



PRELIMINARY AGENDA

**Fire Brigades Union
93rd Conference, Brighton
10th, 11th, 12th and 13th May 2022**



PRELIMINARY AGENDA

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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The Standing Orders by which Conference is governed
are printed in full at the back of this booklet

PAY AND CONDITIONS

1. RETAINING FEE

Conference recognises the level of commitment that is given by firefighters working the Retained Duty System (RDS) and that the retaining fee falls short of adequately compensating them for their commitment.

Therefore, Conference would like to remind the Executive Council (EC) of Resolution 7 from Annual Conference 2019, which was supported by the EC.

Resolution 7 'Retaining Fee' was carried. It instructed our negotiators "to make achieving a substantial increase in the current Grey Book retaining fee a priority".

Conference acknowledges the increased workload experienced during the last two years, but also notes that it is three years since the resolution carried. Conference instructs the EC to update Conference on the progress of Resolution 7 2019. Conference also instructs the EC to formulate a time bound strategy for actioning Resolution 7 2019. The strategy is to be formulated and communicated to the National Retained Committee by the end of September 2022.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

2. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE (ARA) FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRIVING

Conference is concerned that currently there is no provision for an ARA for blue light emergency response driving of Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) vehicles to emergency incidents. Conference notes that the FRSs rolemaps document produced by the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services in 2005, makes reference to emergency response blue light driving under the firefighter rolemap section, FF 9.1. This refers to 'Drive vehicles to incidents', but many fire services make restrictions on the number of drivers on watches or stations, due to additional training and cost. This results in limited numbers of emergency response drivers, meaning certain individuals are expected to drive on a regular basis and in some cases all the time, taking the extra risks and responsibilities that come with this role.

Emergency response driving currently does not attract a pay increase, so driver and non-driver remuneration are equivalent despite the added pressure, risk and additional responsibilities.

The risk to personal insurance should an accident occur in a service vehicle does have a financial impact on the drivers personal or family insurance, as it is a legal requirement to declare any accidents or claims regardless of whether driving a vehicle for work duties or not.

Emergency response driving is a specialist skill which requires drivers to undertake regular time-consuming training courses to maintain competency.

Emergency response drivers are responsible for confirming the roadworthiness of service vehicles at the start of their shift. They are responsible for the health and safety of the crews whilst travelling to and from incidents. In the event of a road traffic accident involving a fire service vehicle, a driver faces potential prosecution in a court of law, added risk and responsibility for no financial reward.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to negotiate with our employers a provision for an additional responsibility allowance for all FRS emergency response drivers.

NORTH WALES

3. UNDERPAYMENT OF CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PAYMENTS TO MEMBERS

Conference notes that it is three years since Conference instructed the Executive Council (EC) to discuss with the National Joint Council (NJC) the need to equalise CPD payments across the UK, to raise them to the highest rate currently paid and to make CPD core pay.

Following on from this debate in May 2019, which highlighted the fact that some Members were having their CPD reduced due to working less hours or because of maternity, it became apparent that many Retained members are simply not being paid the current correct level of CPD, as set out in the NJC CPD Scheme.

This scheme states that Part Time employees, including those employed on the Retained Duty System, will be paid on an individual pro-rata basis, subject to a minimum payment of 25% of the full-time equivalent rate.

Many Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) are paying just this minimum rate and are not calculating the payment for each individual, resulting in a significant number of our Members being underpaid.

Conference instructs the EC to support Brigade Officials in mounting an immediate challenge to this detrimental practice within the relevant FRS. This challenge should secure the correct calculation and payment of CPD going forward and should also secure payment of all monies owed through underpayment of CPD to our Members, going back to the scheme start date of 1st July 2007.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

4. FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (FRSs) IN BREACH OF THE WORKING TIME REGULATIONS (WTR)

Conference instructs the Executive Council to conduct a study into duty systems and ways of working within FRSs which breach the WTR, to be completed by Conference 2023.

This will include;

- FRSs operating duty systems without collective agreement
- FRSs operating duty systems with collective agreement whereby the brigade is not fulfilling the terms of the agreement and breaching the WTR
- FRSs who employ staff as both Wholetime and Retained as a secondary role, whereby breaches in the WTR go unmonitored. For the avoidance of doubt this does not refer to the Grey Book Day Crewed duty system.

