity of midwife-led care. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the RCM – a big welcome, Cathy – and seconded by Unison.

**Continuity of midwife-led care**

**Prof Cathy Warwick** *(Royal College of Midwives)* moved Motion 45.

She said: The Royal College of Midwives is moving our motion to call on Congress to campaign with the RCM to ensure that there are enough midwives so that women have access to continuity of midwife-led care. Women in the UK typically see different midwives during the antenatal, labour and post-natal periods. Some women even see a different midwife at every single visit.

The recent Maternity Review in England recommended that women should receive continuity of care throughout the whole of their pregnancy, birth and post-natal period. This model has been shown to increase women’s satisfaction with their care but, even more importantly, to improve outcomes for women and babies, including really critical outcomes like reducing premature births and increasing breastfeeding, which we know make an impact on the future life chances of children.

The Royal College of Midwives agrees that continuity of care is the best model and that the future of women and their babies do depend on the highest quality of maternity care. However, this model can only be delivered if maternity services are funded and staffed appropriately and in accordance with the NICE safe staffing recommendation.

The RCM is clear that we do not have enough midwives. We have been campaigning for many years for more and our campaign had been making progress. We had persuaded previous governments to employ 3,000 more midwives and that was delivered. However, our annual State of Maternity Services Report still recorded a shortage of 2,600 midwives in England and this has very recently climbed to 3,500 midwives. It is very worrying that our work is being done, but it is impossible to deliver the best models of care to women.

We are also concerned that the Government’s proposals to change the bursary system for student midwives will increase our problems. The introduction of fees and loans will deter new students from studying to be midwives. We surveyed current student midwives and we asked them that if the proposed system of fees and loans had been in place when they started their midwifery degree, would they still have started? A staggering 64% of students said that they would not have studied midwifery had that been the case. The current proposals can only make things worse.

In addition, the Department of Health does not seem to be at all concerned with the retention of staff. They are continuing with their disastrous policy on pay restraint in the NHS, intent on seeing that midwives, maternity support workers and other hardworking NHS staff do not see a proper pay rise until at least 2020. They are also intensifying work in the NHS, asking staff to do more with less and relying on their goodwill to work throughout their breaks and beyond their already long shifts just to get the work done. The increased workload is causing enormous stress and burnout, leading to high sickness absence rates and more and more midwives leaving midwifery.

More worrying too, which has also been mentioned, is the fate of midwives from EU countries. There are 1,192 midwives working in the UK delivering high-quality services, who are from EU countries. They do not know if they will be able to stay. Over half of these midwives work in London, which has the most acute shortages. It is unthinkable what will happen to women if all of these midwives have to go home. All our hard work campaigning to reduce shortages will continue to be undone. EU staff working in the NHS must be granted the right to remain.

The Royal College of Midwives sincerely believes that continuity of midwife-led care is the best model of care for women and we absolutely believe that we must get maternity care right if we are going to guarantee the future health of the children of the UK. We want to work with the NHS and the Government to make this type of care a reality for women. However, we must have the right number of midwives to deliver this care and we are asking for Congress please to work with us to campaign for more midwives so that we can deliver the best care, the care that women and their families deserve. Thank you, Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

**Eleanor Smith** *(Unison)* seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, I am very pleased to be seconding this motion and following on from Cathy. I work as a nurse at Birmingham Women’s Hospital where we have a midwife-led ward and it is a real success story. It is well-led, provides something mothers want and is an excellent service. It is living proof of the popularity of such a service with patient satisfaction notably high. It shows that when our commitment and our committed hardworking midwives are allowed to get on with work, it works well for patients and staff alike.

As the RCM highlights, continual care is essential in the NHS. This is particularly the case with midwifery but, Congress, we cannot afford to be complacent. We remain very short of midwives in our unit so, in some ways, the success of the unit is even more remarkable. As the motion points out, the shortage of midwives persists across the NHS despite the excellent campaign efforts of our colleagues in the RCM and others. The lack of staff remains a real problem. The Government were supposed to have addressed this in the wake of the Mid Staffs scandal, but the issue seems to have slipped further and further down the priority list as austerity has been prioritised over everything else.

A crucial part of addressing the shortage is to ensure that we get a decent flow of student midwives coming through the system yet the Government is abolishing the NHS bursary for healthcare students. Congress, this is a massively retrograde step. It will stop many potential healthcare students from going on to become midwife nurses or allied health professions. It will cause financial misery for many higher education institutions which run the healthcare courses and, most of all, it will affect patient care because the supply of dedicated health professionals will be affected.

Healthcare students are not like other students. They work the same hours as the paid healthcare staff. They are not able to get paid jobs alongside their duties on the ward and so lumbering them with anything up to £50,000 worth of debt is simply not a sustainable option for students, for patients or for our NHS.

The motion also draws attention to the critical issue of long-term pay restraint. Pay cuts and pay caps have had a massively damaging impact on the ability of the NHS to recruit and retain the level of staff that services need to thrive. That is nothing of the pain that they are causing to those of us who work in the NHS where many healthcare staff are struggling to make ends meet. Finally, there is a need to ensure that the healthcare staff from within the EU are guaranteed a right to remain in the UK. Without the dedication and graft of our colleagues from Europe, and indeed from all over the world, our NHS would end and grind to a halt. Theresa May, let them stay.

Congress, this is an important issue and Unison is proud to work alongside the RCM in campaigning for more midwives. Please support the motion and a properly-staffed NHS. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We are going to move straight to the vote on Motion 45. Can I see all those in favour? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 45 was CARRIED.*

**The dangers of new psychoactive substances**

**The President:** I am now going to call Motion 46: The dangers of new psychoactive substances. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the POA and to be seconded by Community. Thank you.

**Mike Rolfe** *(POA, The professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers)* moved Motion 46.

He said: Congress, I am the National Chair at the POA. As you will be aware, this motion is very dear to our heart in the POA because there has been a mass prevalence of drugs within our prison system. That has been a problem for many years. We have had lots of drug issues. We have had the traditional drug issues of many years, with heroin and cannabis, often known as “bird killer”. But, in recent years, we have had a mass influx of new psychoactive substances coming into prisons. It is estimated that in some of our establishments some 50% to 80% of prisoners use NPS on a regular basis to get through their time in prison. This results in large sums of money exchanging hands. NPS, until recently, was legal, people were able to buy it on line, and 100 grammes at £3 per gramme. That is then cut up, smuggled into prisons in a variety of ways and sold at £100 per gramme. So some 40 times what it is on the outside street value.

The Government have, quite often, blamed the high level of violence within the prison system on NPS. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that there has been an increase, a surge, in violence due to the use of NPS, the Government have hidden behind this and, at the same time, they drastically reduce prison officer numbers. Numbers of prison staff have gone down by 30% in the last six years, whilst prison populations have remained static.

There is a crisis within our prisons in lots of ways, and NPS is causing many issues, not only for the staff working within prisons but also for those prisoners who are seeing this as the drug of choice. NPS is undetectable to traditional security methods, such as sniffer dogs and urine testing. So prisoners use it and they don’t feel that there are any repercussions to it. As a result, there are many dark things that come from the mass use of this drug. Many prisoners have committed suicide. Some of those suicides have been attributable to prisoners who have become depressed or seriously mentally unwell from the use of NPS. Prisoners have died just from the very use of NPS. Every day now in our prisons staff are struggling to cope with the amount of prisoners who are falling ill, under the influence of these drugs. This has created not only a burden on the prison system, but it has also created a massive burden on the National Health Service. Some of my colleagues report to me that they have up to nine ambulances a day going out to the local hospital, taking up valuable resources within those hospitals, and taking up valuable prison-officer time that should be available to try and help prisoners rehabilitate and get themselves away from a life of crime. This situation creates a real block on both systems and a massive cost.

We have campaigned for a long period of time for proper investment into prisons so that we can do our rehabilitative job and also reduce the use of drugs. In turn, that would take away that burden from the NHS.

Today we are bringing this motion before you and we are asking for you, our fellow trade unionists, to support our fight against NPS, and to support those community projects that educate people against the use of NPS, because it really is a scourge that could grow out of control, that affects not only the young but the vulnerable. It is quite often administered to people who sleep rough who do not have a home. We are asking Congress, for you, to support our message, to get it out *there*, to tell people of the dangers, to steer people away from a life of drugs and to steer people away from that spiral into criminality and also a life of not feeling that there is any hope or anything to be gained, and ending up and winding up stuck in our prison system. Thank you very much. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. I call Community.

**David Lawrie** *(Community)* seconded Motion 46.

He said: My union, Community, welcomes the POA motion. The ever-increasing use of psychoactive substances across the prison estate should cause grave concern, and should for all staff in this sector. Our members in the prison and custodial service face a daily struggle. As prison officers we struggle daily with offenders. When we signed up, we knew our working life was not going to be easy, so we don’t speak out lightly. But the lives of prison officers have been endangered, and we have a duty to speak out. Our officers are being forced to work in an environment of shrinking staff numbers, and in some cases dangerous situations. If unregulated, this situation will spiral out of control.

It is Community’s belief that we need a two-pronged approach for NPSs in our prisons. In the long term, we must educate people of the threat that NPSs pose. It is vital that we tackle this problem at its roots by educating users, officers and policymakers about the threat posed within the Prison Service. But, Congress, we cannot afford only to take the long-term view. Substance abuse in the prisons has caused a 40% rise in ambulance call outs in the last two years. It commonly takes additional officers to restrain an inmate who has used these substances in an environment where the staff are working alone. It must not be left to an officer to lose their life before action is taken. That is why Community is calling on the Government to take immediate action to safeguard workers. We have to ensure that the prison and custodial service no longer operates with so few staff and that NPSs are not so freely available. No one should be forced to work worried about having to deal with a high risk of violence in their workplace. I say that the Government must unnecessarily putting officers’ lives at risk. They must commit to urgent action and commit to a minimum level of safety. Congress, please support. Thank you.

**The President:** Thank you. I am going to move to the vote on this motion. Will all those in favour, please show? Those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 46 was CARRIED.*

**Organ donation**

**The President:** We are now moving on to Motion 47: Organ donation. The General Council supports the motion. It is going to be moved by the SOR and seconded by PCS. We have no time for other speakers. I am sorry about that.

**Susan Webb** *(SOR, Society of Radiographers)* moved Motion 47.

She said: Congress, much has changed since the first successful human corneal transplant in 1905. Then in 1967 the first successful heart transplant was carried out in Cape Town, South Africa, by Dr. Christiaan Barnard on a gentleman called Louis Washkansky, a man with chronic heart disease. The donor was a 25 year-old woman, who had been fatally injured in a car accident. The transplant was a success, although the early drugs used to fight rejection of the transplanted organ left him at risk of other illnesses, and he died of double-pneumonia, although his heart was still functioning.

In the 1970s the development of better anti-rejection drugs made organ transplantation more viable. Most transplant organs will be from dead donors. This may be because the organ in question is a vital organ which the body needs to stay alive, or the removal of the organ from a living donor is impracticable. Dead donors will be needed for transplants, including heart, cornea, pancreas and small bowel. It is likely that liver and kidneys will come from dead donors, too, but these can come from living donors. A living donor can be used where the body contains more than one replacement organ, such as a kidney, or where a lot of material is needed, such as bone marrow. A thorough medical, surgical and psychological assessment is carried out to establish whether living donors are fit and healthy. Each year there are over 9,.000 people in the UK who need a transplant but only 3,000 receive one. Over a thousand people die each year waiting for an organ. This is despite 500,000 people dying in the UK because only 5,000 die in circumstances where they can become a donor.

Statistics released in the Organ Donation and Transplantation Activity Report of 2014/15 shows that the number of transplants decreased by 5% from the year before. Of the transplants carried out, over a thousand were made possible by living donors who gave a kidney, bone marrow or part of their liver because it can regenerate, and 3,309 people benefited from organs donated after their death. Donation after death is an emotive subject, and figures reveal that families are more likely to agree to a donation if they know of their family members’ wishes. Even so, last year 120 families felt unable to honour their dead relatives’ wishes. Carrying a donor card or signing up to the Organ Donation Register should be followed up by discussion with your family and your wishes made clear.

Our ethnicity has an influence on our human leukocyte antigen and blood group. Donors need to have a close genetic match. People from the same ethnic background are more likely to be suitable donors and recipients. For a successful bone marrow donation, donors have to have exactly the same tissue type, and as some ethnic groups are less likely to register, there is an urgent need for donors from some ethnic communities to improve the changes of people from that ethnic group.

As a mother and grandmother of Type 1 diabetics, which is where the pancreas stops working completely, I have a personal interest in this. My daughter is 36 and has been diabetic since she was 15. She has managed her condition well, having had three children, although her pregnancies were difficult. She now suffers with neuropathy, which is where she cannot feel her feet, so she is at risk of amputation in the coming years, along with kidney failure and blindness. Her 16-year-old son is struggling badly with his diabetes at the moment after being diagnosed diabetic at the age of 7. He is at the moment unable to cope well, and we have been told that if he doesn’t start to manage his diabetes better he could be dead by Christmas. This is partly because he sees no way out of the regimented life that a diabetic has to live with finger pricks, blood tests, having to eat and not be able to behave like his friends.

I have, in the last few months, as part of my job as a CT radiographer, scanned three people who have had pancreas and liver transplants. They tell me their lives have changed so much, with the freedom from constant monitoring of their blood with needle pricks to their fingers and injecting themselves up to five times a day. Just last Saturday I saw a story in the papers about an 11-year-old boy, who was given a kidney by a stranger, and declared, “Now I can eat chocolate pudding and go for a wee”. He said he is a normal person now and feels amazing. Before his transplant he was hooked up for 12 hours a night to a noisy dialysis machine and was restricted on what he could eat and drink. Now he is looking forward to a normal life, as are his family. His mum urged the public to join the Organ Donation Register, and she said three people are dying every day in Britain while they wait for much-needed organs. His donor underwent a three-hour operation but said he has now recovered and doing fine.

I know that medicine is moving on a pace with new treatments, but a transplant is the only cure for some chronic and life-limiting diseases. I urge Congress to support this motion and to give hope to so many people. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. Janice.

**Janice Godrich** *(PCS, Public and Commercial Services Union)* seconded Motion 47.

She said: Colleagues, last week was Organ Donation Week, which provides a fantastic opportunity to promote and highlight the importance of organ donation, to hear from those who have experienced or are waiting for donation and to celebrate those who have saved lives.

The motion, rightly, highlights the crisis in organ donation facing us here in the UK. Public support for organ donation is overwhelming, with 90% of people supporting it in 2015, yet the UK has still got one of the lowest rates of consent in Europe. Families are approached about organ donation at an unbelievably difficult time. That is why we support a campaign a campaign to raise awareness and promote discussion about donation. We are proud to support the motion and to call on Congress and every union present today to do all we can to encourage people to sign up to the Organ Register and urge the Westminster and devolved governments to look again at changing the law to presumed consent.

For many of us in PCS our awareness of this issue has recently increased for, as many of you know, following an illness six years ago, our General Secretary, Mark Serwotka, is waiting for a heart transplant. He is currently in hospital after being admitted because the heart pump he has been fitted with has developed complications. Mark was honoured to be asked to second this motion, and I am pleased to do it in his absence. Although Mark needs to remain in hospital while the problem is addressed, it does not affect his general wellbeing and he remains in contact with PCS colleagues. If circumstances allow, it is now the doctors’ intention to take this opportunity to carry out the heart transplant mark has been waiting for. In seconding this motion, he has asked me to read a short message to Congress. He would like to thank everyone who has sent cards and messages. He said: “It’s really appreciated by myself, my wife, Ruth and my family. I would also like to thank the marvellous medical and other staff here at Papworth Hospital who do an absolutely fantastic job, and whose care and dedication are overwhelming. There are many people in the same situation as me, waiting for heart transplants, some who have been waiting in chronic poor health for several years, but the system of organ donation we have, sadly, could be much better. The motion talks about a system of presumed consent, and the TUC must now campaign for a system in all nations to raise awareness and increase the level of donations in the UK. We also recognise that this campaign comes at a time when the whole of our NHS is facing an unprecedented threat from a Tory Government, intent on destroying the very principles of universality and treatment free at the point of need that we all hold so dear. The amazing work by medical staff who provide brilliant care to those like me has been undermined by this Government’s attempts to cut funding and resources, and may even affect many workers’ rights as UK citizens to remain in the UK. The trade union Movement must fight this attack and use the opportunity at Congress to demonstrate our unwaivering support for junior doctors and all NHS staff.”

Congress, as Mark makes clear, we know the Tories are destroying the NHS. We need to make sure that we respect and campaign for everything, but importantly in this subject let’s build a campan to increase organ donations and improve the transplant chances of those waiting. Unite and save our NHS. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Congress, we do send our best wishes to Mark, and thanks for that. As crucially, today you, as delegates, will receive an email about the NHS Campaign con Organ Donation. We would urge all delegates, their friends and their families, to sign up to this incredible campaign. Thank you.

We will now move to a vote on Motion 47. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried. Thank you, colleagues.

* *Motion 47 was CARRIED.*

**Patient complaints**

**The President:** I am now going to call Motion 48: Patient complaints. The General Council supports the motion with an explanation. I will call on Dave Prentis a little later to explain the General Council’s position. It will be moved by the SOR and seconded by Unite. Thank you.

**Sheila Hassan** *(SOR, Society of Radiographers)* moved Motion 48.

She said: Congress, Motion 48 brings to the attention of Congress one of the biggest scandals of our time, which is draining valuable NHS resources. According to the annual report of the NHS Litigation Authority, over £1.67 billion was spent last year by the NHS in insuring against and defending claims for compensation from patients following problems with their care and treatment. I want to emphasise this figure: £1.67 billion! This is not for compensation paid but the cost to the NHS of insuring against claims. In addition, over £600 million was spent just on the legal representation patients need to get the compensation.

According to the Litigation Authority’s annual report, this is a 27% increase over the last 12 months. Congress, you do not need me to remind you that this money comes from only one place, and that is the NHS budget, which could otherwise be spent on improving healthcare. Not only is this an unproductive use of resources, but this puts many healthcare professionals, including radiographers that the SOR represents, in a very difficult position regarding their professional obligations and the duty of candour, a duty that requires them to own up and apologise when things go wrong, a duty that, we believe, is entirely appropriate for healthcare professionals.

Colleagues, our concerns, however, are not just about wasted resources. Our concerns go much deeper than that. My union prides itself on putting patients first. We work closely with patient groups and involve them in our policymaking process. Quite simply, our members would not be doing the job they do if they did not put their patients first. In 2014 the SOR took industrial action, and we did this by making sure our patients received urgent care and, in doing so, got our patient support. But putting patients first becomes more and more difficult if the only recourse that patients have is through the legal process when things go wrong. Unfortunately, we have seen a rise in vexatious complaints against our members, some so serious that the police have charged those making complaints with wasting police time. In fact, we believe we now have a system that encourages vexatious complaints. Over 4,000 complaints a week are now dealt with by the NHS; a consequence, no doubt, of a non-win/no-fee culture that we live in today. This current framework works for no one except the lawyers and the insurers who, of course, are the people paid the £1.5 billion. It doesn’t work for patients who have to fight for compensation, and it doesn’t help our members who are often giving their accounts of what has gone wrong to lawyers rather than their fellow professionals. In such circumstances, there is no opportunity for lessons to be learnt and for the open and honest approach needed following the Francis Report and now applied by regulators.

