

Motions for Lambeth UNISON AGM 2021

MOTION ONE

Fight the cuts

This Branch Notes:

1. After a decade of cuts, increased demand, and reduced revenue during the pandemic, local authorities face disaster.
2. Croydon is now the second council, after Northamptonshire, to invoke Section 114, indicating it will provide only statutory services.
3. The government has not funded the full cost COVID-19 related losses, as it had indicated it would.
4. Rishi Sunak has only given councils an extra £3bn – over £5bn less than the (Tory-led) Local Government Association called for as necessary to prevent further cuts, and a billion less than needed to avoid meltdown.

This Branch Believes that:

1. The government is gutting public services, driving down working-class living standards, decimating council housing and destroying meaningful local democracy.
2. Labour should start an aggressive campaign to halt and reverse this assault.
3. The costs of COVID-19 should be met by making the rich and corporations pay – not workers and communities.

This Branch Resolves to:

1. Call on the union to vocally and actively campaign and take action for:
 - increased central funding for councils to prevent further cuts and job losses, immediately pushing the government for the additional £5bn the LGA has called for;
 - a £10bn annual grant to fund the building of 100,000 council homes a year;
 - a funded payrise for all local government workers of £2000
 - a clear timetable to reverse all cuts since 2010, moving towards budgets meeting social needs.
2. Organise a meeting to discuss local campaigning to stop cuts and win restored funding. Invite trade unions, community campaigners and the local Labour Party.
3. Call on councillors to raise these demands in the council, and campaign to win them.
4. Circulate this motion widely, and make links with campaigners in other areas.

Moved by Ruth Cashman, Joint Branch Secretary

Seconded by Simon Hannah, Joint Branch Secretary

MOTION TWO

Campaign against unemployment

This AGM notes:

1. That the number of claimants for work-related Universal Credit has more than doubled since March. The ONS estimates that there are 3.4 million people actively seeking work.
2. That a large proportion of the millions of furloughed workers will not return to work after the lockdown.
3. That this will affect those who keep their jobs as bosses use mass unemployment to attack our pay, hours, workloads, and contractual conditions, as British Gas is doing with its 'fire and rehire' sacking of 10,000 employees. This branch believes:
4. When the lockdown ends, the government and bosses will attempt to claw back the billions that have been spent through austerity, and attacks on jobs.
5. That the trade unions, Labour parties, and Labour councils have a duty to provide resources, including premises, for the unemployed to self-organise in the fight for well paid jobs and decent social security.

This AGM resolves:

1. To support the call for an unemployed workers' movement.
2. To send delegates to a local committee of action to coordinate the fight against unemployment and for financial and health resources for the furloughed and unemployed. 8. To create a petition to the council calling for:
 - No local authority job cuts
 - Resources, including premises for unemployed activists
 - To campaign for the government to provide jobs for all

Moved by Simon Hannah, joint Branch Secretary

Seconded by

MOTION THREE

Oppose the victimisation of Hassina Malik!

"A motion has been submitted in good time for the AGM on the above topic, but the matters covered in the motion are now the subject of negotiation with the Council. The AGM will be updated about this as appropriate."

MOTION FOUR

All Black Lives Matter: #ENDSARS!

This Branch salutes

1. The courageous youth of Nigeria who have boldly risen up against the murderous Special Anti-Robbery Squad, SARS.

This branch notes

1. That SARS is a unit of the Nigerian police with a record of abuse, especially against young people including extrajudicial murders, extortions, kidnappings and rape.
2. That nationwide protests started on 7 October 2020 after a video of SARS officers shooting a young man sparked off one of the most powerful demonstrations ever led by young Nigerians.
3. The Nigerian government was forced to disband SARS but only changed its name to Special Weapons and Tactics.
4. As #EndSARS grew, on 20 October 2020 President Buhari's police killed 46 unarmed protesters, prompting angry protests around the world, including in the UK. Youths took to the streets, chanting: All Black Lives Matter and ENDSARS now.
5. All this is happening while the Nigerian unemployment rate stands at 27.1 per cent, 21.7 million people including 13.9 million youth, the overwhelming target of SARS/SWT, without jobs and Buhari is pushing through cuts to services.

This branch resolves:

1. To send solidarity to the protesters and support to Nigerian unions and youth organisations in their demands for justice in everyway possible.
2. To call on UNISON NEC to do likewise.
3. To invite speakers from the #EndSARS movement in the UK to a zoom meeting in support with comrades in Nigeria, UK and the rest of the world.
4. To twin our branch with a local government union branch in Lagos.

Moved by Jocelyn Cruywagen- Children social care shop steward, Lambeth UNISON Black workers convenor and International officer.

Seconded by Jeremy Drinkall, schools convenor.

MOTION FIVE

Open schools safely

This branch notes:

1. That the government's and Labour opposition's mantra "Schools must stay open" has cost many lives, especially in the second wave proven to have spread through schools in the autumn.
2. Gavin Williamson's gross incompetence and last minute u-turns have lost him the confidence of education workers, parents and students that he can provide fair education for all.
3. That the school unions, led by the NEU and UNISON, have successfully overturned Williamson's murderous policy and been vindicated for their militant stance regarding vetoing unsafe working practices time and again.

