

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020 MOTIONS

Motion 1: The Need for a Scottish Human Rights Act

The UK Government has declared its intention to remove basic human rights from the working people of Scotland and the UK who were born out with the UK. The new legislation and the proposed online registration and documentation system would require people to place themselves and their families on an online registration system. Every time these people want to change their workplace, or move to a new home they have a duty to update the online register. Employers and housing providers in turn are required to check the online register to see if the person born out with Scotland and the UK is correctly registered. There are discussions to extend the online register to determine who is and isn't eligible for free NHS care.

The right of people from the EU resident in the UK to vote was suspended following the Brexit referendum result.

Around 3.5 million people from Europe and an unknown number of people from elsewhere in the world who are residents of Scotland and the UK are affected by this legislation.

This new legislation threatens and diminishes the lives of UNISON members, colleagues, friends, and relatives who have invested their lives in this country raising families and contributing significantly to our communities.

The new legislation is divisive and creates a situation where people become non citizens with limited rights and a duty to regularly inform the state of where they work and live.

This legislation sets a dangerous precedent.

Who will be next to be required to register themselves and their families on the online register?

Welcome to the online surveillance state.

You and I as UNISON members need to support our UNISON member colleagues, friends, and relatives who although born outside Scotland have invested their lives in this country and protest against this unfair and dangerous legislation.

Scotland needs a Human Rights Act to safeguard the rights, duties and freedom of its people to participate in a fair and democratic society.

I hope this AGM will welcome and support UNISON's campaigns at a Scottish and UK level against the new legislation and agree to request the following.

A Scottish Human Rights Act to include the following

1. The right to apply for and be granted citizenship.
2. The automatic right to citizenship for children born in this country.
3. The right of all people who live, work and study in this country to free NHS care at the point of delivery.
4. No online registration and monitoring of ordinary working people.

Proposed by: Branch Committee

Motion 2: Campaign for a Scottish Climate Change Emergency Act

Reality bites!

Climate change now impacts upon our lives now not as previously thought just our grand children and the people at the end of the century. The Climate Change Act (Scotland) is no longer fit for purpose in the rapidly worsening climate change emergency that affects Scotland and the world.

Here in Scotland people face working in summer temperatures over 30C in work clothes, vehicles and buildings not suited to hot summers like we had in 2018. NHS England and Wales have issued a report that links the deaths of 900 people in care homes and hospitals to the hottest days in the summer of 2019. The 2019 Weather “bombs” wash away bridges and roads as happened here in Aberdeenshire in 2016 and 2019. Under current funding guidance only 50% of the repair costs incurred are covered by government grants the remaining monies have to come from Council reserves.

Scotland and the UK need Climate Emergency Acts to provide the legal, regulatory and funding structures needed to deliver a climate emergency resilient zero carbon Scotland and UK by 2035. This is the date advised by the UN Climate Change Panel scientists.

I hope that you agree that UNISON Scotland needs to join with other partners across the trade union movement and civil society including the Scottish Youth for Climate Change Strikers and Extinction Rebellion to campaign for a Climate Change Emergency Act.

Without action now the Climate Emergency will create greater disruption to public services, leading to the marginalisation of people and communities in Scotland and the British Isles just as it does in the rest of the world.

The Climate Change Emergency Act would be an opportunity to provide a strategic framework for investment in 21st century climate change emergency resilient public sector linked into changing lifestyles to deliver a fairer and more equal society. The Act could also be used to empower local government and the proposed Citizens Assemblies to deliver and scrutinise the transition to a socially, economically and environmentally just climate emergency resilient zero carbon Scotland.

The UNISON Aberdeenshire branch requests that the Scottish Council of UNISON:-

1. Engages fully with our members and their families, the STUC, the People’s Assembly, the Scottish Just Transition Commission, campaign groups, communities and people across Scotland to campaign for a Climate Emergency Act to provide the legal, regulatory and funding structures to deliver a climate emergency resilient zero carbon Scotland and UK by 2035.
2. Requests that all Scottish and UK public sector agencies respond to the Climate Emergency by producing their own statement recognising the Climate Emergency and establishing a climate change emergency resilience working group to work with internal and external partners to deliver climate emergency resilient services.
3. Requests that all Scottish and UK public sector agencies respond to the Climate Change Emergency by reviewing and risk assessing their workplace policies and procedures to support the safe delivery of public services and the provision of appropriate work facilities and equipment during adverse weather.

Proposed by: Branch Committee

Motion 3: Branch Rules

During this coming year the branch intends to carry out a review of the branch rules to ensure that the rules reflect the current organisation and modern ways of working. This review group will incorporate all sections of the branch and reflect the diverse areas in which we now organise. This review group will report their proposals to the AGM next year.

Prior to that formal review the branch are seeking the AGM approval of the inclusion of Virtual branch committees. This has been used by the branch when decisions must be made when it is impossible for the branch to formally meet, due to weather advising against travel.

This is a written meeting where comments and opinion are given via email and all responses are recorded and treated as formal minutes of the meeting. We are asking that this AGM give approval for this approach when travel is not recommended.

In addition to the above change we are seeking formal approval to allow branch activists to attend meetings via SKYPE. Aberdeenshire Council have encouraged the use of SKYPE to avoid unnecessary travel and enable staff to use their time more efficiently. The use of SKYPE has enabled branch activists from across Scotland to attend Branch Committee meetings without the very lengthy travel to and from the meetings and allows more local stewards to attend whilst minimising absence from the workplace. This has helped to maintain attendance at branch committee meetings.

We are seeking approval from this AGM to allow branch activists to attend Branch Committee meetings via SKYPE on the occasions where travel to the venue to be too lengthy or to minimise absence from the workplace.

Proposed by: Branch Committee

Motion 4: Honoraria

Aberdeenshire UNISON proposes to pay the Treasurer the sum of £1402.90. This sum is calculated based on the amount paid last year plus the pay settlement for 2019/20 at 3.0%. This is to recognise all the work carried out in their own time during the past year and we all should support. This is the only Honoraria the branch wish to pay and is less than 10% of branch income.

Proposed by: Branch Committee