Colleagues, we need to find a better way of doing this. Radiographers have, for a long time, been reporting errors at all levels in a no-blame culture, which encourages honesty and learning. These errors are reported nationally and learning is shares across the radiographer community. We need an environment such as this, where healthcare professions can immediately own up to errors and allow their fellow professionals to be aware of lessons learnt. We also need an environment also where patients get treated fairly and compensated when appropriate, and an environment where those who have no conducted themselves in accordance with their professional standards, duties and obligations should face appropriate sanctions, including being struck off.

There are better examples of good practice both within the UK and outside that we can learn from, such as the airline industry, which have good practice in dealing with mistakes. There are many experts and organisations who share these concerns, including the Medical Defence Union, whose chief executive has publicly stated that NHS is hemorrhaging money on claims and has called for an overhaul of the current system. So let us today take the lead on this on behalf of our members, and put the TUC at the forefront of the debate about how we move from the culture of secrecy fuelled by the no-win/no-fee litigation to a culture of openness that truly puts patients first. This motion calls for the TUC to begin a discussion with interested parties so that we can start to move towards a system where patients are compensated where appropriate, where those healthcare professionals, having been judged by their peers as performing below the standard expected of them, are suitably sanctioned by the way it does not waste precious NHS resources and allows professionals to learn from mistakes so that patient safety is protected and enhanced. Colleagues, I urge you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. I call Unite.

**Marina Gunn** *(Unite)* seconded Motion 48.

She said: Congress, I am speaking in support of Motion 48. I speak as both an active trade unionist and somebody who, unfortunately, has had the need to make a patient complaint. After undergoing an operation, I suffered nerve damage. The delay in admitting that something had gone wrong meant a delay in getting the treatment and physio that I badly needed. But there were angels, I must say, in the NHS who helped. Congress, I believe that my impairment could have been avoided if the staff felt that they could have come forward and been honest about what had happened. Everyone makes mistakes, and we are all human beings. I know from fellow trade unionists working in the NHS the stress that the staff are being put under, and under-funding is taking the service close to breaking point. With staff being asked to work long and unpaid hours, these mistakes are more likely to happen. The culture is one of fear over one’s future, and trying to do the best for the patients and service users in extremely difficult circumstances. Workers are suppressed from raising their concerns and training is becoming harder to come by as budgets are cut. All of this works against the working conditions that can prevent mistakes happening in the first place and works against a culture that is open and honest, where mistakes are an opportunity to learn and how to prevent similar occurrences.

Unite has produced its *Saying Sorry* fact sheet to help our members in the health sector to raise issues in their workplaces. I know that other unions have produced similar material. Congress, I am an active member of my disabled committee, and also the vice chair of my regional committee. I have met some amazing people, like Sean McGovern. I am proud of the work that my union and others here are doing to help prevent others experiencing what I have gone through. We know that trade unions are an effective voice in the workplace for staff in a properly funded NHS. Please support this motion. Thank you.

**The President:**  I call Dave Prentis.

**Dave Prentis** *(General Council)* said: Congress, the General Council position is to support Motion 48, but with an explanation which I am about to give you. The motion calls on the TUC to discuss ending the option of legal recourse for patients who believe that they have been the victim of poor and, possibly, negligent medical care in favour of a professional and not a criminal sanction. The duty of candour recommended by the Francis Report requires registered health professionals to provide information to patients where serious harm or death has been caused by acts undertaken by them or their organisation, regardless of whether this information has been requested. Congress, opinion differs about the impact that this has on litigation, but evidence published in *The Lancet* and elsewhere suggests that the candour policies of this kind can lead to reductions in cases leading to personal prosecution in the long run.

The TUC favours a review of the system to ensure that any reviews are fair and transparent, provide patient redress, promote learning and do not lead to criminal sanctions as a default position. There may also be scope to consider alternative litigation routes, such as no-fault compensation, but the TUC would not want to promote an outcome which automatically removes the right of patient to legal recourse. With this explanation the General Council asks you to support Motion 48. Thank you.

**The President:**  There is no need for the right of reply. We will move to the vote, then. Will all those in favour, please show? All those against? That is carried.

* *Motion 48 was CARRIED.*

**Low wages and occupational health**

**The President:**  We now move on to Motion 49: Low wages and occupation health. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the Bakers Union and to be seconded by the GMB. They will be the only speakers. Thank you.

**Sarah Woolley** *(BFAWU, Bakers, Food and Allied Workers’ Union)* moved Motion 49.

She said: Congress, how many people here today have had to make the decision “Do eat or pay my rent?” How many of you have worried so much that, in order to buy the new school uniforms for September, you have had to work 60-plus hours a week, putting not only yourselves but others who work around you at risk? How many are working but have been forced to use their local food bank? Congress, £7.20 is not a living wage. It is low pay. When employees have, continually, to work over their contractual hours in order to be able to survive and not working overtime because they want to buy a holiday but to enable them to buy food to eat, it is wrong. When working people are forced into using food banks in order to eat or even to receive nappies, the situation is disgraceful. The situation is even worse for those under the age of 25, who are paid at the discounted rates of £6.70 per hour or even as little as £5.30 for the same job, which is disgraceful at best. It puts them at an even greater risk of disease or injury. After all, they don’t get a discount on their rent, rates or food bills, but have to survive with discounted wages.

There is a direct link between low wages and illness. Continual and prolonged stress brought on by not having enough money to live on presents its own illnesses, both physically and mentally. Our aim is that we have legislation for an increase in the minimum wage to £10 an hour, and we have organised our *Fast-Food Right Now* campaign. Young people on zero-hour contracts, being paid disgracefully low wages, know that their friends and colleagues have committed suicide because they have not seen any way out of the cycle of poverty, mounting debt, payday loans and hunger, being too embarrassed to admit that they need help from food banks and isolated as they cannot join in with their friends. Tiredness from working ridiculous hours to make up for such low pay increases the risk of an accident, not only at work, which can have detrimental impacts on colleagues but also on the way to and from work, which can have potentially devastating effects.

The Bakers Union has been campaigning for £10 per hour for all workers regardless of age for a few years now, a campaign that the TUC, at its Congress in Liverpool two years ago, agreed to support. Our union represents some of the lowest paid workers in the UK, workers who are more susceptible to a greater risk of diseases, such as those of the heart. Alzheimer’s, diabetes, asthma and depression, to name a few. Also they are at a greater risk of injury. Congress, this is not down to the work that they are doing but down to the pressure of having to work excessive amounts due to being paid so poorly in order to survive, and the constant stress of not knowing how they will pay the bills, eat, give their children bus fare to school or simply survive the week or month.

Higher wages are proven to provide health benefits, such as lower stress levels, being able to eat properly and establishing a proper routine with adequate sleep patterns as overtime is not relied upon. This is why low pay needs to be recognised as an occupation health threat, and why the TUC and its affiliates should be actively supporting our £10 an hour campaign that you agreed to two years ago to help us combat this occupation health threat. Please support. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. I call the GMB.

**Sheila Bearcroft** *(GMB)* seconded Motion 49.

She said: Congress, like many other TUC affiliates, GMB has a clear and simple policy on low wages. Work has to pay. GMB believes that if a living wage relies on working receiving in-work benefits, then it is not a living wage at all. It is nothing more than corporate welfare, pure and simple. GMB supports the call for a minimum wage, free of subsidy, free of corporate welfare and a wage that workers can live on. As 21st century unions, now is the time to campaign for a minimum wage that means that workers don’t have to rely on in-work benefits. Let’s give working people the dignity they deserve and put an end to corporate welfare once and for all.

Congress, the impact of a £10 per hour wage would not just be enormous and make a profound different on workers’ take-home pay, it would also have a huge impact on their families and the health of their families. Too many workers don’t know if they can afford to pay the rent or keep their children fed from day to day, week to week. Too many workers have two or three jobs just to make ends meet, let alone the luxury of taking a holiday, and you can forget about buying your own house.

The anxiety and the stress that this causes is just one reason why many working-class people die younger. They are denied the dignity of a wage that pays, they are constantly under huge pressure and, unlike the rich, they have no wealthy family to turn to for help. There are no trust funds that they can draw upon. Christmases, birthdays, school holidays all become times of acute stress, not times of family fun, not times of family happiness but worry on where it is all going to come from and how it will be paid for.

GMB has heard enough from executives who claim that their stressful jobs lead to health problems. Give those health problems to the real worker and they will manage it. Working-class people are the silent majority, suffering from a silent killer. Now is the time for us to speak up and support them. Please support the motion. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you, Sheila. We will move straight into the vote on that. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 49 was CARRIED.*

**Promoting and protecting the dietetic profession**

**The President:**  I now call Motion 50: Promoting and protecting the dietetic profession. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by the BDA and seconded by BOS TU.

**Dennis Edmondson** *(BDA, British Dietetic Association)* moved Motion 50.

He said: Delegates, dieticians are the only qualified health professions who assess, diagnose and treat dietary and nutritional problems at both individual and wider public-health levels. We combine clinical expertise and counselling skills to translate nutritional science into individually tailored advice, and we work with our clients to formulate practical and achievable goals that enable them to make informed decisions about their nutritional health and lifestyle choices.

As health professionals, we like our fellow healthcare colleagues, are passionate about what we do, but we are also acutely aware of the massive on-going challenges we face. The term “work intensification” was previously discussed in Congress which, as was cautioned, cannot easily be translated from a manufacturing or assembly-line model into health and social-care settings. Yet this is increasingly what health and social care seems to feel like under the over-arching mantra of achieving more for less. In recent days, media attention has highlighted the stark admission from NHS employers that an already completely over-stretched NHS cannot continue to function at current levels without increasing funding, with the chilling alternative that health services would have to be cut or rationed.

We are, therefore, deeply concerned that, in the relentless drive to cut costs at the expense of high-quality evidence-based practice, dietetic services, and particularly those within public health, are increasingly at risk of being outsourced to profit-driven providers when merely handing out generic leaflets is highly unlikely to achieve long-lasting results for improving the nutritional health of the hundreds of thousands with chronic conditions such as diabetes and obesity.

On a palliative note, the dietetic profession has, in answering the call to further increase productivity and to work smarter, demonstrated our specialist clinical skills in innovative ways. So we can advance and develop the profession and help alleviate pressure on a stretched NHS workforce. For example, the establishment of dietician-led out-patient clinics for assessing and treating conditions such as irritable-bowel syndrome frees up physicians’ time to enable them to focus on other clinical duties. This is just one of the many examples of how a dynamic and progressive dietetic profession continues to innovate and deliver on all aspects of nutritional healthcare. Equally, there are many examples of how our allied health professional colleagues likewise continue to innovate within their specialist fields.

In summary, dieticians play a crucial role in promoting nutritional health and wellbeing, treating illness and supporting recovery and rehabilitation. It is, therefore, essential that there is proper recognition by service commissioners and the Government of the important and valuable contribution that dieticians and all allied health professions provided to the wider health economy. We, therefore, call upon Congress to support this motion to both protect and promote the dietetic profession. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. I call the BOS TU.

**Deborah Podmore** *(BOS TU, British Orthoptic Society Trade Union)* seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, the BOS is glad to be able to second this motion as it highlights the need for allied health professionals to promote the excellent work we undertake in public health, the NHS and social care, yet in many ways we go unrecognised. We all realise there needs to be a sustainable model of healthcare that is free at the point of delivery. The Nuffield Trust highlighted the need to maximise the skills and abilities of all AHPs and the workforce needs to reflect this. In these times when the Government are looking at what will be provided by the NHS, the AHP workforce must not be overlooked. We must be included in all strategic discussions about the workforce to ensure further inclusion when clinical commissioning groups in England are reviewing services across health and social care. Providers must then ensure that they deliver a model which supports modern and efficient AHP services by incorporating professional leadership for each professional group.

The Government are looking at funding, productivity and the right skills for the right job at the right time, and we believe that AHPs have skilled in abundance across public health, health and social care. We need to have proper funding to ensure that enough AHPs are being trained and that the wellbeing of the staff is properly managed so as to retain those staff and maintain a high-quality service. 15.4 million people, in England alone, are living with at least one long-term condition. This figure is set to rise with our increasing age demographic and we must use the skills that all AHPs acquire to develop personalised care plans. For example, our Society has worked with the Centre for Workforce Intelligence and the Royal College of Ophthalmologists to identify roles that orthoptists can undertake to alleviate the pressure on medical staff in eye services across the UK. Orthoptists are now running glaucoma and low-vision clinics, giving injections into the eye and are working with surgeons in the eye theatre. We are a highly-skilled and highly-trained workforce, able to deliver cost-effective care.

The five-year forward plan as well as recent health initiatives realise that prevention and health promotion need to be highlighted as well as integration between health and social care. AHPs are already working across these areas. Many work in schools, across public health sectors, care services and third-sector organisations. The emphasis on integrated multi-agency teams will bring benefits to service users, but unless it is designed and delivered jointly with all professional groups at all levels the valuable work of our small professions will be at risk. We need to ensure that these excellent services are not lost when commissioners are deciding what services they wish to deliver. Congress must urge the Government to ensure that the whole workforce is engaged in any discussions about health and social care and professional leadership is visible at every level. Thank you.

**The President:**  Thank you. We are going to move straight to the vote on this item. All those in favour, please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 50 was CARRIED.*

**Austerity kills**

**The President:**  I am going to call Motion 51: Austerity kills. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the SCP and seconded by the CSP, with ATL coming in and the BDA.

**Brian Harris** *(SCP, The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists)* moved Motion 51.

He said: Congress, I welcome the amendment by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. According to the Office of National Stats, one-third of people in the UK have experienced poverty in the last three years, and nearly 7% of the UK population is in persistent poverty. This amounts to 3.9 million people; 3.9 million people, double the amount since 1983! According to a recent study from the New Economics Foundation, the austerity programme undertaken by the Government is mainly hitting those in areas of deprivation the hardest, and these areas are increasing. People living in the most deprived areas are around four times more likely to have poor health compared with those living in the least deprived areas. There are now over four million people in the UK who have diabetes, and there is evidence that Type 2 diabetes reduces life expectancy.

As podiatrists, my members treat diabetes in relation to foot disease, which is often the precursor to severe consequences, such as ulceration and amputation. This can, obviously, be devastating on our patients’ lives and many long-term follow-up studies have demonstrated a poor quality of life and increased long-term mortality amongst these patients. Foot ulceration is a major complication of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. The lifetime risk of foot ulceration in patients with diabetes is 25%, and increases with the more medication conditions they are diagnosed with.

A leading researcher in the field states: “What we know about diabetes is not only that are low-income and poor people likely to get it, but they are also the ones who, once they get it, are more and more likely to suffer complications.” These stats in themselves are, obviously, extremely concerning for podiatrists, other medical professionals and the patients themselves, but the Society is even more concerned following a recent study by Manchester University, which has linked social deprivation, diabetes foot ulceration and mortality. The study found that people in deprived areas have a greater chance of developing a foot ulcer, with the most deprived individuals being 62% more likely to develop a foot ulcer leading them to conclude that diabetic foot ulceration increases the risk of death. This creates a perfect storm of health concerns for my members and our patients. If you live in a socially-deprived area, your health is already likely to be poor. If you then have diabetes, your chances of getting a foot ulcer is as high as 87%. Foot ulcers have a high risk of leading to amputations, and following amputation the average life expectancy in a diabetic patient is less than five years. Podiatrists and the rest of our multi-disciplinary healthcare colleagues work hard to treat and help these patients, but with such poor stats for some, podiatrists often feel that they are fighting a losing battle. If you add in the fact that podiatry departments and the NHS, as a whole, is being not funded correctly, this leads to immense pressures on staff to treat more and more complex patients with less and less resources being made available. There is a real danger that most patients will lose their limbs and their lives. The Government need to see that the austerity regime is affecting more than just people’s pockets. It is killing people, colleagues.

We, therefore, call upon the General Council to continue campaigning against austerity whilst also raising awareness about the wider implications austerity can have on people’s health and well-being and how this also interlinks with the need to properly resource the NHS. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you. I call the CSP.

**Deborah Russell** *(CSP, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)* seconded Motion 51.

She said: Congress, obesity rates in the UK have been rising sharply, nearly doubling over the past 20 years. At the same time, the number of people living in poverty has been increasing, nearly doubling in the last 30 years. The age at which it is affecting people is getting younger. A third of this country’s 10 and 11 year olds are now obese. The Health and Social Care Information Centre has provided the evidence to show that there is a clear link between poverty and obesity. Women living in poverty are 11% more likely to be obese than their wealthier counterparts. Children living in poorer households are twice as likely to be obese.

In addition to this, there are clear links between austerity and malnutrition. The link is striking when you look at the reality of what this means. In Richmond-upon-Thames 11% of year six children are obese, but if you go just a few miles down the road to far poorer Southwark, you will find that more than a quarter of year six children are obese. If you live in a poor household, there is a very high chance that it is having a major impact on your health. You are less likely to play sport and your children are likely to eat less fruit and vegetables. There is plenty evidence showing that regular physical activity is related to a reduction in many chronic, long-term health conditions. Poor diet and nutrition are recognised as major contributory risk factors for ill health and premature deaths. The simple reason is that people living in poverty just can’t afford to buy healthy food.

As a recent Fabian Society report on this issue said: “Poorer households prioritise calories over health benefits when money is tight, preferring to buy tummy-filling items .” The report found that per calorie healthy foods are as much as three times more expensive than less healthy foods, and that supermarket price promotions tend to favour the less healthy items.

We need action on public health. We need the Government to set up a clear strategy to stop the inevitable journey from poverty to poor health and premature death that so many of our children are facing. We need greater investment in our NHS and preventative healthcare. Physios like myself, working with colleagues from a range of professions, from dieticians to chiropodists, from nurses to health visitors, know we can make a difference. We can teach adults and their children about the benefits of exercise and healthy eating. We can run exercise classes and show them how to keep fit and maintain a healthy body weight, but this won’t happen if the Government are not prepared to invest in staff and invest in our patients. Please support this motion.

**The President:**  Thank you. I call ATL.

**Hank Roberts** *(ATL, Association of Teachers and Lecturers)* spoke in support of Motion 51.

He said: Congress, unemployment kills, homelessness kills, workplace bullying and stress kills, invading countries illegally kills, asbestos in schools and other buildings kills, etc. etc. etc. Let’s just shorten it: unrestricted, untrammelled, neo-liberalism capitalism kills. *(Cheers and applause)*  They call it the age of austerity. They could call it the age of abundance. There is no austerity for the super rich. For them, this is the age of abundance, indeed super abundance. Average UK CEOs earn 123 times the average worker’s salary, the highest one there being Sir Martin Sorrell whose salary of £70 million is equivalent to earning the average worker’s annual salary in less than 45 minutes. Their pay is peanuts to the sums the hedge fund managers and the billionaires take. There is no shortage of money except for us.

Take Sir Phillip Green. He was knighted, by the way. Of course, he should be stripped of his knighthood, but the real question is why on earth was he given one, anyhow? What sort of society is that? *(Applause)*  Pensions! He said he had been giving it some thought. All he has to do is to pick up a pen and sign a cheque and he would still be a billionaire after that.