This branch believes:

1. That the COVID pandemic has not caused inequality in education but exposed it.
2. All workers have the right to refuse to work where there is "a serious and imminent" risk to their health under Section 44, Section 100 and other legislation.
3. That this is a national scandal and needs a national response from the union and Labour Party leaders.

This branch resolves:

1. To support all school members and others who exercise their right not to work in unsafe conditions or want to ballot for strike action.
2. To call on the council to suspend all disciplinaries, sickness panels and restructures until the pandemic is over, autumn at the earliest.
3. To call on the General Secretary and NEC to ballot and campaign for a national strike to prevent schools fully re-opening when it's not safe.
4. To campaign for funding for more school staff, buildings and facilities.

Moved by Jeremy Drinkall, schools convenor

Seconded by

MOTION SIX

Note: this motion is outside of UNISON policy which is to support Labour candidates in elections.

Any vote on it can only be indicative

Anti - Cuts Candidates for the May 2021 GLA elections: towards independent workers representation

1. While the fortunes of the bosses of logistics, PPE, pharmaceutical and some other companies have soared in 2020/21, capitalism as a whole has entered a devastating crisis, the price for which is being paid for by the working class and poor.
2. Labours response in the post Corbyn era to the COVID-19 crisis has been woefully inadequate in its mild criticisms and then tail ending of government policy for the sake of an illusory 'national unity'.
3. Opposition was also distinctly muted from Starmer's New Labour to the Tories' public sector pay freeze. The shadow chancellor not even arguing for an actual pay rise (and in favour of future tax hikes and public sector cuts)!
4. By contrast Jeremy Corbyn, speaking as an independent MP in the House of Commons pointed out that civil servants, for example, have lost 19% of their wages over the last decade, and he demanded a 10% pay increase for all public sector workers.
5. The Bakers' Union (BFAWU) and Communication Workers' Union (CWU) expressing concerns over the current direction of Labour and feeling "*further away from having a political voice than ever*" are consulting their members on political affiliation.
6. Disaffiliation in itself will not solve the problem of working-class political representation.
7. If instead Corbyn was to take up the suggestion of the RMT London regional council to back an anti-cuts candidate for London mayor, and to launch his own candidature, backed by a list of trade unionists, socialists, and community campaigners on an anti-cuts platform, it could have a dramatic effect in combating Starmer, inspiring and rallying all those previously enthused by Corbyn's leadership of the Labour party.
8. Even more important than Corbyn's actions as an individual, however, is the responsibility that lies with left trade union leaders inside and outside the Labour party. Those affiliated to Labour have correctly protested against Corbyn's suspension and other undemocratic measures taken by Starmer, but need to go further.
9. If the left-led unions were to seize the moment, with the support of even a handful of MPs and councillors, and to launch a conference to fight for political representation for the workers' movement, it could transform the situation. If a conference agreed even on limited steps, such as freeing trade union branches to stand or back anti-cuts candidates in May's elections, and setting up a trade union group in parliament (perhaps proposing Corbyn as its chair) - it would do more to fight back against Starmerism than any amount of pleading behind closed doors.
10. This UNISON AGM 2021:
11. Endorses the call by the RMT London regional council to back a list of trade unionists, socialists, and community campaigners on an anti-cuts platform in the London GLA and Mayoral elections 2021.
12. Calls for Jeremy Corbyn to stand in the London Mayor elections or at least openly back independent anti-cuts candidates in the May elections and Mayoral elections 2021.
13. Calls for the left Trade Unions and Trade Union branches to launch a conference to discuss and debate the fight for political representation for the workers' movement and the standing of independent, TU backed candidate on an anti-cuts/anti-austerity platform and programme in 2021

Moved by Andy Tullis – UNISON Convenor Children's Services

Seconded by

MOTION SEVEN

** According to UNISON rules motions pertaining to the Labour Party should be voted on at a Labour Link meeting*

Stop the purge of socialists in the Labour Party

This branch believes:

1. That the Labour Party is Britain's only mass working class party, supported by the unions and 500,000 individual members and therefore it is competent business for all our members to debate and deliberate on its policies and internal democracy.

This branch notes:

1. Keir Starmer's frontbench has failed to criticise the Tories' murderous covid policies except on grounds of "messaging" or the timing of inadequate measures and undermined UNISON's fight to make schools safe.
2. At the same time Labour has supported the spycops bill and overseas operations bill, while dropping good policies for a national education service and free highspeed broadband.
3. Now Starmer and unelected General Secretary David Evans have withdrawn the whip from Jeremy Corbyn and suspended 50-100 branch and CLP party leaders, while outlawing motions of protest or of no confidence in himself or Starmer.

This party resolves:

1. To call on UNISON to demand the whip is restored to Corbyn, the immediate lifting of all suspensions and the withdrawal of all restrictions on party motions.
2. To call on UNISON to suspend all payments, including subscriptions to the Labour Party and to boycott all electoral activity on their behalf until the above is achieved.
3. To call on UNISON to call for an emergency conference of the party to end the purge, to replace David Evans and to decide on action to stop the Tory onslaught on lives and livelihoods.

Moved by Jeremy Drinkall, schools convenor.

Seconded by