Wilson and Pickett, in their study *The Spirit Level*, show that physical health, mental health, drug abuse, imprisonment, obesity, violence and child wellbeing, all those outcomes, are significantly worse in more unequal rich countries, and ours is becoming more unequal every day. Michael Roberts, in his book *The Long Depression*, wrote: “The real aim of austerity is to achieve a short fall in real wages and cuts in corporate taxes, and thus raise the share of profits. In this way, wage costs have been lowered and profits raised.” As Warren Buffett, the US billionaire, said: “There is a class war and we are winning it.”

Surely, there is only one answer and that is to fight this class war more vigorously. The TUC needs to call a conference to discuss just this strategy of how we do this. Having only one in 10 young workers in a union is an existential threat to us and needs to be urgently and successfully addressed. Keri-Ann Mendoza’s book on austerity, under the sub-title *Austerity is Theft*, she writes: “Austerity is planned hunger, planned poverty and planned homelessness. It is the deliberate destitution of the many to the benefit of the few.” I could say something extremely rude about *this* but I won’t. I went to the bookshop in the exhibition centre and I saw a rather nice tea towel, which says it for me: “Bollocks to Austerity”! *(Applause and laughter)*

**The President:**  I call the BDA.

**Annette Mansell-Green** *(BDA, British Dietetic Association)* spoke in support of Motion 51, plus the amendment from the SCP.

She said: Thank you, President. Follow that! Thanks for the opportunity to raise this issue. Congress, I was going to say, and I have written in front of me, that the BDA was extremely disappointed in the Government. What I am going to say, though, is that we are very angry that the Government decided to announce their Childhood Obesity Strategy on 18th August. I say “strategy” but it is actually not a strategy. That is what we were promised. It is just a very, very weak plan. There has been a lot of noise about tackling the problems of childhood obesity and we were expecting some real progress on this when Teresa May announced earlier this year that the strategy would be delayed until the autumn. We thought, “Perhaps there is some real work underway”, but no. The plan was published in the summer with a whimper. Key policies, which could have driven down obesity rates amongst children and young people, have been dropped, including proposals to ban junk food advertising before the 9 o’clock watershed and the regulation of price promotions on unhealthy food. This is despite support from numerous sources, including the Commons Health Select Committee and the Health Alliance, which brought together a huge range of expertise and evidence. Obesity is a national crisis – we have heard that today – and it cost the NHS around £6.3 billion in 2015.

David Cameron and Jeremy Hunt said that they wanted this to be a game-changing moment, and Jeremy Hunt has said that he regards childhood obesity as a great scandal. He said that there would be some robust action to tackle it. I am afraid to say that we are still waiting. In 2015 19.1% of children aged 10 to 11 were obese and a further 14.2% were overweight. Once children become obese it is very difficult to treat and when they become adults they are more likely to be obese, suffer a higher risk of morbidity, disability and premature morbidity.

Congress, this is not a strategy. It includes no recommendations. It lacks the prioritisation of activities. It is insufficiently stringent and does not impose on industry to make significant change. What we are witnessing is a health crisis that can only be tackled by the expert professionals working on evidence-based policies, which include properly-funded programmes, paid for by targeted taxes on industry. This Government, and in particular Jeremy Hunt, seem to shy away from engaging with experts when making policy decisions. It is almost as if they are afraid of the truth, and this has been illustrated by the publication of the recent *2020 Vision* document, which proposes that there is no longer a place for an allied health professional adviser in the Department of Health. I think this is somewhat lacking in vision, Congress. Although we are supporting the motion, Congress, but will the last one who leaves the NHS please turn off the lights. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you. Once again, we will move straight to the vote on that motion. All those in favour, please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 51 was CARRIED.*

**Shortage of hospital consultants**

**The President:**  I call Motion 52: Shortage of hospital consultants. The General Council supports the motion, moved by the HCSA and seconded by BOS.

**Eddie Saville** *(HCSA, Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association)* moved Motion 52.

He said: Colleagues, we all know that there is a shortage of qualified professionals in many areas of the NHS. With the recent bout of junior doctors’ strikes, the role of the hospital consultant in stepping in to ensure continuity of safe care for all patients, especially in the emergency departments, has been vital. But the reality is, Congress, that there are just not enough hospital consultants. Full stop. We also know that the demand for NHS services is outstripping the supply in terms of the numbers of hospital consultants we have in many key specialities. Coupled with this, we have an ageing population, who live with all manner of chronic illnesses. In fact, we have a staffing crisis, with 40% of hospital consultant vacancies remaining unfilled. This was the stark evidence from a data census from the Royal College of Physicians.

In addition, Congress, the latest evidence from NHS Improvement sets out clearly the hospital consultant shortages in some of the key specialist areas of practise, such as emergency medicine, acute general medicine, diagnostic services, psychiatry and radiology. These are some of the most demanding areas of medicine where work-life balance, working conditions and stress are the most challenging.

Also the recent report by the Public Accounts Committee reported that there was an overall shortage of around 50,000 clinical staff in the NHS across a whole range of staff groups, including nurses, radiographers and midwives. These gaps were, by and large, filled by agency and locum staff at a much higher cost to the taxpayer and adding further to the already critical financial pressures that the NHS is under.

Workforce planning has never been an NHS strongpoint. We know that earlier in the year figures showed that the numbers of foundation year 2 doctors, who have applied to start speciality training, has fallen by nearly 10% since 2013. This is an astonishing figure and steps must be taken to reverse this trend. Congress, these were the consultants of tomorrow lost to us and to our communities. When you couple this with the consultants who have already gone, those who are heading quickly to the exit doors for various reasons, including working overseas, early retirement and burn out, the position is a scary one to contemplate.

Congress, we hear a lot these days about seven-day NHS services. The HCSA, like many other trade unions, has no issue with the principle of seven-day service, although we do know that we already work seven days a week. However, it must be a safe seven-day service, a service that is fully staffed, fully funded and delivered safely for both patients and the staff. With hospital consultant shortages running at such a high level, along with other staff groups also running short, the notion of such a service within the current numbers seems a long way off.

Congress, the media may think that this is some kind of union-scare story, but we only saw last month a hospital in the Midlands having to close its accident & emergency children’s unit because they just did not have enough consultant paediatricians and specialist doctors to ensure that safe care could be provided. Imagine the fear from those in the local community who now have to travel much further simply to seek emergency care for their children.

This is a serious issue. I agree with the Public Accounts Committee, who said in their recent report, and I think our midwife speaker referred to it, that we should prioritise retaining existing staff. We are seeing well-trained staff flooding out of the NHS, and it has got to stop. So we must prioritise staff by raising morale, prioritise existing staff by valuing them more, stop the continual restructuring that creates fear and insecurity, work in collaboration with the trade unions and, Congress, most importantly of all, create an environment where there is negotiation and not imposition. That’s the way forward. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you, Eddie. I call the BOS.

**Deborah Podmore** *(BOS TU, British Orthoptic Society Trade Union)* seconded Motion 52.

She said: Congress, the BOS is happy to be able to second this motion to reiterate the issue of substantial staff shortages across the NHS. The shortages across all clinical staff will have a huge detrimental effect on patient care, with over 1.3 million staff performing over 300 different types of jobs across more than a thousand employers. The NHS requires robust workforce planning to ensure that we have the right staff in the right numbers with the right skills to deliver high-quality care.

The HCSA has identified that 40% of hospital consultant posts remain unfilled. Imagine, 40%! A survey carried out by BOS shows a significant vacancy factor in our profession. It also showed that the heads of service who retire are not replaced on the same level. The loss of clinical expertise at this level will be mean that specialist eye treatment, carried out at present by non-medical staff, will not occur in years to come, so who is going to do it? It takes a minimum of three years to train a nurse or an AHP, so you can see that, within a very short period of time, there will be a huge gap in the number of clinical staff needed to meet the needs of an ageing population who will have more than one long-term condition, including vision problems.

Work undertaken by the Centre for Workforce Intelligence, the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, Vision 2020 UK and the British and Irish Orthoptic Society showed that the need for medical ophthalmologists is increasing. This is driven by increases in the prevalence of diabetes and age-related vision problems. It is not clear how the rising demand will be translated into an increase in training numbers, but it has shown that orthoptists can and are being trained to deliver treatment to deal with demand. However, we are continually being told that there will be a reduction in undergraduate places in years to come. How will this help deliver the best care for those losing their sight through diabetic eye disease or age-related macular degeneration? Specialist orthoptists are being trained to deliver therapies which slow the process of sight loss, but if the number of undergraduate places are cut, or even if they are not increased significantly, these treatments, which must be delivered monthly for best results, will not occur.

This week, NHS providers said that we must look at what we can afford to provide NSH services because of the deficit. Vision 2020 UK is working to raise these issues, but even if they are recognised, without trained specialist staff, waiting times will increase and best outcomes will not occur. To cut training places for all staff and allow the market to decide health services is not the way forward. This is a short-sighted – I do not apologise for the pun — approach to workforce planning. It is not the way to provide good healthcare. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We are now going to move to the vote on Motion 52. Will all those in favour, please show? Those against? That is carried.

* *Motion 52 was CARRIED.*

**The President:** Congress, I am afraid that we have run out of time this morning. We will try to complete the left-over business as soon as we can. We will let you know about that.

I have a couple of notices to tell you about. All the meetings at lunch time are set out in the Congress Guide. Can delegates, again, complete your equality forms? Can I encourage you to visit the Unite stall in the exhibition centre to sign their First Direct petition. This hall will be closed from now until 1.40, so please take everything with you that you need. Again, just to explain the delay in coming into the hall this morning, it was so the stewards can put all the papers on your desks in time. So please be patient with us. Have a great lunch.

*(Lunch break)*

 **AFTERNOON PROCEEDINGS**

 (*Congress reassembled at 2.15 p.m.*)

**The President**: I call Congress to order. Many thanks again to the *Groove Merchants* who have warmed us up a bit for the afternoon. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Congress, it has been mentioned that a small number of copies of the General Council Report are missing a few pages. If your copy is affected please collect another one from the TUC information stand.

Congress, I now call upon Linda McCulloch, Chair of the General Purposes Committee, to give her report. Thanks, Linda.

**General Purposes Committee Report**

**Linda McCulloch** (*Chair, General Purposes Committee*): Good afternoon, Congress. Congress, I can report that the General Purposes Committee has approved the following Emergency Motion: Emergency Motion 7 on Turkey and Solidarity with the Kurdish Population will be moved by Unite, seconded by the NASUWT, supported by the GMB and the NUT. The President will advise when this Emergency Motion is to be taken. I will report further on the progress of business and other GPC decisions when necessary throughout Congress. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. We have another Emergency Motion, Emergency Motion 7, and I will let Congress know when we will be able to take this.

Congress, we will now receive the TUC Equality Audit, this year presented in a short video.

*Video presentation – Equality Audit*

**The President**: That was a great video that highlights some excellent work as well as the challenges that face us all. I would encourage you to read the full report. Delegates, we are now going to return to Section 2 of the General Council Report, Respect and a voice at work, the section on Equalities and Diversity, on page 33. I call paragraph 2.3 and Composite Motion 8, Challenging the politics of hate. The General Council support the Composite Motion with an explanation that I will call on Gloria to set out our position. It is to be moved by GMB, seconded by Unison, supporting speakers will be PCS, UCU, and Usdaw. I will then call Gloria. Then we will see how many speakers we can fit in. Thank you. I call GMB.

**GC Report Section 2: Respect and a voice at work, cont.**

**Challenging the politics of hate**

**Kamaljeet Jandu** (*GMB*) moved Composite Motion 8.

He said: President, Liz, thank you very much for the opportunity to come and speak to you. Colleagues, the last time I was told to go home I recall replying, “What, to Coventry?” Sadly, the comment, “Go home,” has been expressed and heard too many times since the EU referendum. Since 23rd June we have witnessed a frenzy of hatred, signs describing Polish people as vermin, school children have been told to go home, people wearing T-shirts with the words, “start with repatriation”, and anti-Muslim leaflets being distributed, shops being firebombed, residents waking up to graffiti in neighbourhoods; the list goes on and on. Recently, sadly, we heard of the murder of the Polish man, Mr. Jozwik, in Harlow, followed two days later by a physical assault on two Polish men outside a pub.

In equal measures this is sad and worrying, vile and disgusting and, frankly, it makes me angry. As many people said yesterday, there has been a record 58% increase in recorded incidents of race hate crime. Many do not report these attacks because they are afraid, they feel ashamed, and some do not trust the police. Congress, they suffer in silence.

Friends, let me shine a light on the human impact of racial violence. People now adjust their daily pattern to safeguard their safety and wellbeing. I have found myself constantly looking at who is behind me, surveying fellow passengers on buses, making sure I stand away from the edge on a Tube platform, and making sure I sit in the middle Tube just in case I am attacked and I have a means of escape. Like domestic violence, racial harassment leaves you feeling humiliated, abused, degraded, and worthless. You soon have low esteem. Your confidence is shattered. Depression can set in. You feel shame, even though you are the shamed.

The jingoistic talk of patrolling borders, we want our country back, stoking fears of immigrants and foreigners gave cover to many who felt emboldened, comfortable, and confident to racially abuse people of colour, migrants, and people of Muslim faith. The Remain campaign did not do enough to stand up for the anti-immigration and xenophobic rhetoric. People have genuine concerns about a lack of affordable homes, absolutely; decent resourced schools, absolutely; access to health, right, and rightly wanting decent wages and decent conditions at work. However, it was not the migrants and foreigners that denied these. The blame lies with successive governments and bad employers.

So, friends, what is to be done? The TUC and affiliates here have an honourable history of challenging racism from raising awareness, educating on tackling racial harassment at work, organising in sections where there is a high percentage of ethnic minority workers, lobbying for and winning for anti-racist legislation, establishing structures to engage and increase ethnic minority members, standing shoulder to shoulder with the parents of Stephen Lawrence and raising nearly £300,000 for the family campaign, and campaigning to implement the recommendations of the MacPherson Inquiry into institutional racism.

More than that, we had the TUC’s very own *No to Racism* campaign in the late 1990s, which included two Respect festivals that brought in new members closer to the trades union Movement, attended by thousands, absolutely hundreds of thousands people attended, as well as organising the largest anti-racist demonstration in Britain when over 60,000 people marched opposing racism in East London.

Friends, we, the TUC, we as trade unions, gave the national a lead on anti-racism. Yes, we could have done more, always. The genie at this moment is out of the bottle. It will take a long time to put back. So, what do we do? Firstly, we acknowledge our strong position in giving leadership and leading from the front, winning hearts and minds to confront racists. Yesterday’s speakers highlighted an abhorrence of racism. Standing up to racism unites us all, absolutely.

Let me be specific in the next steps I would like to call on. We should launch a campaign to recruit the growing army of migrant workers so they are able to challenge exploitative employers, become active and strengthen our unions; that is where migrants belong, in our unions. Secondly, let’s launch a resourced *Stand up to Racism* campaign designed to win hearts and minds. Finally, work with community and anti-racist organisations to arrange a national event, a national trade union anti-racist event, maybe a demonstration. I move. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call Unison, please.

**Margaret Greer** (*Unison*) seconded Composite Motion 8.

She said: President, Congress, I stand here with mixed feelings. I feel proud standing her with my trade union sisters and brothers speaking to this composite about our shared values, standing against hatred, intolerance, and fear, but I have been hurt, Congress, sick at what I have witnessed, heard, and seen in the months that have followed the referendum. I felt the deep truth of the poet and civil rights activist, Langston Hughes’s words when he said, “I swear to God I still can’t see why democracy means everybody but me.”

Communities are being set against each other, fear and anxiety is being stirred up and, Congress, this year we saw campaigning that stirred up some very dangerous forces, people with foreign accents openly attacked in public spaces, a resurgence operating against UK black communities telling us we will never belong, even though we were born here, little eastern European children reduced to tears in school, excrement thrown through letter boxes, toddlers hearing racist abuse screamed at them and their parents, gangs prowling the street demanding to hear if you can speak English, Women having their hijabs torn off, swastikas on street corners and, Congress, when I heard about the murder of Arkadiusz Jozwik, set upon and beaten to death because he was heard speaking Polish, my blood ran cold.

Who is speaking out against this: certainly not a government that is increasing its surveillance of migrant people and anyone perceived to be a migrant, public services workers being turned into immigration officials, and primary school teachers forced to report young children under the *Prevent* duty, and new plans to place immigration duties on the police, including asking people about their immigration status during routine traffic stops. It is not just creating a hostile environment for migrant people but for anyone who is perceived to be a migrant.

Congress, as a public service worker I passionately believe my job is to help people, to support communities, not divide them. We will need to work to rebuild our communities, to bring people together and give hope to those who despair of the future. The power of the trade unions has always been to try to better, even when the future looks bleak, to build solidarity especially when we are divided, to bring our collective power to bear and to protect the most vulnerable. Congress, please support this composite and continue to fight for a more inclusive future for this country and us all. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thanks, Margaret. Thank you. I call PCS, please. No PCS here, so I move on to UCU and if PCS wish to speak they can come to the front.

**Sally Hunt** (*University and College Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

She said: Congress, we in this country have a proud history of welcoming people, of integrating migrants who have gone on to prosper and to make strong economic, social, and cultural contributions to our country from which we have all benefited, but during the EU campaign that history was ignored and instead what we were given was a case against immigration, a case highlighting everything that was wrong according to the right-wing press, anti-immigrants, anti-refugee, xenophobic language right the way through.

Now Brexit is a reality and yet here we are nearly three months on and none of them quite seem to know what they are doing. The Prime Minister disagrees with the Brexit Minister, who may, or may not, agree with the Foreign Minister, who may, possibly but we do not quite know, have views similar to the Trades Minister, or not; maybe. Who knows? Whilst that is going on in the sectors where we represent our members and in my sector in particular, freedom of movement is being really put under pressure, but for our members that freedom of movement is an imperative. It is an imperative to our staff and to our students. There are thousands of EU nationals studying in both further and higher education and they make up a significant proportion of the students and staff population.

The application process for students for 2017 has already opened but no one has any idea what the cost will be, not the best advert if you are trying to get people to apply. It is not just students, a minimum, a minimum of 15% of the HE and SE workforce are currently from other EU countries.

Congress, this Government does not have a strategy, what they have is a debacle and an absolute travesty, unplanned, and it is having serious consequences for the members that we in UCU represent, and I am sure for many of you. This is on top of the very heavy-handed *Prevent* agenda, which has already damaged our standing abroad. It has terrified many of our students, it has angered and alienated many of our communities and it has done damage to our ability to teach openly and encourage debate.

Congress, higher and further education in this country are by their very nature both local and global, and we can only maintain this freedom of speech and of movement if we have a clear open door policy to the rest of the world. We have to remember one thing, immigrants built our economy, immigrants have fought and died for our country, and immigrants have brought culture, colour and light to our wonderful, wonderful society, and it is our turn now as a movement to support them. So, I say support the composite and let’s make sure they know they are welcome. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. PCS?

**Janice Godrich** (*Public and Commercial Services Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

She said: I am really pleased to be speaking in this composite debate and supporting this motion. Our union, like all the unions here, has a strong history of campaigning against racism and fascism, and standing proudly against intolerance that has also become worryingly apparent in our society following the referendum. I think we all can agree that our country is experiencing a political crisis, which, without strong and unified action from trade unions and the labour movement, could seriously threaten social stability and community cohesion.

Sadly, racial prejudice has been on the rise in Britain in the years also before the EU referendum with a number of people saying they have some level of racial prejudice rising from 25% in 2000 to 29% in 2013, according to a social attitudes survey. This growing prejudice has been fuelled, as we know, by the right-wing media and the Government’s increasing rhetoric on immigration. Remember the introduction of policies such as Theresa May’s *Go home* funds. The result of the referendum has encouraged and provided legitimacy for the open expression of this prejudice. It has played on people’s fears, encouraging an association with immigration and explicit racism, as illustrated by UKIP’s *Breaking Point* poster which depicts the lengthy queue of refuges in sinister tones.

To tackle racism and anti-immigration sentiment we have to make a positive case for immigration, exposing the myths and misinformation of the referendum promoted by the right. Alongside that, of course, we have to fight austerity and the causes of insecurity, social division, and fear that feeds it, and challenge low pay, insecure work, alongside defending stretched public services. Austerity has caused a real crisis in public services, including lack of social housing, pressure on school places in some areas, difficulty in getting GP appointments, and other things.

We need to be clear why these things are happening: long-term chronic underfunding by the current and past governments under the myth of austerity. Our motion in the composite calls for Congress to oppose all cuts in education and health services, and calls for a house-building programme. As soon as the Government start to decide which cuts to make or accept we start having to choose between schools and hospitals, young and old, and a divided society will increase the environment of hate and racism. That is why our motion calls for a new anti-racism campaign that is integrated with an active anti-cuts, anti-austerity campaign and a clear economic alternative policy that will provide decent jobs and hope for the future. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you, Janice. I call Usdaw, please. Then I intend to take FBU and Unite, and then we will have to move on, I am afraid. Thank you.

**Jeff Broome** (*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

He said: This is a timely composite and sadly telling of the climate we are living in when racist attitudes have been given a veneer of acceptability by the toxic Leave campaign. We know that racism has never gone away in this country. Certain groups have been empowered by the referendum result, expressing views they previously would not have dared. That is why it is so important that we all stand together to challenge racism. The composite recognises the good work that has already been done but we know there is far, far more to do. At the forefront of that work, as ever, are our workplace activists. It is vital, therefore, that we give them the right start.

I want to talk about how Usdaw, and Usdaw reps in particular, have gone about this because the response of our reps has been to be honest and upfront. In the days following the referendum result Usdaw launched a *No Room for Racism* campaign with a range of literature and materials to give the campaign a real presence in the workplace. I am proud to say that our reps truly embraced this campaign. Events have been held in workplaces the length and breadth of the country. Thousands of members and non-members have been engaged in conversations about racism, its negative impact on us all, and how to challenge it.

This has not been about responding to individual instances of racism in the workplace, although it has proved an effective way of addressing that too. It has also seen reps proactive in taking up the issue. Reps have seen the direction of public discourse and have decided they want to do something about it. It is clear that racism will not be tolerated in Usdaw’s organised workplaces so I want to thank our reps for their excellent work.

Congress, as a movement we need to show leadership in tackling racism and Usdaw’s experience has shown that, if we give activists the right support, they will take this lead and make a real difference in their workplace. Thank you for listening. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call FBU.

**Micky Nicholas** (*Fire Brigades Union*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

He said: The implausible Foreign Secretary at the dénouement of the EU referendum stated that *Project Fear* is over. Horribly, for many in our communities it continues apace. Fire stations, like many other workplaces, heard many discussions and they were all based around immigration. The majority of our working-class communities with little multiculturalism or diversity to speak of voted to leave citing fear of rising immigration as the main reason for voting the way they did. This was despite – despite – our trades union Movement overwhelmingly urging support for the Remain campaign.

The reality is that we failed. We failed to dismantle the lies and the misinformation. We failed to convince those in communities, our communities, that human rights and the security of opportunity and employment were actually the main issues. We failed to combat and defeat the politics of hate, racism, and division.

We must now do better to support those in our communities who are at the sharp end of the referendum outcome. We must do better to reconnect with those in our communities who believed the lies and empty promises. We must do better to ensure that our communities do not permanently suffer from the consequences of the insidious politics of Brexit.

Congress, finally, we need a fully functioning Labour Party, representing all working and vulnerable people to lead the fight against hate, not a Labour Party fighting to decide who leaves. We need the forces of the good and the strong to stand up and confront those who continue to thrive and peddle the politics that divide and destroy us. The trades union Movement, our movement, must be at the forefront of the fight back to regain the trust of those in our communities, those in our communities who we have lost. Our Movement must continue to represent, support, and protect those who are desperate and vulnerable to the politics of hate. Please support this composite. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Micky, thank you. I call Unite, please.

**Abdul Rashid** (*Unite the Union*): spoke in support of Composite Motion 8.

He said: Congress, as the composite highlights, after the toxic language used during the EU referendum campaign and result, racist attacks on the black communities, refugees, and those perceived to be of migrant background, rose dramatically across the UK.

Congress, I work as a bus driver and a few days after the result I was told to enjoy my job while it lasts because soon I will be going home. My home is Middlesbrough, always has been, always will be, but the meaning of what this passenger said was clear. Even though racism existed before the EU referendum result, the way it has risen since then is unbelievable, from people refusing to get on to the bus, to my friend’s 4-year old son being told by his friends at nursery that they could no longer play with him as he is a Muslim.

How many more stories have racism as a daily issue? This is why fighting racism is a trade union issue. Migrant workers and black workers are active trade unionists standing up for all workers. Now is the time for us to stand together in solidarity, not hatred. At a time of rising racist attacks the Government is going to make a further 25% cut in funding to the Equality and Human Rights Commission. This will reduce the total number of legal case workers who support victims of discrimination to just three. We must oppose these cuts.

Congress, I know that everyone in this room is united in that goal and committed to standing up against racism so please support this motion in this hall, and when you leave. Make sure that your workplace has a union equality rep. If we as trade unionists are not leading the fight against racism in all its forms, we will never achieve equality and social justice for all. Congress, please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call Gloria Mills, please.

**Gloria Mills** (*General Council*): President, Congress, I just want to give an explanation from the General Council to say that much of the activities in the motion we already do and any of the new ones will be under way. We want to say that much of the motion’s recommendations are in line with existing policy. We want to give a simple explanation to say that the TUC would want to consider the most appropriate way to work with organisations, or partner organisations, on the recommendation for a national demonstration.

We already support and coordinate trade union input into the annual United Nations Anti-Racism Day demonstration and rally, which is organised by *Stand up to Racism*. That is supported by anti-racism organisations and migrant organisations. This event, which is normally held in March, is an annual focal point for anti-racism in the UK and linked into the UK’s international obligations to tackle racism. This event has a potentially wider reach and focus than a solely based trade union event and we would very much like to continue to do this.

We do support the composite and we hope, Congress, that you accept the explanation. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thanks, Gloria. I am going to move straight to the vote. Can I see all those in favour, please? Thank you. And all those against? Thank you. An important debate.

 \* *Composite Motion 8 was CARRIED*.

**The President**: I now call Motion 27, Hidden conditions. The General Council supports the motion to be moved by CSP and seconded by Prospect. Thank you.

**Hidden conditions**

**Alex Mackenzie** (*Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*) moved Motion 27.

She said: Sisters and brothers, I would like to commend the TUC for the work they have done in supporting reps and workers with issues related to invisible impairment. The paper entitled, *You don’t look disabled*, is an excellent resource and I would encourage all affiliates to read it and to ensure that their reps have access to it.

Invisible impairment and hidden conditions can take many forms. Only a small minority of disabled people in Britain conform to the stereotypical view of disabled people portrayed in the media, for example, people in a wheelchair or walking with a white stick. Employers, managers, and colleagues, often forget that there are a wide range of conditions which may classify as a disability and may impact on the individual in the workplace. This includes neurodiverse conditions, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism and ADHD, as well as mental health conditions and long-term conditions like arthritis, cancer, and HIV.

A recent study on arthritis and work which was published by the Arthritis Research UK indicated that many people with a musculoskeletal condition were reluctant to speak to their manager about their condition for fear of being found unfit for work or dismissed. We also know from TUC research that less than half disabled people are in work compared to 78% of non-disabled people.

The CSP through a members’ network decided to focus on one form of invisible impairment in 2016 which is over-represented in the physiotherapy workforce, that impairment is dyslexia. Earlier this year the network surveyed members with dyslexia as well as their educators and managers. More than half the respondents with dyslexia told us they had encountered barriers to accessing support and reasonable adjustments in the workplace. These barriers included loss of additional time allocated for note writing, negative attitudes of others, and excessive time taken to implement adjustments. One of our members, Karl, told us that recommendations from the workplace assessment are still not in place over a year later since being made. Another member, Maxine, said, “My educator told us that they did not have time for my individual learning time.” It beggars belief that in 2016, more than 20 years after the legal requirement to make workplace adjustments was enacted, we are still hearing these types of statements.

Ongoing negativity and barriers to work can have far-reaching consequences for individuals, leading to stress, anxiety, increased sick leave, and low self-esteem. Several participants in the survey described themselves as thick or stupid when we know that dyslexia has no link to intelligence.

Meseret Kumulchew, an employee of Starbucks, felt suicidal after she was accused of fraud, demoted, and asked to retrain after incorrectly filling in equipment temperatures on a form. She recently won her claim for disability discrimination at an employment tribunal, the judge noting that there was little or no knowledge of equality issues by the employer despite having a policy commitment to diversity and inclusion.

The TUC have been vocal supporters for the social model of disability and their manifesto for disability equality is something we can all aspire to promote. The social model of disability sees the individual as a person first and foremost. Disability is caused by numerous physical, social, environmental and financial barriers in everyday life. This is in direct contrast to the commonly adopted medical model in which disability is seen as a problem or something broken requiring a cure by an expert. Knowledge and understanding of rights at work as well as flexible approach to adjustment can make all the difference.

Another CSP member who responded to the survey told us, “I requested access to work assessment which was refused and they tried to put me on competency due to the speed of my written work affecting my caseload. My next employer agreed to an access to work assessment straightaway. I was promoted and I have never had a problem since. I feel very pleased I did not leave physiotherapy because of my experience.”

Positive real life case studies are an invaluable resource to reps in achieving change in the workplace. We ask Congress to support the motion to enable the TUC and affiliates to continue essential work supporting workers with hidden disabilities. I move. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call Prospect.

**Neil Hope-Collins** (*Prospect*) seconded Motion 27.

He said: Are your members toxic employees? I will tell you how to find that out and define them. Are they self-proclaimed rule followers? Are they over-confident with technical proficiencies? Are they productive but not in the right way? The reason I am bringing this to your attention is these were the words that were used in an article in *Civil Service World* telling people how not to appoint toxic employees. I just want to let that sink in, people who are rule followers, over-confident with technical proficiencies, and productive but not in the right way. You do not want to employ them. This was an article in July 2015 telling our managers who not to employ. This is what we are facing with hidden disabilities.

I stand here as a member of Prospect knowing full well that a lot of people with neurodiverse conditions are attracted to careers in IT, in STEM, and as such my union represents a very high number of those people. We recognise that, we expect that, and we know that a lot of those individual members will come to their careers without any formal diagnosis.

I am here specifically to speak to our amendment about the impact of cutbacks and reorganisation on those with neurodiverse conditions. Changing the work that gets done, the intensification, changing the office environment, changes around the reorganisation of work that come with little notice, changes like this can have a huge impact on individuals and need to be managed with sensitivity to get the most. The impact on our members is huge but the impact on the organisations that employ them is also huge; productivity, loss of specialist skills, and the personal cases of those both managed and I have to say the managers who are put under increasing pressure. Our approach is to increase awareness. Our website resource is there for helping, for training members, reps, and employers, and in a shameless plug I would please urge you to go to the Prospect website and look at the resources that we have for helping around people with neurodiverse conditions.

I did talk about diagnosis and diagnosis in the education system is getting better. I could reference the conversations this morning about changes in the education system but I do not have time. It is improving. It is not brilliant. However, for adults already in the workplace diagnosis can be a real issue, but it is one that needs to be approached sensitively because of the impact on someone’s own self-image. What I ask you for, ladies and gentlemen, is please support this motion because what we want is neurodiverse friendly employment. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I am going to have to move on so sorry to those speakers who had planned to come in. Can I just ask all those in favour, please, to show? Thank you. And all those against? Thank you. That is carried.

 \* *Motion 27 was CARRIED*.

**The President**: I now call paragraph 5.9 and Motion 28, 2020 Vision. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by Asha Wolfe-Robinson, on behalf of the TUC LGBT Conference, and seconded by ATL. There will be just one speaker, the NASUWT. Thank you. Thank you, Asha.

**2020 Vision**

**Asha Wolfe-Robinson** (*Unison*) moved Motion 28.

She said: The TUC LGBT Conference met this year on 23rd and 24th June, so day one was the EU referendum. Day two was very much the morning after the night before. You can imagine the atmosphere, no doubt, with shock, fear of the unknown, lack of sleep. With worry and uncertainty the need for firmer values and our vision becomes more important than ever. This motion on 2020 vision for LGBT policy proved even more fitting than we had thought.

The first was to knock some myths on the head and I am quite sure that none of these have any attraction in this hall: one, LGBT equality has not yet been achieved. As a result of years of campaigning, the legal framework improved, the levels of discrimination and prejudice education at work and across society remains far too high. Research from Unison over the past months by NatCen Social Research into how LGBT people have been affected by public spending cuts is currently being analysed. I can tell you already that the report is going to make grim reading.

Mainstream equality is not the answer but it may be part of the answer. Dedicated and specialised equality measures, services, and experts, are as vital as ever. They save lives but they are disappearing everywhere. Equality protection is for workers’ rights and not red tape. They are a hard won safety net that must be protected and strengthened. Trade unionists do not disrupt services. We defend them. We understand and cherish their value more than anyone and, no, whatever the question the Tories are not the answer.

While we know these myths are ridiculous they are pervasive. Support for the Tories remains strong and they see no sign of wavering from the headlong charge towards ever greater privatisation, fragmentation, deregulation, and austerity. As this motion says, the next four years are vital. We need to use all of our organising skills to engage our members and our communities in our vision for the future. We need to spell out the vision, developing clear LGBT union messages. We need to sharpen our LGBT equality demands. They were strong in 2010 but we need to be stronger, particularly in terms of our demands for transgender equality.

The Government’s response this summer to the recommendations of the select committee inquiry on transgender was shameful. The recommendations were forward looking and welcome and clearly a call for a cross-government strategy, for an NHS service for trans people, changes to outdated and confusing legal protections, and recognition in law of people with gender identity outside the binary. The Government’s response, they will keep these matters under consideration. We must demand more.

This motion demands the TUC LGBT Committee to act; that is because it was drafting the motion to the LGBT Conference. The LGBT Conference selected to send it to Congress. It is not before you today as a “for information” item, it is here before you as an item of urgent business for every union. Congress, we urge you to support it and to act on it. Thank you. I move. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. ATL.

**Julia Neal** (*Association of Teachers and Lecturers*) seconded Motion 28.

She said: I am proud to be a member of the LGBT Committee. Congress, President, we have made enormous strides on LGBT rights. We should be proud but it is not a time for complacency against the background of Brexit, a right-wing Government, a continued austerity regime, not to mention the attacks on trade unions under the infamous Trade Union Act. We have so much more to do.

If the voices of LGBT people are to be truly heard, we need to encourage much wider participation in the electoral process. During the last election, the TUC LGBT Committee led a campaign to encourage more LGBT people to register and to vote. We further need to develop this. We obviously need more LGBT members in Parliament. It is so important to collect data and to find out just how good our LGBT representation is, for example, within the Labour Party.

In recent weeks I am very sad to say that I have heard about quite a lot of homophobic attacks against LGBT activists. It is vital that a culture is created that makes this completely unacceptable. There is a wider problem of perception. I was reading recently an example of how we view the ideal candidate from Olivier Bailey writing for *The Fabian Society*, and she said, “Using a range of evidence from LGBT members across the Labour Party we can still see that homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are big problems. This ranges from direct discrimination in the selection process to unconscious bias which seems to revolve around the theme that LGBT people do not meet outdated standards of what makes the ideal candidate. They are not the white man with the 2.4 children living in a big house with a wife making jam.”

So, the message here is that trade unions can play their part in encouraging LGBT activists to stand for office so that they can effectively represent their communities and work to build more coalitions with other partners, such as The People’s Assembly, even setting up an LGBT section within it. Trade unions can identify key dates and events and advertise them across their networks. Clear trade union messages can help to build a strategy for forthcoming political events right up to the 2020 Westminster elections.

Teachers in schools and colleges, all the education unions and their members, have been working hard to encourage LGBT students to be out and proud and to be part of an inclusive school community. Their political voices are emerging with more courage and determination than ever. So, as and when they join our unions let’s make sure they continue fully to engage in the political process and end discrimination through the ballot box. Congress, please support this vital resolution. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. I call NASUWT. Thank you.

**Debbie Hayton** (*NASUWT (The Teachers’ Union)*) spoke in support of Motion 28.

She said: The NASUWT welcomes this motion built upon work we have undertaken over many years, exposing and challenging LGBTI discrimination and prejudice. NASUWT is committed to supporting lesbian, gay, and bisexual and trans teachers in the UK.

Congress, whilst there has been vast progress on LGBTI rights, much still needs to be done. We are becoming an increasingly intolerant society and just as racism remains very much an issue, so do homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. The myth that equality has been achieved is a nice one to consider but it is simply untrue. Children and young people who identify as LGBTI are still more likely to suffer from bullying and subsequently mental health issues than their peers. They are still more likely to drop out of school early and under-achieve in the education system. It is estimated that 48% of trans people under the age of 25 have attempted suicide yet cuts to mental health provision continue unabated.

This Conservative Government appears intent on dismantling hard won progress on equalities provisions by watering down, and in some cases removing, requirements in schools to promote equalities. Congress, there is no doubt that austerity has impacted disproportionately on the LGBTI community. Family attitudes often mean that LGBTI teenagers find themselves homeless, and cuts to housing benefit for 18-25 year olds only exacerbates this problem. NASUWT LGBTI teachers tell us of their anger that they still have to suffer discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, in schools and colleges. They share with us worrying stories of employers failing to address homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, choosing instead to dismiss it as harmless banter.

Research undertaken by NASUWT has shown that homophobia and biphobia bullying and harassment is widespread in schools but the problem is often hidden as individuals do not feel safe enough to talk about it. 93% of respondents surveyed said that their workplaces did not provide adequate training to staff.

The Government response to the Women and Equalities Committee Report on Transgender Equality was underwhelming to say the least. Promises of further monitoring and teacher reviews are poor substitutes for timely legislation that is needed now. From an education point of view, recommendations were delegated out to school and college leaders, which inevitably means that any support provided to staff and young people would be sporadic and based upon the personal whims of employers.

Congress, we have a responsibility to children and young people to educate against bigotry and discrimination and to promote equality in all its forms. Please support this motion. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. Right, I am going to move straight to the vote on this. Can I see all those in favour? Thank you. And all those against? That is carried.

 \* *Motion 28 was CARRIED*.

**The President**: Delegates, I now turn to Section 4 of the General Council Report, Strong Unions, and the section on Organising from page 57. I call paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3, and Composite Motion 18, Rights for freelance and atypical workers. The General Council supports the motion and it will be moved by Equity, seconded by the NUJ, and supported by UCATT. Then we will need to move on. Thank you.

**GC Report Section 4: Strong unions, cont.**

**Rights for freelance and atypical workers**

**Stephen Spence** (*Equity*) moved Composite Motion 18.

He said: Equity members are often in atypical freelance work, short-term, low pay, no pay contracts, profit shares where we are all in it together until mysterious expenses that are never disclosed mean a profit is never made and if we are really lucky we are asked for a contribution towards the losses; sacked from productions by people who were not supposed to be our boss because it was a genuine artistic collaboration; sexually harassed and bullied in the name of art and getting to the bottom of the part, long hours, last-minute changes to the schedule; you name it and Equity members get it.

Organising in this climate can be difficult. You cannot just declare rates and terms as competition law is always there to call you a cabal and allege price fixing. That is why Equity’s *Professionally made professionally paid* campaign has been so important seeking to establish collective agreements in theatre and in film schools, working with members, developing a community consciousness, and an understanding that united we bargain, divided we beg. Cases to the ET on the national minimum wage have pushed the understanding that performers, stage management, and creative team members, are workers, artists, of course, professional always, but workers, and workers are entitled to wages. Court success is no easy thing to get because you have to get members confident enough to challenge their boss, especially if the boss was not supposed to be the boss; we are all in it together. This has pushed the engagers towards new agreements that have resulted in over £1m in new wages that our members were not getting before. (*Applause*)

As if struggling for wages was not bad enough, the current government is advancing proposals that would see our members effectively having to do four tax returns each year as self-employed professional workers. Now, of course, a small percentage of our members do earn good fees from their work and perhaps that is why HMRC is interested but the vast majority of Equity members earn less than £10,000 a year from their work in the performance industries. So, some bright spark thinks, “Let’s add the burden of having to produce accounts every quarter,” and then they want our members to cough up every three months. Why is it that you can have all the disadvantages of self-employment but for the small fish this Government seems determined to eradicate any of the advantages when the captains of industry and the big corporations can utilise tax havens and complex international structures to account for little and pay reduced or no tax at all. Workers who are self-employed for tax are workers nonetheless and are entitled not only to decent wages, terms and conditions, for their work but also not to have onerous burdens dumped on them when complying with their tax obligations when the great and the not so good are allowed to get away with unacceptable tax avoidance. (*Applause*)

Self-employed workers for tax should be given a choice about which methods they choose if the Government genuinely believes that choice is an important principle. Instead, it seems to be *Heads we win, tails you lose* is the order of the day. Well, even the most vulnerable atypical workers organised through their union can show that that can be turned on its head. If we do not fight, we lose. When we do fight, we do not win them all but Equity organises to show engagers and governments that they are there, and if they are not respectful and if they are not decent then self-employed atypical workers will fight by lobbying and campaigning, and acting to hold them to account just like workers everywhere. (*Applause*)

**The President**: Thank you. Thank you, Stephen. I call the NUJ.

**Tim Dawson** (*National Union of Journalists*) seconded Composite Motion 18.

He said: This motion is about freelance and atypical workers but there have been a lot of names for these kinds of workers over the years, casuals, contractors, the precariat, working on the lump, the gig economy. The greatest increase in workers of this kind working in this mode is those driven by what are known as workplace distribution apps. You know the ones I mean, Deliveroo that will bring your food to your desk, Uber that will arrange a ride to take you home, Airbnb that will provide you somewhere to stay.

If you stand still for a moment in any of our big cities these days you will see people dashing about answering a call from other people’s smart phones. That is nothing, nothing, to the level of penetration that these kinds of services have in the United States. If you want somebody to go and care for an elderly relative, if you want to get your car mended, if you want your house painted, you know what they say, there is an app for that and there is an exploited worker jumping to attention when somebody presses the keys on that phone. In the United States today there are five million people dependent for their income on work of that kind.

Make no mistake, Britain will follow the same route. Already 15% of the British workforce is self-employed, the highest level it has been at any other time but what is the effect of these distributor workplace apps, of the gig economy? It is that rates of pay are driven relentlessly down. It is that people are forced to survive without pensions, without sick pay, without the most basic protections that we would expect.

These are issues that my union, the National Union of Journalists, has been dealing with for years; in fact, since 1907 when we were founded we have been organising freelance workers, we have been negotiating with employers on their behalf, and when need be we have been calling them out on strike. I know that we are not alone.

I salute the campaign on behalf of precarious workers at Sports Direct following their predecessors who worked against piece rate in factories, and casualisation in the docks, but this motion is about those who choose to be freelancers or atypical workers and about showing them that their issues are issues that are at the very centre of the trades union Movement’s concerns. It is about showing them that our concerns are their concerns, it is about looking beyond these shores and saying to the International Labour Organisation, “You, too, need to take the concerns of freelance and atypical workers seriously.”

I know there is a lot of debate about what is the status of these workers: are they micro businesses, are they entrepreneurs, or are they undertakings? I say that question is a distraction. It matters, of course, when we represent them in court, and there are self-employed workers who we may well want to campaign for to ensure they have permanent contracts of employment.

Remember the words that Karl Marx used to close his most famous work in 1848: “Workers of the world unite.” It is not employees of the world unite, not those with permanent contracts unite, but workers of the world unite. That is why I ask you to support this motion, to send out a clear message to those who choose to be self-employed, who choose to be atypical workers, that their concerns are our concerns, that the trades union Movement in Britain has their back, will defend them, and will promote their interests. (*Applause*)

**The President**: I call UCATT, please.

**Malcolm Davies** (*Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians*) spoke in support of Composite Motion 18.

He said: In general, we support this composite that is focusing on the increase in rights of freelancers and it is not weakening the campaign to ensure that the false self-employed win full employment status. Focusing on our original amendment on the HMRC’s proposal to introduce quarterly self-employment reporting, unlike in other sectors where workers make decisions on the way they work, freelance or genuine self-employed, in construction the user reality is that there is no option. You work as your boss or your agency demands. In many cases it is either a form of self-employment or false self-employment, or umbrella companies, allowing the industry to escape payment of tax and undermining the employment rights of workers, carpenters, painters, bricklayers, labourers, all engaged through a typical route through no fault of their own. They need work. They need to feed their families. They do not have the choice of how they are employed. Many are given ultimatums, “Accept this or you don’t work.”

So, we have this perverse situation where workers are at risk of being penalised for failing to provide proper tax returns. Construction is a transient workforce industry. Sites are not permanent. Engagements are normally short. In 12 months a construction worker is likely to undertake spells of direct employment, false self-employment, and working via an umbrella company. Members are left confused whether they should or should not claim and what they can or cannot claim each quarter.

Congress, our members are not accountants. They are out there working in all weathers. It is a hard enough job without having to worry about tax returns every few months. For the Government to push ahead with these changes will be a disaster. From our point of view, we call on all unions to support workers engaged in false self-employment by ensuring they are not overly burdened while we push forward a campaign for that worker who should be classed as an employee and protected from being penalised. My union, UCATT, aims and objectives remain the same, we strive to deliver a culture of direct employment within the construction industry. Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The President:** We will go straight to the vote on this one. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against?

 \* *Composite Motion 18 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I am now going to call Motion 74 on facilities time. It will be moved by the NAHT and seconded by Unison. I do want to get in the motions that we lost yesterday and the two important ones that we lost this morning so after that, we will move on. Thank you.

**Facilities time**

**Judith Stott** *(National Association of Head Teachers)* moved Motion 74.

She said: I know that I do not need to remind anyone in this hall about the importance of facilities time, not just in support of our members, but also for the organisations in which they work so please forgive me whilst I talk to those who do not share our values and remind those who paint a very negative picture of our work that facilities time is good for members, it is good for employers and for the social good too.

The blind spot in the anti-union rhetoric and the legislation that comes from that is obvious. Well-supported worker representation means that organisations simply work better. I know this to be true. NAHT represents school leaders in all settings and structures so do not boo me, but, yes, that means I am often on the other side of the table.

As a head teacher of 21 years, I am pleased to be able to say that with the use of facilities time in my school, colleagues representing members from our sister unions (ACL, NUT, NASUWT, Unison and GMB) have been able to help me ensure that the children we care for receive the very best education we are able to provide. At the same time, we ensure that the staff at the school are rewarded correctly and treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. The relationships that I have with local representatives are not always easy, but they are positive and I know that without the provision of facilities time to make this possible, our school and our children would lose out.

I will not repeat the headline statistics that demonstrate that the provision of facilities time is fantastic value for money and that through the provision of facilities time, employment solutions are found in the place of conflict, but I do want to underline those statistics with local experience. Our school budget is under pressure because of the Government’s failure to fund education properly, but I will not be able to improve the life chances of the children in our care by saving a few thousand pounds from the facilities provided to my union colleagues. That money is a drop in the ocean compared to the value I get as a school leader from the import of trade union officials. What would I do instead: hire expensive consultants to give me input at twice or maybe three times the cost? Now that really would be a detriment to the children in our care.

Through reforms to the school funding formula, we have the spectre of schools losing the ability to contribute to a facilities time pot administered centrally at local authority level and many academies also contribute to those pots. We know that this de-delegation process works well and we urge the Government to think again over its proposals. As national structures such as the teachers’ pay framework are dismantled around us, we have to find local solutions to our problems and who do I engage with if my colleagues have no facilities time to enable those discussions?

As a trade union, the NAHT instinctively knows the value of facilities time to represent our own members, but as a union representing school leaders, we also know the value to our schools from our position as leaders. The same applies across the rest of the public sector and the private sector too. So, Congress, please join with us in an attempt to remind the detractors that facilities time is not a gift from the employer; it is not an altruistic act on their behalf. Good employers agree facilities time because they know it is good for them too. So let us remind them not to fall for the easy rhetoric of the right and the Taxpayers’ Alliance, but instead support the things that we know have always worked. Congress, please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**Eric Roberts** *(Unison)* seconded the motion.

He said: We strongly support this motion. We have dealt with a lot of important issues over the last few days, but I really think that this motion raises one of the most important. Facilities time is the bedrock and foundation of the trade union Movement, not just in schools, but in all areas that we, in this hall, cover. I guess that most of us are here because of some kind of facilities time agreement that we have.

We have a battle on our hands over this, but we must face it. We know that it has always been hard to get union reps in schools and other educational institutions. School staff are dedicated to their jobs and the classroom-based staff are working at full tilt from the start until the end of the school day with few breaks and often interrupted lunch hours. This is particularly a problem for school support staff, many of whom are represented by my union.

Whilst many schools are supportive of trade unions, some are not, which makes staff nervous to put their heads above the parapet. Of course, as the motion states, this has been compounded in recent years in England by the rapid expansion in the number of schools becoming academies and joining multi-academy trusts. Whilst most of them continue to pay into a facility-time pool held by the local authority, an increasing number are withdrawing funding and setting up their own arrangements and we know where that will end.

Historically, Unison has provided support for our school staff members from all over government branches. However, with some academies going their own way, withdrawing funds and also denying access to the local authority-based reps, the ability of the unions to organise in schools is becoming harder. As the motion points out and as we all know, our reps help avoid conflict and get better outcomes and conditions, both for our members and for the schools in which they work.

Then there is the Trade Union Act with the unnecessary measures within it which add more problems. They are clearly set out to further attack our facilities time. However, with the appointment of a new Secretary of State for Education and a minister in the Department of Education who, it is rumoured, is a union member, we hope to see a change in the way that education unions are treated. As a start, we would ask that the DfE make it clear that trade union facilities time is not seen as a cost but as a benefit which should be protected and properly funded. All schools (including academies and free schools) should be told to pay into their local authority facility pool and this should be fairly shared out.

Unison was proud to be at the forefront of the trade union Movement’s resistance to the Trade Union Act, including the damaging, retrograde measures it proposed on facilities time. We fought the Act tooth and nail alongside our brothers and sisters in other unions and in the Labour Party. We pointed out that undermining facilities time would be a false saving.

We have made strides. We have some compromises and the Act is now far better than it was although it is very bureaucratic when it comes to facilities time. Although the Government retains the power to introduce the cap on the amount of money that public bodies can spend on facilities time, new conditions and tests are being introduced before any cap can apply in any workplace. Firstly, two years of data evidence must take place before ministers can impose a cap. Ministers must also take into account the type and size of the organisation and any factors that would explain why the authority has a higher facilities bill. Before imposing the cap, ministers must write to the public authority explaining their concerns and giving them at least 12 months to address the issue and reply. So, Congress, it is far from perfect, but it is preferable and, if nothing else, some of these problems have at least been put on the back burner, giving unions across the public sector time to prepare for how they would deal with it if such changes do take place.

Congress, we have to keep up the fight and keep making the case for the importance of our facilities time, for our members and for the services that we provide. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We are going to move to the vote on this. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against?

 \* *Motion 74 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I will now call Composite Motion 14, Digital campaigning and organising. The General Council supports the composite. It is going to be moved by Accord, seconded by the GMB and supported by the RCM. Again, colleagues, we need to move on.

**Digital campaigning and organising**

**Carol Knowles** *(Accord)* moved Composite Motion 14.

She said: Accord organises workers in financial services including those in Lloyds Banking Group and TSB. The honest and hardworking employees have served the public in an increasingly challenging environment where staff levels have been cut back to meet costs targets, but also reflecting that fewer people are using their local bank branches now, taking advantage of the technology that we all now take for granted.

Traditional employment in financial services is changing as it is in so many other parts of our society. As employment patterns change, it is crucial that we, as unions, do not get stuck in the past. We must meet the challenge to meet the needs of the workers in the new, more fragmented, less secure world of work. The Uberisation of many jobs and the lack of a union presence in many workplaces present huge organisational challenges for unions in the modern world. Union membership amongst 16-24 year olds is just 9%. Less than 5% of union members are aged 24 and under whilst almost 40% are aged 50 and over. There are significant numbers of young workers concentrated in sectors of the economy with low levels of union density.

In the accommodation and food services, there are over 500,000 young workers of whom less than one in 100 are actually in a union. Trade union members are increasingly older employees. Approximately 39% of trade union members are aged 50 and over. Less than 5% of trade union members are aged 19-24. Employees with ten or more years’ service make up just 52% of all union members, but account for just 30% of our workforce. Yet evidence shows that collectivism is not an historic concept. Young workers mobilise through social media and modern technologies on a wide range of political and social issues from environmental campaigns to student activism.

Congress, digital campaigning and organising strategies must be part of the solutions for unions to achieve better outcomes for people at work. I call on you, firstly, to explore and showcase good examples of unions utilising digital campaigns and organising strategies; secondly, to work together to build a digital campaign and organising skills; and, finally, to develop digital tools to support union campaigning and organising strategies. In short, Congress, it is to make sure that the workers of tomorrow are not isolated, insecure and unsupported, but part of a better Britain: more equal, more prosperous and with positive futures in our Movement. I move Composite 14. *(Applause)*

**Lisa Johnson** *(GMB)* seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, when I started my first job it was, shall we say, a simpler time – a time before Google; a time when people won pub quizzes by actually knowing stuff (if you can imagine a time when that happened); mobile phones were the size of small countries; and scores of young people swamped dial-up internet connections to get online with something new called “the internet”.

During the last 20 years, how we relate to the world, to each other and to work has changed dramatically. The pace of change shows no sign of abating. GMB young members organise by WhatsApp, warehouse workers speak to the union and to each other through Facebook and companies pay teams of professionals to manage their social media profiles as more of what we do, buy and say is online by a smartphone or tablet computer.

Employers have grasped the opportunities technology offers to organise for their own interests. Uber is just one example that we have heard quite a lot about today. It is a company which has made millions using digital technology alongside a tried and tested strategy of exploitation, insecure work and low pay for their workers, refusing to give workers sick pay, holiday pay or to even recognise their rights and responsibilities as an employer. They shrug their shoulders and insist that they are a technology firm and they do not employ drivers.

That is what the GMB’s landmark court case is about. It is about Uber and their refusal to give rights to workers that we have fought for over generations, but it is also about the future of work in a modern age and the power of technology, whether that power is used to create a fairer, more prosperous workplace where workers are treated fairly or whether it has utilised a race to the bottom with working people paying the price. This is new technology, but these are familiar issues. In many ways, what we face is a straightforward battle for workers’ rights and against exploitation. It is why we exist and it is why we have always existed; we just have another front to fight on.

21st century work needs 21st century unions, embracing and innovating in digital campaigns that deliver real and practical change for our members, adding another tool to our arsenal when taking the fight to bad employers. This is not just in the gig economy, but in the whole economy as well, showing the Ubers and the ASOS’s of this world that there is no hiding place, while at the same time better connecting working people with their union and each other, becoming an ever-present and more active part of our members’ lives on a day-to-day basis.

Congress, the world of work is changing and we must change with it. We second this composite. *(Applause)*

**Denise Linay** *(Royal College of Midwives)* supported the motion.

She said: I am a first-time speaker at Congress. *(Applause)* The RCM amended the motion to include two further actions: firstly, that unions should share best practice about how membership systems can be utilised and integrated into digital and organising strategies; and, secondly, to ensure that the provisions of the Trade Union Act do not inhibit our digital activity.

For the benefits of digital campaigning and organising to be fully utilised, we need to make sure that we are using new technologies and platforms alongside our membership systems to help us fully understand our members, how to organise them and what they need. A few years ago, the RCM had a market research company investigate our members’ views about this and about us. The research segmented our members into four distinct groups in terms of what they wanted from their membership, how they viewed us and, importantly, how they wanted to be involved. This helped us to update and further develop our organising strategy.

We are also investigating our membership database. We want to link it with our website and our social media activity. This means that we can target our digital campaigns to specific members more effectively. The motion calls for Congress to showcase good examples of how trade unions are utilising digital campaigning and organising strategies. We are certainly happy to share our learning and best practice amongst affiliates, in particular how we are linking and integrating this into our contract management system. We also need to ensure that the provisions in the Trade Union Act do not inhibit our digital campaigning. As the motion rightly says, young workers mobilise through social media and modern technologies on a wide range of political and social issues. Indeed, many of our trade union campaigns have been successful because of the use of social media.

In 2014, the RCM took industrial action for the first time in our 134-year history. We needed to work hard to gain the trust and confidence of our members so that they would vote for, and support, industrial action. One of the keys to our successes was the use of social media, in particular developing infographics to simply explain quite complex information about the dispute. We also use social media to share images of our action and how organised and united our members were in campaigning for a fair pay rise.

We are profoundly concerned by some of the suggestions that were made when the Trade Union Act was making its way through the House of Commons about the potential restrictions to social media during industrial action. We are waiting for the draft Code of Practice from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy about the social media provisions. It is vital that the TUC and affiliates campaign to ensure that the visions do not restrict our ability to campaign on social media. We ask Congress to support this motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** We are going to go straight to the vote on this one. Can I see all those in favour, please? All those against?

 \* *Composite Motion 14 was CARRIED*

**The President:** I now call Motion 75, Women organising against the Trade Union Act. The General Council supports the motion. It will be moved by Ruth Hayes, on behalf of the TUC Women’s Conference, seconded by the GMB, with three additional speakers from Unison, the NUT and the NASUWT.

**Women organising against the Trade Union Act**

**Ruth Hayes** *(TUC Women’s Conference)* moved Motion 75.

She said: Congress, it is a real honour to move this motion on behalf of this year’s TUC Women’s Conference. Trade union women overwhelmingly agreed that this was our priority to bring to Congress. We have already heard some very powerful speeches about why we need to fight for the repeal of this unjust Act and to fight for a new framework of positive rights, collective bargaining and the strengthening of our right to organise.

While the Act does impact on everybody, there are specific issues for women. For example, the Act will have a particular impact on women in important public services such as education whose right to organise and strike will be undermined even more than those of us in other services. Attacks on facilities time, which we have already heard about, will make it even harder for women to play a full role within their union as many continue to have a double shift of paid work and domestic responsibilities.

This very important motion sets out the practical steps to ensure that we involve our women activists in every aspect of the fight back. Even the Government’s own equality assessment recognises that the Act will impact particularly on women and we therefore need to ensure that our women activists are centrally involved in the struggle to overturn it. Many of you will have seen recent extensive press coverage of the rise in maternity discrimination. This did not come from nowhere. Tory policies have led to this with the reduction in qualifying periods for workplace rights, the introduction of tribunal fees, the cutting of legal aid for employment issues and the nurturing of a growth in insecure work.

Earlier on today, Angela Rayner, in her fantastic address, told us that more than half of women in a recent TUC study reported that they had experienced sexual harassment at work. Over half: that is a staggering figure. The figure for young women is even higher at 63%. Four out of five women did not report this abuse to their employer as they felt ashamed and frightened. We know that many women will face additional issues because of their age, disability, ethnicity and faith. We can only fight these issues by collective action as trade unionists.

Contrary to popular stereotype, more than half of union members are women, many of us working in public services, and we are in low-paid and part-time work. We should have confidence as we have seen members take on insecurity, injustice and fear at work and win campaigns such as the Bromley Library campaign, Sports Direct and Pizza Express. We know that unionised workplaces deliver for women on flexible working, on maternity pay and on dignity at work. The ILO and the European Commission have found that greater collective bargaining leads to a significantly lower gender pay gap.

Women are not the passive recipients of trade unionism. We are the activists, the organisers and the leaders of strike action. It will take more than the Trade Union Act to break the spirit of our sisters in struggle. As Mary MacArthur said in 1907, “A trade union is like a bundle of sticks. The workers are bound together and have the strength of unity ….. An employer can do without one worker. He cannot do without all his workers.” What was true then is true today. We need to organise, we need to build confidence across the Movement and we need to defeat the Trade Union Act. I move. *(Applause)*

**Sheila Bearcroft** *(GMB)* seconded the motion.

She said: President, Congress, we all know that the Trade Union Act is a vindictive Tory attack on trade unionists, but this motion is making clear that we know who will pay the highest price of all. This motion is important because it is not always obvious that the impact on women is most severe of all. As always with the Tories, we have to look at the bigger picture.

Under this Government, women have been on the receiving end of wave after wave of attacks through Government policy. First, they watered down the Equality Act, passed in the last months of a Labour government. The right to equality at work was put out to consultation, inviting employers to undermine it as part of the Government’s red tape challenge. A clear message was sent out.

Laws preventing the discrimination at work against women, black and minority ethnic workers, disabled people or LGBT workers were a burden to business that could be, and should be, done without. Under Osborne’s austerity policies, working people suffered a sustained attack on living standards and cuts to public services. As two-thirds of public sector workers are women, it was women who were disproportionately losing jobs and pensions while bankers and directors of big business were being protected.

Last year, new research demonstrated that of the £9.6 billion raised by increased taxes and cuts to social security, £7 billion came from women. We have a proud history of women’s activism in the trade union Movement but, Congress, here we are again, with a Tory Government attacking trade unions, who provide the best protection to all workers, male and female, with protection against low pay, protection against exploitation and discrimination and protection through organising and collective action. Rest assured, Congress, this is not a bill we want to go halves on. Whilst none of us should be made to pay the price of the reckless behaviour and greed of a financial elite, this bill is asking women to pay the biggest share.

Congress, trade unions are the last line of defence for women in work. New figures show that 55% of trade union members in the UK are women. Last year, trade union membership among the men remained static, but amongst women it increased. Whilst our whole Movement must be united if we are to defeat the Tories and the Trade Union Act, it is important that working women, who are on the receiving end of these policies, are at the front of the fight-back. Our stories and experiences can connect with those voters who might not know much about trade unions and the work we do other than what is served up in the right-wing press. That is why our structures, our self-organisation and our strategy must enable our many female members to lead the charge against Theresa May’s Government.

Congress, working women up and down the country are in the fight of their lives, but together we will win. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**Penny Smith** *(Unison)* supported the motion.

She said: Congress, my union is proud to support this motion and I am really proud to be part of my union. Nearly eight out of ten of our members are women and our battles on equal pay, family-friendly working, maternity leave, workplace and domestic abuse policies and so much more have been underpinned by women’s self-organisation. By women’s voices being heard, their views made known and their demands being met, and in listening to those women’s voices and acting on their demands, we have also, along with our sister unions, changed the face of society.

We are a long, long way, though, from true equality, particularly in equal pay, but those of us privileged to work in the public sector know the difference that strong and effective unions can have in improving our working lives. This Government’s Trade Union Act was designed to threaten all of that. We know it was intended to smash our trade union Movement. Attacks on our political activity, our right to strike and our facilities time are vindictive: no more, no less.

All of us in this room know that participating in our trade union Movement can, quite frankly, be a labour of love. We have busy lives. Our families, our communities, our political activism and our trade union work all take a toll. Without facilities time (even the little bit that some of us are allowed) that workload becomes impossible. That, of course, was exactly their intention. The things that we have been able to change, the things that make such a difference to our members’ lives, may have a cost implication for employers and this Government put the balance sheet above all else: above women’s rights; above the right to respect in the workplace, whether you are black, LGBT, disabled, young or, even like me, fairly ancient; above the right to a safe and healthy workplace; and, even more important, above the right to be paid fairly for the work that we do every single day.

We know that the balance sheet is so much more than money. It is about people’s lives, fairness, decency and respect. Women have suffered greatly under this Government. Its austerity programme, cuts in support for services, outsourcing of women’s jobs and cuts in financial support for families are all direct attacks on women. The Trade Union Act is just another one to add to the list.

I am really proud, Congress, of the fight against the Act from the union Movement and from my union, Unison. Of course, we would rather it was not there at all, but were it not for our interventions, it would be so much worse. Congress, we must continue to challenge the Government and continue campaigning for equality. Thank you. Please support. *(Applause)*

**Marilyn Bater** *(National Union of Teachers)* supported the motion.

She said: President, Congress, this is just a very quick contribution from the NUT, you will be pleased to hear. I would like to concentrate on point 2 in the list of calls to the TUC about women self-organising. I am proud to be a woman activist in the National Union of Teachers. Women make up 76% of our membership and I am proud to say that 77 of our school reps are also women. However, this is not reflected further up with branch secretaries and at NEC level.

We are very much a lay-led union and organise at local level so some women activists decided to try to change this and find out how we could get women more involved. Some fabulous lay women activists – not me, I have to say, as I got involved at a later stage – set up women’s networks in their regions. They tried informal ways of engaging women. They spoke to women in their areas and asked them what they wanted. They organised social activities with a political focus, including speakers on the success of women trade unionists. They showed films and they did theatre visits to such things as *Made in Dagenham*.

Some regions then took this into their local area and organised gatherings in smaller places to engage more and more. This has certainly led to a greater involvement of women and we are really pleased with our success. It is still very much a work-in-progress. Sisters, we have not cracked it yet, but we are getting there. Therefore, I urge you all to go back to your branches and regions and try this. Find us on Facebook: NUT Women’s Networks. *(Applause)*

**Kathy Duggan** *(NASUWT, The Teachers’ Union)* supported the motion.

She said: The NASUWT welcomes this motion, which highlights that trade union membership is now more prolific among women. It follows that any attack on trade union activity has a disproportionate impact on working women – working women who teach our children, drive our buses and trains and treat our sick. Teachers, transport workers and health workers will be subject to the 40% threshold for legal industrial action. This comes together with further onerous and unreasonable restrictions on the right to strike.

The Act comes as no surprise to those of us who defend workers’ rights. It is no surprise that a government that seeks to abandon the Human Rights Act also seeks to abandon the rights of women to organise in the workplace. Congress, a women’s place is in her trade union and that place is under attack. This motion calls upon the TUC to ensure that women are central to the trade union response to the Trade Union Act. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Again, we will move straight to the vote. Can I see those in favour? All those against?

 \* *Motion 76 was CARRIED*

**Lay reps awards**

**The President:** Congress, it is now time to celebrate the work and achievements of those who bring the benefits of trade unionism to tens of thousands of workers each day, our workplace representatives. On every single day of the year, they advise, guide and represent. Quite simply, they make life both inside and beyond the workplace better for working people. They are the grassroots heroes of our Movement. First, we are going to watch a short video that celebrates their work before Frances presents the winners with their awards. Thank you.

 *(Video and presentation of Congress awards)*

**The President:** We now continue with section 4 of the General Report on strong unions. I call paragraph 2.5 and Motion 79, the RCM’s Caring for You Campaign. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the RCM and seconded by the CSP. They will be the only speakers I will take. Thank you.

**RCM’s Caring for You Campaign**

**Natalie Linder** *(Royal College of Midwives)* moved Motion 79.

She said: President, Congress, in June, the RCM launched our new campaign, Caring for You. Our campaign aims to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of RCM members so that they can provide excellent care for women. Our campaign is necessary because many maternity units are overworked, understaffed, with many midwives under intense pressures to meet the demands of the service.

We recently conducted a survey of RCM members and we found a high level of burnout and stress. Our survey found that only 21% of RCM members said that they took their entitled breaks most or all of the time. 17% of members work five or more hours per week unpaid. 48% of members said that they felt stressed every day or most days. The most common reason for this stress was workload, staff shortages and just not enough time to do their tasks. 56% of members have felt overwhelmed by how much work they have to do and 18% of members have often cried at work because of the pressure they are under. From a personal point of view, I can honestly say that this does represent my last week in work.

However, our evidence demonstrates that when organisations work with RCM health and safety representatives and take positive steps on health, safety and wellbeing, it can make a real difference. These positive actions are not radical. It is taking action on key issues such as flexible working, breaks and bullying. When our reps and organisations work together, our research found that the percentage of members who reported feeling stressed every day. or on most days, reduced from 64% to 30%. Reports of bullying, harassment and abuse from managers reduced from 53% to 12%. Members reporting that they felt proud to work for these organisations actually increased from 21% to 73%.

The RCM’s research is testimony to the value of health and safety representatives in the workplace and that the effort of treating staff fairly is to everybody’s benefit. Lower stress levels, better health and wellbeing for staff will always lead to improved care for women and families.

Our *Caring for You Campaign* asks NHS organisations to sign up to our charter which asks the organisations to show a commitment to health, safety and wellbeing. The charter asks managers to commit to working with the RCM health and safety reps to take the positive actions as previously discussed. In the first three months of our campaign, we have had 40 NHS organisations across the UK sign up to our charter. That is nearly 25% of all organisations. Our workplace reps are working hard to negotiate locally with their managers to get more organisations to sign up and we are encouraging more of our members to become health and safety reps as our research clearly shows just how important this role is and the difference it can make. We want to make sure that our maternity workplaces are healthy so that they can provide and deliver high-quality care. We ask you to support our motion, for the General Council to support the RCM’s campaign and to continue to make the case for the value of health and safety representatives in our Movement. *(Applause)*

**James Allen** *(Chartered Society of Physiotherapy)* seconded the motion.

He said: Congress, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy welcomes the RCM campaign. For too long, NHS staff have been working under extreme and increasing pressure. Cuts to funding and staffing and the constant demand for efficiency savings are making NHS staff’s working lives intolerable. It is a truly dangerous scenario; increasing workload while decreasing staffing levels. What does it create? It creates compromised quality of care and this is a time where there is an expectation that we can deliver seven-day services on existing resources.

Congress, enough is enough. For too long, the workforce has been told, “Become more resilient, manage your stress better, exercise more, you can overcome this, just keep going.” It is a fine line between just coping and not coping at all. This is not good for staff and it is certainly not good for our patients. Instead of tackling the cause, we are constantly covering each new wound in our NHS with a disposable sticking plaster while the cuts grow.

So how can the NHS cure the problem? I will tell you. Invest in us. Give us safe and effective staffing levels. Give us the right training and support. Give us achievable workloads and we will deliver high-quality care to our patients. After all, this is why we joined the NHS – to make a difference and to support our patients to live the best and healthiest lives possible.

Employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff. This is why the CSP is also launching its own campaign “Pinpointing the pressure”. We are supporting our local stewards and safety reps to work with members to identify the causes of unacceptable levels of workplace stress and workloads and, more importantly, to come up with plans to address them.

Congress, we know that collective action in the workplace can really make a difference and bring about change. Sports Direct is a great example of that. We believe that staff is the solution to resolving these problems. This Government has cut the NHS funding to breaking point. We must take action, halt this approach and give patients and staff the NHS they deserve. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Colleagues, we will go straight to the vote on this. Will all those in favour please show? All those against?

 \* *Motion 79 was CARRIED*

**Appropriate footwear in the workplace**

**The President:** We now go on to Motion 28, Appropriate footwear in the workplace. The General Council supports the motion with an explanation. I will call on the Deputy Secretary to explain that a little later. First, we will have the SCP and then the GMB.

**Katy Collins** *(Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists)* moved Motion 80.

She said: Many workers face problems with their feet or legs because of the wrong footwear at work. Feet bear the brunt of daily working life. It is estimated that around 80% of the adult population has some form of foot problem. This can vary from aches and pains, swelling and corns, to fungal infections and varicose veins. While not all of these are the result of work activities, a large proportion are. A survey of 2,000 people in the UK by the College of Podiatry in 2013 found self-reported foot problems in 90% of respondents.

Our feet are exposed to many dangers at work and, like every other danger, the risk can be avoided or removed if employers take simple straightforward steps to protect their workers. The SCP raised this issue at Congress in 2009 and the TUC issued a guide around working feet and footwear, but the furore surrounding Nicola Thorp being sent home from work by her agency without pay from a receptionist job in London for refusing to wear high heels shows that the issue of safety and appropriate footwear at work is still alive and kicking. Indeed, we are still getting reports that in many occupations, in particular where staff deal with the public, employers enforce a dress code that includes footwear. Sometimes this code prevents staff from wearing comfortable and sensible shoes and instead insists that they wear slip-ons or inappropriate heels. This can apply particularly to women. Apart from being extremely sexist, these policies can also lead to long-term foot problems.

Nicola Thorp refused to wear high heels for both of these reasons. She complained that male colleagues were not asked to do the same and she would have struggled to work a full nine-hour shift in high heels where she had to do a lot of walking. A Stanford University study found that wearing heels that are three-and-a-half inches high and above can strain knee joints and lead to osteoarthritis, the most common type of arthritis in the UK. So, wearing high heels has real long-term health implications which employers must take into account.

However, it is not just high heels that can cause problems. A survey conducted by energy provider Eon on their accident statistics showed a dramatic rise in accidents on stairs in the summer due to employees wearing flip-flops and sandals, including a case where an employee who was wearing open-toed shoes caught her toe underneath a filing cabinet, ripping the nail off. These types of footwear can also be unsupportive, cause muscle strain and lead to serious injuries. In manufacturing, building and construction and many other workplaces, appropriate footwear is mandatory for safety purposes so why not require the same standards in all other industries as well?

Congress, we are not calling for a ban on high heels, sandals or flip-flops, but for common sense and fairness in the workplace. Women or any other worker should not have to risk their health, wellbeing or safety to comply with inappropriate standards. The issue has attracted significant public interest with a Parliamentary petition gathering 145,000 signatures with the Government’s Petitions Committee launching an inquiry and a possible debate in Parliament.

Both employers and employees need to be educated about the importance of foot health and footwear. Information such as the TUC Footwear at Work publication needs to be utilised along with accident trend scenarios and real-life cases of the consequences of wearing the wrong footwear. We therefore call on the TUC and affiliated unions to work closely with the SCP and its members to educate employers and employees on the dangers of inappropriate footwear at work and to campaign for the law to be changed to enable people to not be compelled to wear high heels and other inappropriate footwear at work. I move. *(Applause)*

**Penny Robinson** *(GMB)* seconded the motion.

She said: Congress, seven years ago, at the TUC Congress in Liverpool, our President, Mary Turner, spoke passionately in support of a very similar motion to this concerning the pressure put on women to wear the right kind of acceptable footwear at work. Those of you who were there back then may remember that she ended up having a public row with Nadine Dorries MP over her ridiculous comments that she needed high heels to empower her. It was total nonsense, which is about what you would expect from a Tory.

Seven years later, nothing seems to have changed. Women are still expected to wear totally inappropriate shoes for work every day just to make sure that the right image is portrayed for their employer. Nicola Thorp deserves a huge amount of credit for standing her ground and kicking her heels off. It is great that almost 150,000 people felt strongly enough to sign a petition to protest, to condemn the employer and to demand change, but if anything is truly going to change, we need to deal with the people at the very top. Luckily enough, we now have someone running the country who can set an example for the rest of us by making a point of wearing sensible shoes.

Congress, when Theresa May became Conservative leader and Prime Minister, I expected to read an analysis of her policies, her priorities and her approach to Brexit. Instead, most of the newspapers concentrated on her love of shoes and her extensive shoe collection. I guess that without an election to report on, they were struggling for a story. It was even the lead story on *Good Morning Britain*, which was enough to put me off my breakfast!

There is one GMB that is ready to call Theresa to account on this. Our new Prime Minister may be well-known for her leopard-print kittens, her leather boots and, of course, her Jimmy Choos, but if she really wants to advance the cause for women in the workplace, there are two things she can do. The first is to make a point of wearing pumps, flats and comfortable shoes for her Cabinet, for PMQs and for meeting all those EU leaders. Let the media see that you can be the most powerful woman in the country – well, maybe the second after Frances – without needing to wear designer shoes to meet men’s expectations. For once, set an example we can actually be proud of. The second thing Theresa can do is to call a General Election and put us all out of our misery. Please support. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I now call the Deputy General Secretary in his very sensible shoes.

**Paul Nowak** *(Deputy General Secretary)* set out the General Council’s position to support the motion with an explanation.

He said: Motion 80 rightly draws attention to the issue of women being forced to wear high heels at work, something which is offensive, sexist and also detrimental to health and safety. The General Council supports the motion for all the reasons that you have heard from Katy and Penny and the TUC has campaigned on this issue with the SCP. We will continue campaigning to raise awareness with both employees and employers, as the motion calls on us to do.

The motion also calls on us to campaign for a change in the law, which is not in line with current TUC policy because discriminatory dress code policies are already prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. Rather than a change in the law, the General Council wants stronger enforcement of the legislation that already exists, we want better access to justice and we want clear guidance from the Health and Safety Executive, from ACAS and from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. So, with that explanation, Congress, the General Council urges you to support the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. Can we move to the vote on that, please? All those in favour? All those against?

 \* *Motion 80 was CARRIED*

**The President:** Delegates, we may have time this afternoon to take the business lost from yesterday afternoon. That business is Composite Motion 11 on Mental health and wellbeing of the education workforce and young people, moved by the NASUWT, seconded by ATL and supported by the AEP, and Motion 43, Post-16 Education, the UCU and ATL. We will try and do that, if you can be prepared.

Delegates, we now turn to section 3 of the General Council Report, Good services and decent welfare, the section on Creative Industries. I now all Motion 64 on Channel 4. The General Council supports the motion. It is going to be moved by Equity and seconded by the NUJ.

**Ian Barritt** *(Equity)* moved Motion 64.

He said: Comrades, I am the vice president of Equity. Who owns Channel 4? You do. We all do. It’s publicly owned. In the words of Michael Caine, “Not a lot of people know that”. It was established in 1982 to provide an independent alternative to the BBC and ITV. How much does it cost us? Nothing. The money it earns is put back into programme making. It doesn’t cost the taxpayer a single penny. It commissions a range of high-quality and original programmes, spending more on British film than any other UK broadcaster. Since 2007, those films have won 19 Oscars. It has challenged British attitudes to diversity. Think about *Brookside* and the first lesbian kiss on UK television. Think about *Desmond* and *Queer as Folk*. In 2012 40 million people watched Channel 4’s coverage of the London Paralympic Games, and 83% of viewers agreed that Channel’s coverage would positively change perceptions of disability.

Channel 4 has a statutory remit requiring it to be educational, distinctive and innovative, to reflect cultural diversity, inspire changing people’s lives, nurture talent, stimulate debate and show alternative viewpoints. Its 360 Degrees Diversity Charter is a five-year plan with 30 commitments to improve diversity on and off screen. Channel 4 News has a higher proportion of young and BAEM views than any other public-service broadcaster. Two-third of viewers say that Channel 4’s factual programmes inspire change in their lives. So we have a publicly-owned success story. Where’s the threat?

Last year the Government accidentally leaked plans to privatise Channel 4. A document held by an official photographed Downing Street states, and I quote: “Work should proceed to examine the options of extracting greater public value from the Channel 4 Corporation focusing on privatisation options in particular”. Comrades, the privatisation of Channel 4 represents a fundamental threat to the UK’s media freedom and plurality. The pressure to pursue profits akin to the 20% enjoyed by ITV would lead, according to Channel 4 estimates, to budget cuts of up to £200 million in the making of programmes. Independent experts, including Ofcom and Ernst & Young, have all concluded that Channel 4 is sustainable. We can only assume, therefore, that privatisation is ideological.

The last Culture Secretary, John Whittingdale, is alleged to have driven the privatisation agenda. The appointment of a new Culture Secretary gives us the opportunity to re-state the case for public ownership. Comrades, Equity will vigorously make that case. We need your support. Please vote for the motion. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you, Ian. I call the NUJ.

**Pennie Quinton** *(NUJ, National Union of Journalists)* seconded Motion 64.

She said: Congress, this is my first time speaking at Congress. *(Applause)*  There is much that makes Channel 4 unique, some of the highlights which my colleague that my colleague from Equity has just mentioned. It will not surprise you to know that the most important work that Channel 4 does is its journalism. It’s *Despatches* strand has produced a string of award-winning documentaries, the powerful messages of which have recast the way in which we think about numerous critical issues of the moment.

*Escape from ISIS* showed us the work of the secret network that helps to free women held by ISIS as sex slaves. *Children on the Front Line* showed how young people’s lives were being devastated by the civil war in Syria, or *Hunted,* which uncovered the vigilante gangs in Russia that targeted gay men. Most are still available on-line, so if you have not seen them do seek them out.

Things have moved on since this motion was written. The unions and other supporters have mounted a magnificent campaign, and there are signs that the Government are not now as committed to George Osborne’s privatisation plan as it once was. If that is the case, then that campaign provides some important lessons for the rest of our work. When the idea of privatisation was floated, unions and other supporters went into overdrive, lobbying ministers, getting supportive MPs on board and creating an alliance in the House of Lords to front our position. The prospect of several more years of a majority Tory Government is not a welcome one. I am sure that it will bring forth some fresh horrors that none of us have yet imagined, but when we fight, when we take the approach that we won’t easily give up an inch of ground without trenchant resistance, then we can win. Please, pass this motion to show our enduring support for Channel 4, a genuine beacon of diversity and progressive values in the British broadcasting landscape, but also to learn the lessons of the campaign against privatisation. Guile, tenacity and imagination deliver us victories, even when the odds are stacked against us. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  We are going to move to the vote on Motion 64. All those in favour, please? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 64 was CARRIED.*

**Transparency and accountability of broadcasters on diversity**

**The President:** I now call Motion 65, Transparency and accountability of broadcasters on diversity. The General Council supports the motion, which is to be moved by BECTU and seconded by Equity.

**Jane Perry** *(BECTU, Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union)* moved Motion 65.

She said: Congress, there is something each of you can do to impact on representation, so please have a pen and paper ready. Twenty-eight years ago when I started working for the BBC a black woman trainee on the same production scheme as I was asked when we were in the canteen, “Where’s your uniform?” Twenty-eight years later you would have hoped things had improved. A BAEM radio producer recently told the editor of BECTU’s magazine, “I’m passionate about gardening. All I want to make programmes about is gardening, but all they want to talk to me about is Islamic terrorism”. Added to which, broadcasting has a weak regulator — Ofcom — but it has not always been this way. Under the previous regulator, the ITC, from 1997 to 2002 BAEM employment in broadcasting rose by 89%. Admittedly, they started from a small base figure but, nevertheless, it was a promising start. The ITC monitored and published racial-diversity figures. This pressure on broadcasters resulted in the impressive rise we have seen. However, since Ofcom took over in 2002 there has been a 31% drop.

The problem is that almost half of those working in broadcasting are now freelance, and hiring is by informal networking, where those in-charge recruit those they know. The only effective way forward is to return to something akin to the ITC monitoring. Ofcom are wilfully useless! So the broadcasters themselves want to take action. The BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Sky have come up with Project Diamond to monitor diversity of all the protected characteristics in broadcasting, and they want union support. However, they don’t want to name and shame down to programme level. Firstly, they said that this would be too expensive. Now they are saying that they cannot take action as this could breach data protection. So they will only public protection, so they will only publish by genre or broadcaster, nothing more detailed or more useful.

However, both the BFI and the Arts Council are willing to be that open. In fact, the Arts Council has said that disappointing diversity figures could jeopardise the funding of the organisations they support. So, in essence, broadcasting are using data protection to shield those who expect to be invited into our living rooms but refuse to represent us accurately. BECTU is saying “Don’t waste our members’ time with your lip service. Either monitor and publish at a meaningful make-a-difference level or we will boycott your whitewash”.

You can impact on BBC representation very effectively yourselves by logging your views on what the BBC broadcasts on a duty log. This is very important because 97% of the UK’s population use BBC contents every single week. I know that the duty log has an effect because I have watched executive producers sweat over their responses. What you do is you ring the BBC complaints telephone number, which is 03770 010 0222. I will repeat that: 03770 010 0222, choosing option 1 and then option 3 to get through to a person. Make sure that you demand a response in writing. That way your complaint goes straight to the producer of the programme. If you don’t like their response, appeal to the Trust.

I also get the duty log itself. On one occasion, a couple of years ago, five thousand trade unionists rang in and complained that not enough coverage had been given to a public-sector dispute. But we need to do more than this. There are still in the logs I get more reactionary complaints than progressive ones.

Lastly, comrades, I have to report that on occasion BECTU reps have been verbally attacked for campaigning for the BBC. Trade unionists and the left, in my opinion, are quite rightly very angry about misleading pieces of BBC news and/or no coverage at all. BECTU does not campaign on content, but rather we campaign for the maintenance of platform. Please don’t confuse the two. After all, you have not stopped supporting the NHS because of what happened at Mid-Staffs. It was Tony Benn himself who first pointed out to me the importance of all public-service broadcasting in a democracy. The BBC content is debatable. That is the point. Please support BECTU’s efforts to make broadcasters accountable. Thank you.

**The President:**  Thank you. I can Equity.

**Christine Payne** *(Equity)* seconded Motion 65.

She said: Congress, I am reading the speech that was written by my member Tanya Moodie, an actress who had to leave for work reasons. This is what Tanya says: “What motivates me daily is how my work as a performer as well as my role as a parent can contribute towards creating a peaceful world, based on dialogue, inclusivity and non-violence. Each of us is a vessel through which actions say ‘This is the world I wish to see’. The fundamental lack of diversity across the creative industries is a central issue for me and my union, and it is not a new concern. While artistic leaders have taken notice of and have brought this issue to prominence recently, Equity first coined the phrase ‘Integrated casting’, now called ‘Inclusive casting’ in 1967, and we are still talking about it. Despite the plethora of commitments, targets, strategies, charters and action plans set out by the broadcasters, only one-in-three people on screen is female, one-in-10 is BAEM, one-in-100 is disabled and one-in-100 is LGBT.” But it is not just a numbers game. Our diverse members continue to report that their identity defines who they are and who they are permitted to play, that they are more likely to be cast in the background and in a stereotypical role, and that inaccessible casting, just getting into the place, is the norm for disabled people.

As the broadcasters’ regulator, Ofcom’s role will be crucial in challenging poor practice, in introducing greater accountability and in publishing and collecting diversity-monitoring data so that we can measure the progress that the industry is making. Post BBC Charter renewal, Ofcom’s role will become more important, and we think it could use its influence in a game-changing way.

Equity’s new campaign, *Play Fair*, calls on the industry regulator to do more to stand up for equality on and off screen. It is the talent and expertise of creative workers from diverse backgrounds that has the potential to transform our national conversation, to inspire the next generation and to influence and change society’s attitudes. By seeing diversity on our screens in stories that show what we have in common, we help to create a more inclusive society, because if we can see it then we can be it. Please support the motion. Thank you.

**The President:**  Thank you, Christine. We will move to the vote on this motion. Will all those in favour please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 65 was CARRIED.*

**The President:**  Congress, as I advised earlier, we can now take those two motions from yesterday, which are Comp 11 and Motion 43. We will take that business after Motion 67. We now move on to Motion 66: Performers and mental health. The General Council supports the motion, to be moved by the Musicians’ Union and seconded by Equity.

**Performers and mental health**

**Rab Noakes** *(MU, Musicians’ Union)* moved Motion 66.

He said: Comrades, it would be erroneous and, indeed, rather exclusive to claim that only those in the performing arts, and musicians in particular, are prone to suffer work-related mental illnesses. There is no doubt, though, that there are exceptional circumstances, and allow me to quote from an article which has appeared in the *Morning Star* today, written by our General Secretary, John Smith. He said: “A 2014 survey by Help Musicians UK revealed the high levels of mental health problems within the musician community. Of those surveyed, 67% had, on occasion, suffered from depression or other psychological problems, 75% had experienced performance anxiety and 62% had experienced relationship difficulties. These are shockingly high figures and there is considerable evidence to suggest that performers in other areas are similarly affected. In our industry there are a number of high-profile sufferers, some reaching tragic ends. The famed 27 Club springs to mind. It’s so named after the age at which many high-profile performers have died. Included in this gang are the likes of Jim Morrison, Janice Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix, Brian Jones, Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse.”

At the end of a working day, providing there are no extraordinary stress-inducing circumstances in evidence, most working people are tired and want to get home to family comforts and relaxation. Performs, though, are often, although maybe a bit tired, pumped up and ready for some excitement and extreme entertainment. I knew plenty of people in the ‘70s who lived a virtually chemical-led existence. Far too many of my own contemporaries are no longer with us. I have created a concern or two in celebratory commemoration of artistes I knew, the most prominent of these being Gerry Rafferty, whose attempts to park company with alcohol proved futile. He eventually died from related conditions at the age of 63.

There was a terrific piece in a film made in 1989 called *25x5: The Continuing Adventures of the Rolling Stones.* In an interview with Charlie Watts, he was asked: “What’s it been liked being in the Rolling Stones for 25 years?” Charlie pauses, and then replies: “Well, it’s been about five years of working and 20 years of hanging about”. There lies a clue, hanging about and waiting for your turn in the recording studio, long afternoons and evenings in dressing rooms, between short bursts of activity prior to the concert proper.

Performance anxiety. I expect there have been people suffering performance anxiety here today. It’s an intriguing thing, I think. A little tension is not such a bad thing. It can help you focus and, as a rule, as soon as the performance begins the concentration is full on and the anxiety dissipates. The truth is that we usually find our way round any unforeseen difficulties, and little mistakes and mishaps can often be used to a show’s advantage. I, along with most performers, have had to endure this to a certain extent, and it is not good. You don’t concentrate. Shaky hands aren’t much good for guitar playing, and the show was probably too fast and not very pleasant.

Stage fright, though, is another animal altogether. It can come out of the blue and be utterly debilitating. I have known Barbara Dixon for years, since we were teenagers. After many years as an accomplished concert performer, she was offered some acting positions in musical theatre. She had a real ability for this, and quickly came to be offered high-profile West End work, but during an initial run of *Blood Brothers*, involving a rigorous schedule arranged over the week, she was becoming a lot more mentally exhausted than she was fully aware of. One night all it took was a prop to be misplaced on stage and she was visited by the terrifying spectre of stage fright. It took some time, about 15 years, she felt, to get past this considerably upsetting episode. Time spent away from home, and all of those tensions created by suspicions, jealousies and guilt can often add to stresses for both the folks at home and the folks who are out on the road. It is also the case that performers often find it even more difficult than most to come forward and ask for help. Freelancers, in particular, may worry that being open about anything that might have a stigma attached or suggests frailty or unreliability could negatively impact on their career. This is where the support of a union can be indispensable. Please be aware of this extraordinary situation and join us in supporting the bodies who can help directly, such as Help Musicians UK and BAPAM, the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I call Equity.

**Adam Burns** *(Equity)* seconded Motion 66.

He said: President and Congress, Equity is really happy to support this motion today. It’s vital. In 2013 a clutch of tragic suicides within our industry occurred, including that of the actor Paul Bhttacharjee, prompted demands for Equity to do something. We began with research and our survey of over five thousand people told us that 41% of people felt their health was poor or, at best, average, and 23% of people had found that mental-health challenges directly impacted on their career, but figures alone do not show the full extent of what arts’ workers are facing. We work in a high-hours, low-rewards culture. We work with constant job insecurity. Until the 2013 Federation of Entertainment Unions’ Campaign, which was called *Creating Without Conflict*, we worked in a culture of bullying. We work in an industry where the majority of our members earn less than £5,000 a year. So no wonder that the major cause of stress and depression is cited as financial pressures. The same financial pressures mean that many arts workers simply cannot afford to seek help.

As a stage manager, I am well aware of the pressure of touring on family life, and the debilitating effects of being pushed by cost-cutting producers into taking on extra duties that fall outside of our job description, leading to longer hours, tiredness and health problems, both mental and physical, problems we often hide and pain that we sometimes mask. Stage managers have to project stability for the company, regardless of our own health issues.

Rab has brilliantly told us of the most common respite for those of us working in the arts, and I have had many spells where I, probably, drank far too much, especially when I was on tour. But my experience is by no means a rarity. I have lost two close friends to suicides since I started in the theatre in 1993. I really wish I could say confidently that it won’t happen again. So many more friends have had horrendous experiences that I am certainly not going to share with you. Historically, there has been little support for us, but along with industry partners, especially BAPAM, our union has created a one-stop resource which helps arts’ workers get the support they need when they need it, whether it is help, financial-relationship advice or immediate help in an emergency. It is called *artsminds.co.uk*. I urge you to have a look.

Congress, it is really clear that there is a big problem with the mental health and well-being of performers and creative workers. Only by unions, our industry partners and healthcare charities and professionals working together will we eradicate the stigma attached to mental illness and ensure that workers in our sector have the quality of life that they deserve. Please support. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you. Again, we will move straight to the vote. Can I see those in favour, please? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 66 was CARRIED.*

**Free TV licences for over-75s**

**The President:**  The next motion is Motion 67: Free TV licences for over-75s. The General Council support the motion. On this motion, I will be taking just the mover and the seconder, BECTU and the NUJ.

**Luke Crawley** *(BECTU, Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union)* moved Motion 67.

He said: Congress and President, BECTU wholeheartedly supports the idea that those over 75 should be entitled to a free TV licence. It is an entirely welcome social policy that those over 75 should be able to watch the BBC without having to pay for a licence fee themselves. This motion is about the cost of providing that benefit, the consequences of the policy and who pays for it. Prior to 2015 the Government paid for it as it was a social policy funded from general taxation. The policy was originally introduced by Gordon Brown in 2004, and came out of the budget of the Department of Work and Pensions. Obviously, or maybe not obviously, George Osborne did not think that this was such a good idea and he had his first attempt to try and dump this bill on the BBC in 2010. But Mark Thompson, the then boss of the BBC, refused and threaten to resign if the Government tried to force it through. The Government backed down, but, and it is quite a bit “but”, it forced the BBC to take on additional costs of the World Service and the Welsh Language TV service, S4C, originally funded from the Foreign & Commonwealth budget and the Exchequer respectively.

Making the BBC bear these significant extra costs meant that £350 million a year had to come out of licence fee income, which, in turn, caused the loss of thousands of jobs and the outsourcing of many more. It meant that there was £350 million less money to spend on making programmes for the licence-fee payer to watch and to listen to. Five years later, and having won the election by a whisker, George Osborne, obviously, felt that he could get away with another smash-and-grab raid on the BBC, so he tried again, and this time, I’m sad to say, the BBC caved in without a fight and accepted that it would have to pay for the licences of those over 75 in part from 2018 and in full by 2020.

So what will this cost? It will cost around £700 million to £750 million per year. That’s around 20% of the BBC’s annual income. I repeat: that is 20% — one-fifth — of money they will not have to spend on making programmes, and the sum is keep going up every year as we all keep living longer and the numbers of people over 75 keep rising. That’s a good thing. We want to live longer and everybody wants their aged parents to live longer, but the fact is that there is a cost here that is going to get bigger and bigger and the BBC is going to be facing serious problems. They are already considering what they are going to have to do to get rid of jobs to reduce costs in order to cover that cost. The reduction in income will be offset to a small extent by an agreement to raise the licence fee by CPI, not RPI, and also by closing the loophole that lets people watch the BBC iPlayer for free on the internet. Even at the most generous figures you can think of, those are only £100 million to £150 million, maybe £200 million, so the BBC is still on line to lose between 10% to 20% of its income.

BECTU President, Jane Perry, made the point that some in the labour Movement may say “So what?” They may complain that the BBC’s news coverage is lacking a certain something; that the BBC has, maybe, lost its nerve and it doesn’t hold the Government to account in the way it should be looking at its policies with a critical and independent eye. I have to say that I think there could be something in this criticism, but I don’t think the solution is to try and starve the BBC of funds, close it down or remove the licence fee. As Jane said, Tony Benn was very clear: consider the platform. The message can be changed, and it will be changed, but consider the platform. The reason why the platform is important is because it is a public-service broadcaster. It is not owned or controlled by a billionaire shareholder. The key part of it is proper funding, and that is what has to happen.

Why is all of this happening, do you think? Osborne has, very plausibly, tried to suggest that the BBC has to endure cuts in funding alongside everyone else, but given the way that David Cameron gloated about the British Broadcasting Cuts Corporation, it is difficult to get away from the feeling that this is pay back by the Tory Party to Rupert Murdoch. News International and BSkyB hate what the BBC does. It is a competitor producing high-quality programmes which are free to air. James Murdoch described the BBC as a state broadcaster but it is not. It’s a public-service broadcaster. Even Whittingdale, the last but one Minister of State for Culture, Music and Sport, an arch critic of the BBC, and by a strange and eyrie coincidence an ex-employee of *The Times*, accepted that you could not get rid of the licence fee. However, if less and less of the licence fee can be spent on programmes, then that could have the same effect of making the BBC less and less popular and undermine support for the licence fee.

The BBC is on target to having a huge reduction in funding. As I have said, £750 million is a lot of episodes of *Poldark*, *The Archers* or David Attenborough in *The Natural World.*  BECTU along with the NUJ, Equity, the Musicians’ Union, the Writers’ Guild and other unions, have been campaigning to save the BBC. Our slogan been “Love it or lose it”. The campaign was sparked by rumours and threats and some of those, unfortunately, have come to pass. The BBC matters and proper funding of the BBC matters because it is a media organisation which is able to make programmes of a different kind than that made by the commercial broadcasters. It is also the envy of the world. Ask anyone who has seen Fox TV in the United States. I emphasise again, it needs proper financing in order to keep on working. This motion is asking for your support to campaign for a revised funding formula which will maintain levels of service across the BBC. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** I call the NUJ.

**Sian Jones** *(NUJ, National Union of Journalists)* seconded Motion 67.

She said: Congress, as Luke outlined, the deal done between George Osborne and the BBC last year is a disaster for the Corporation. It is a financial and bureaucratic millstone, which will lead to job losses, reduced output and lower-quality standards from our wonderful but already stretched public-service broadcaster. The joint BBC unions were appalled at the process which, again, saw a “behind-closed-doors dodgy deal” between the Director General and the Government. Licence-fee payers had no say, no input and were neither present nor consulted. As the motion explains, the deal which was done imposes the fiscal responsibility of providing free licences for the over 75s on to the BBC, lumping the entire annual cost of £745 million on to the BBC, and in doing so it has created a budget gap of 20%. In response, the NUJ has argued that the only honest thing that the BBC can do is to reduce its output by an equivalent 20% in order to maintain quality standards. So, for example, *Newsnight* would air on four nights a week, not five a week. Of course, that is something bosses wouldn’t concede. So our members are paying the price. They are paying with their jobs. In fact, only yesterday, BBC Regions announced 200 redundancies to partly meet the cuts, and our members are paying with their health, through stress and unpaid overtime. But the deal also hands the poison chalice of policymaking and the implementation of this on to the BBC, so it is the BEEB bosses who will be the ones deciding, to save their own income, whether you have to reach the age of 80 or 85 before you receive your free TV licence, or perhaps it will be abolished entirely.

The deal takes these difficult decisions away from politicians and hands them to the BBC itself, which is something that was always a state-owned welfare issue in terms of both funding and policymaking and has been outsourced to the broadcaster. Let us remember that this deal comes on the back of five years of cuts because of the last dodgy deal that was done over the licence fee. This included a freeze in income, so a cut in real terms, and also the transfer of costs associated with the World Service and BBC Monitoring on to the Corporation’s books. As a result we have seen attacks on the World Service and we have seen huge job losses in BBC Monitoring.

The BBC isn’t perfect, but everyone in this room will have something that they hold dear or are a fan of, be that the *Great British Bake Off*, *Match of the Day,* the Radio 4 *Today* programme or, perhaps, like me, it’s the CBBC channel, which is advert-free and brings the joy of *Andy’s Dinosaur Adventure* to my toddler, as well, of course, as my local news and weather. There is so much to celebrate from our main public-service broadcaster. But this wonderful content comes at a price. If we value the output of the BBC, we must also value its funding and take action to protect it. By all means, have a radical restructure which addresses the top-heavy make-up of highly-paid bosses of the BBC but, funnily enough, that has not been suggested. We are, obviously, not against free TV licences for the over 75s, but it has no place under the BBC management and the responsibility must be taken back by Government. Please support. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  We will take a vote on this motion. All those in favour, please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Motion 67 was CARRIED.*

**The President:**  As promised, we continue in Section 3 of the General Council Report: Good Services and Decent Welfare. We turn now to Education and Mental Health. I am going to call Composite Motion 11: Mental health and well-being of the education workforce and young people. Again, I would mention that we will be discussing some difficult issues. So a little bit of sensitivity will be needed. Can I ask the NATUWT to move.

**Mental health and well-being of the education workforce and young people**

**Chris Keates** *(NASUWT, The Teachers’ Union)* moved Composite Motion 11.

She said: Congress, the devastating impact of the last six years of economic austerity, with its savage attacks on public services and on workers’ rights, is more than evident in the motions and speeches that we have heard at this year’s TUC Congress. It’s a toxic combination of pay cuts, plundering pensions, workloads spiralling out of control, excessive working hours, rising job loss and job insecurity, and seemingly unlimited freedoms and flexibilities for employers encouraging an enabling exploitation of workers to flourish. This is the stark reality of this Government’s policies for those working in our vital public services.

In teaching the evidence collected by the NASUWT since 2011 demonstrates that teachers’ health and wellbeing have, as a result, deteriorated dramatically. Almost of half of teachers have seen a doctor in the past 12 months as a result of work-related health problems. Furthermore, 14% have undergone counselling and 5% have been admitted to hospital with work-related conditions. Over three-quarters of teachers report experiencing work-related anxiousness, with 86% suffering sleeplessness and a third report poor health in general. 10 per cent of teachers say that they have been prescribed anti-depressants to help them cope with work, and 7% of teachers use or have increased their use of prescription drugs. Of even deeper concern is that 2% of teachers report self-harming as a result of work-related pressures.

It is not only mental health and well-being that suffers. Family life is damaged, with 9% of teachers saying that the pressures of work and ill health have led to relationships breaking down. All of this has fuelled the current teacher-supply crisis, with 71% of teachers now saying that they are seriously considering leaving teaching altogether. Yet the Government, aided and abetted by too many employers, in continuing to fail to address the problems spawned by its policies, is nothing short of scandalous. Employers have a responsibility for the mental health and well-being of their staff, but evidence shows that all too few take their responsibility seriously. If common decency and humanity don’t drive them to address the problem, then perhaps they should, at least, take note that according to ACAS mental health problems cost employers in the UK £30 billion a year through lost production, recruitment and absence, and they have a direct and adverse impact on the quality of service delivery.

High-quality services cannot be delivered by warn-out, stressed and anxious workers. Government and employers cannot claim to be committed to raising standards of education for all children and young people if the health of the education workforce continues to be a low priority. It, clearly, is a low priority when the response to mental and other health issues is applying punitive and callous sickness-absence policies, which actually exacerbate the stress and anxiety and generate a culture of shame and silence around mental health in the workplace. Threatening and abusing capability procedures, excessive monitoring and surveillance, designed to ratchet up the pressure rather than alleviate it, are wrong.

Whilst our evidence focuses on teachers, we know many unions here in Congress today will be able to recount similar experiences of their members across all sectors. The Government seem determined to continue with policies which are causing such devastation. They fail to ensure that employers provide mental health first-aid courses, something the NASUWT does for its members, and which have proved extremely popular. It fails to require employers to have a well-being policy for their workforce, which is clear on the support available to staff, including providing an entitlement to mental-health training, professional counselling and cognitive behaviour therapy when suffering mental health-related illness.

This Government, to their eternal shame, have created a culture across workplaces where anything goes and where any adverse effect on the mental health and well-being of workers is simply regarded as collateral damage. We cannot allow this to continue. Please support the composite.

**The President:**  Thank you, Chris. I call the ATL. Just to advise delegates, I will be taking the AEP, GMB, NUT, UCATT and NAHT.

**Shelagh Hirst** *(ATL, Association of Teachers and Lecturers)* seconded Composite 11.

She said: Congress, I am from the ATL, the education union. The current education system is toxic, toxic to the mental health and well-being of our education workforce and our students. It is caused by the crushing, unreasonable workload on staff and the farcical testing regime imposed on our students. Excessive workload, associated stress and poor work-life balance is particularly caused by the rushed implementation of education reforms by government, without any concern over the impact on the workforce or our students. This is Government ideology trumping implementation and planning. It is no wonder that there is a crisis in recruitment and retention in education, as highlighted in last week’s report by the National Foundation for Educational Research, which found that job satisfaction, workload and having adequate resources, reward and recognition, were key factors in retaining staff.

I have seen reports this week of newly-qualified teachers resigning within weeks of starting in the profession due to excessive paperwork and timetable overload, and this situation is extremely concerning. ATL’s extensive Workload survey led to our innovative and pioneering online workload trapper, available across the workforce, which identifies personal drivers of workload. This, in conjunction with ATL’s *Make 1 Change* campaign has enabled the widespread sharing of brilliant ideas to empower the profession to begin to conquer the workload mountain.

But what are the Government doing about workload? They acknowledge that there is a problem but they are not doing enough to tackle the underlying causes. ATL members are clear that testing and exams are the most significant cause of poor mental health and stress for our students, a view that is evidenced by the significant rise of children accessing help and advice from Childline because of the pressures linked to academic achievement and fear of failing. How can anyone ignore the overwhelming evidence from the NSPCC, ComRes and Mental Health Foundation report highlighting that three children in every classroom are affected, and who have also problems in accessing the services and the sport they need. Apparently, too many children are not just ill enough to be helped. Let’s be clear: the deteriorating mental health of teachers impacts the quality of education they can provide for students, which in turn impacts their mental health and wellbeing. The Government must take seriously their responsibility for the poor mental health and wellbeing of its workforce and students, and put into place a plan of action to address this situation. Please support this composite. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  Thank you. I call the AEP.

**Carole Adair** *(AEP, Association of Educational Psychologists)* spoke in support of Composite 11.

She said: President and Congress, awareness of mental health and well-being amongst children, young people and adults is increasing. It is reported that one-in-10 children and young people will develop mental health problems, creating difficulties in schools both for them and for their teachers. The Mental Health Foundation says that 70% of those children and young people do not get help at an early stage. Why? Within the education system we have a group of well-qualified specialists trained to help schools in meeting the needs of a wide range of children and young people. Those specialists are called educational psychologists or EPs. But local authority educational psychology services are under too much pressure to be able to provide the support that schools need from them. Services have been cut. Schools now have to pay for services that were once free to them. Vacancies are high, morale is low.

The opportunity for EPs to provide help and advice to children and young people, to headteachers, to special educational needs co-ordinators, to governors and to parents on mental health issues is limited by their very low numbers.

Reports suggest that 69% of secondary schools have access to EPs only once or twice a month. EPs should be the first point of call for schools in supporting the development of good mental health and well-being for all their children and young people. There are an estimated 247 EP vacancies across England, which is 10% of the size of the profession. The number in training has only just been increased to 150. This drastic shortfall will not go away any time soon. There are simply not enough educational psychologists. This situation not only puts pressure on staff, pressure that itself leads to mental health and well-being issues for our members, but it also means that we are failing a generation of children and young people as we watch them struggle from the sidelines.

Congress, let’s get something done about this. Support this joint call to get Government action on this issue. Let’s see the reappointment of a Children’s Mental Health Czar. Let’s see an action plan drawn up by those who know about children, and, please, let’s train more educational psychologists to go and work in schools. Thank you.

**Michael Husbands** *(GMB)* spoke in support of Composite 11.

He said: Congress, as a large general union, the GMB understands well the huge burden of poor work-related mental health issues. We support campaigns in education, NHS and local authorities. Our members know only too well that our public services are creaking under the strain of austerity and that they are expected to do more work with less resources for less money. It is no coincidence that mental health issues have exploded as a result, and that in many cases presenteeism is causing just as much as sickness absence. We know that the total cost of mental health failings in the UK is £105 billion each year, much of which is lost to the public sector. By reducing this level of ill health by properly managing mental health issues will remove the need for austerity at a stroke. The GMB campaign around health, safety and mental health issues, in our view, shows that there is a strong need for employers to realise that they Health and Safety at Work Act applies just as much to mental health as it does to physical health. *(Applause)*  Employers have a strong duty of care to all those who work for them to manage risks regarding mental health conditions caused by work.

We believe that the HSE’s stress management standards should form the basis of a set of formal regulations on managing occupational mental health. The voluntary standards have not been widely adopted, and there is a need for guidelines that employers can clearly understand and should follow. There should be a pro-active approach to the issue. This is about prevention, not about attempts to cure after the fact.

Finally, the composite motion, rightly, identifies occupational health support as critical to giving workers the support they need, but we must be clear that it is not enough simply to provide occupational health support. It must be specific health support delivered by a competent provider. Too many employers, in both the public and private sectors, believe that simply ticking the box by having an occupation health provider is enough. We must ensure that the service provided is fit for purpose, and we can only do that by being consulted and involved in the appointment process.

Colleagues, mental health is the health epidemic of the 21st century. The TUC and all unions have highlighted the issue to tackle poor practice, but now is the time for a cohesive, collective campaign to demand the reforms that our members desperately need. Please support. *(Applause)*

**Jenny Jones** *(NUT, National Union of Teachers)* spoke in support of Composite 11.

She said: Congress, I am a proud primary school teacher. I would like you to imagine a six-year old sobbing in a classroom, my classroom. She is crying so hard she can hardly breathe. Why? Because she knows she wrote the wrong name on a shape in her maths SATS paper. It took us the whole of playtime to stop her crying and saying she felt worthless. Now imagine the 11-year old who is staring into space because he can’t answer the third question in his reading comprehension SATS paper. He is frozen in panic. Now imagine the 15-year old girl who is so desperate to get perfect results, to be perfect in her GCSEs, that she is washing her entire body, including her genitals, in household bleach. Unfortunately, these are not imaginary, but real, shared events. These are real children and this is a real shame.

Please also imagine and think of their teachers, who have run themselves into the ground in trying to prepare their classes for this damaging and abusive test system that is not fit for any purpose. I am a Year 2 teacher, and I consider myself a strong teacher, but by teaching Year 2 last year made me physically ill and mentally weak. I spent far too much time hiding in my cupboard as I tried to hide my stress levels from my class and my colleagues. I have taught Year 2 for 13 years, and I have never been so disgusted and negative about what and how I am expected to teach. I try to make learning fun — it’s a great job — and your children actually make teaching fun. They help me to forget. But I don’t know for how long I can continue to work and battle at this level. My struggle is your children’s struggle. It doesn’t have to be this way.

Professional, qualified and dedicated teachers have your children’s education interest and future at heart. But the test-driven educational regime we are forced to take part in does not have anyone’s interest at heart except for a Government which is obsessed with labelling and failing. Please support this composite, which highlights the lack of care this Government have for the mental health of all children, young people and their educators. Your children are more than a score. They are our future. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  I call UCATT.

**James Moran** *(UCATT, Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians)* spoke in support of Composite 11.

He said: Congress, I am a first-time speaker at Congress. *(Applause)*  UCATT recently did a health and well-being survey among our members. The results were really concerning about the level of mental health problems in construction. Two-thirds said they suffered from stress and a huge 76% said that they had, at some point, suffered stress at work. One-in-three have taken time off work due to stress, but hardly any of them had told the union about it. This is something we must change. To that we need to educate safety reps so that they can be helpful to the workers suffering in silence. The shocking fact of our survey was that over half the workers said that their employer had no interest in mental health. Again, we need to change that. The biggest issue for our members is depression and anxiety.

Talking to someone can be a healing process, but it is also apparent to workers that they are isolated. UCATT found that one-in five workers had no one who they could speak to outside of their partners. During periods of redundancy and unemployment, there is a related link to mental health issues. So we need to act by engaging in our safety committees with mental health on the agenda at meetings, improving occupational health services, with more awareness rising around mental health and making sure that members can turn to the union in time of crisis. Congress, please support and help end the stigma of mental health in our workplaces. Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The President:** Thank you. I now call the National Association of Head Teachers.

**Tony Draper** *(NAHT, National Association of Head Teachers)* spoke in support of Composite Motion 11.

He said: Congress, mental health problems in both children and staff are becoming increasingly prevalent and for a number of reasons — the current assessment and testing regime, body image, peer-group issues and what I see frequently in my school issues arising out of poverty. What is clear is that poor mental health is a barrier to learning. A child suffering from mental health issues cannot fully engage with their learning. These children need a champion who will highlight their needs on a national stage. That they had one who was engaged by the Government but was then cut off when she proved unafraid to highlight the truth speaks volumes about their true commitment to vulnerable children needing support for issues that the Government have created yet don’t understand.

Congress, children with mental health issues need respect and access to the support that will enable them to work through their difficulties and to re-engage with their learning. Achieving this needs not only a structure plan but also investment. Sadly, it would appear that our Government only want to invest in schemes that will further exacerbate the problems as children are forced to further fear failure with the re-introduction of selective grammar schools.

School leaders struggle to find and access the timely support that often prevents the issues from blowing up into a full-blown crisis, with the accompanying heart-wrenching spectre of exclusion and even hospitalisation. It is clear to us that there must be investment in training new educational psychologists, but additionally we would like to see investment that allows a counsellor to be available to every school. Early interventions delivered by well-trained school staff would prevent some of the issues that cost excessively in finance, health and well-being later on.

Policies and systems that damage children’s and staffs’ mental health and create barriers to learning means that the Government prevent themselves from achieving their own aims of raising standards in schools. It just cannot happen.

Congress, children are more than a statistic. Let us ensure that the Government understand that and invest in our vulnerable children to enable them to access the support to enable them to overcome the issues that life has thrown at them. Please support the motion.

**The President:** We will now move to the vote on Composite 11. Will all those in favour, please show? All those against? Thank you. That is carried.

* *Composite 11 was CARRIED.*

**The President:**  I think it was a bit ambitious in thinking that we could take Motion 43. We will take that tomorrow.

**Results of the ballot for the General Council and the General Purposes Committee**

**The President:** We now have the results of the ballot for the General Council. Delegates, I invite David Baxter, the Chair of the Scrutineers, to give the results of the ballot for the General Council and the GPC. Welcome, David.

**David Baxter** *(EIS)***:** President and delegates, I present the Scrutineers Report. Will delegates, please, turn to the back of your Agenda, and I will give you the results of the ballot for the General Council’s Section C.

The members nominated for Sections A, B, D, E, F, G, H, I and J, and the General Purposes Committee are as printed in the Agenda.

For Section C:

Ged Nichols, Accord, 242,000.

Brian Linn, Aegis, 56,000.

Simon Weller, Association Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, 271,000. Dave Penman, FDA, 205,000.

Eddie Saville, Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, 217,000.

Ian Lawrence, NAPO, 116,000.

Mark Dickinson, Nautilus International, 260,000.

Nick Cusack, PFA, 250,000.

Manuel Cortes, Transport Salaried Staffs Association, 243,000.

Those elected are Ged Nichols, Simon Weller, Dave Penman, Eddie Saville, Mark Dickinson, Nick Cusack and Manuel Cortes. *(Applause)*

**The President:**  That concludes our afternoon’s business. The various meetings that are taking place are all in your Congress Guide. We are now adjourned till 9.30 tomorrow morning. Thank you.

*Congress adjourned.*