If FRSs are found to be in breach of the WTR the Health and Safety Executive will be informed in writing by Fire Brigades Union Head Office.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

5. NON-CONTRACTUAL WORK

Conference is concerned at the increasing fragmentation of the Fire and Rescue Service especially around the disparity of the work activities currently being undertaken by Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Members. Conference notes that the Executive Council (EC) has been working on the various activities that are considered not to be part of a firefighter's role. Conference agrees that should any expansion of the role maps be agreed then this must be undertaken through the National Joint Council.

Conference notes the recent trade dispute in the West Midlands where the Fire Authority attempted to introduce non-agreed work that was not part of a firefighter's role. Conference also notes the content of the recent offer from the employers in Scotland which was rejected by FBU Members in Scotland. Conference is concerned that our employers are content with being complicit in the effects of austerity by seeking to expand the role of a firefighter into public sector areas which have been devastated by central government budget cuts.

Conference agrees that FBU Members must not be used as a solution to paper over the cracks created by austerity in other public sectors and must only be considered as an additional strand to any public sectors that are appropriate for firefighters to be involved with.

Conference instructs the EC to immediately begin the process of withdrawing from any and all non-contractual work currently being undertaken by our Members. Conference instructs the EC to work with Brigade Officials to ensure they have all the support and information needed to confidently withdraw from non-contractual work and to reject any future attempts by our employers to introduce non-contractual work until such a time that expansion of the rolemap is agreed.

WARWICKSHIRE

6. SHIFT NEGOTIATIONS (24 HOUR WORKING)

Conference notes that the 'National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service' (Grey Book) states the following in respect of shift duty systems:

'No rota system shall include continuous duty periods of twenty-four hours.'

A number of Brigades across Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) have implemented 24-hr shift patterns which have proved popular with Fire Brigades Union Members.

Conference recognises that 24-hour working can act as a favourable work pattern for Members which can offer benefits including but not limited to;

- A greater work life balance as extended periods of time can be spent away from work
- A reduction in commuting times and related travel costs
- Reduced carbon footprint effecting a more positive impact on the environment.

Conference instructs the Executive Council, via the National Joint Council to remove the restriction on working 24-hour shifts and negotiate a new set of principles, including any necessary agreements to ensure working time regulation compliance and allow for a safe, nationally agreed introduction of 24-hour shift working.

KENT

7. GREY BOOK AND 24-HOUR SHIFTS

Conference notes that 24-hour shift patterns have been adopted in Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) around the world. The shift system is also present in various forms, in more than one FRS in the UK.

Those FRSs adopting the shift domestically, currently do so without nationally negotiated and agreed protections that Grey Book terms and conditions provide.

The rising cost of housing, fuel, and over a decade of real term pay cuts, has left Fire Brigades Union Members in a position where many are forced to live long distances from their places of work, as many cannot afford to live in the regions they work in on a firefighter's or firefighter (Control) salary.

A 24-hour shift would reduce commuting costs, and provide a way to put money back in Members' pockets at a time when pay has stagnated.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to negotiate the inclusion of a 24-hour shift option, including all necessary safeguards, within the Grey Book.

ESSEX

8. CALCULATION OF CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Conference instructs the Executive Council to negotiate with the National Employers, that Continual Professional Development payments are recalculated yearly, to reflect any change in headcount.

NORTHERN IRELAND

9. CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Conference instructs the Executive Council to commence negotiations with the National Employers to ensure that Continual Professional Development payments form an integral part of core pay.

NORTHERN IRELAND

10. PAY

Conference notes the strategy on pay has been one of constant flux since 2007 and firefighters today are financially worse off in real terms.

The work undertaken to date on expanding the rolemaps has not yet yielded a positive outcome nor an increase in firefighter pay, therefore a new direction is needed to achieve this.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to devise a new pay strategy, focusing on key areas of work, including but not limited to;

- Environmental challenges including water rescue/flood response
- Working with other emergency services
- Line Rescue
- MTA/MTFA.

Conference instructs the EC to report back before Conference 2023.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

11. NATIONAL LEVELLING UP OF CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Conference notes that there is a significant disparity between rates of CPD across the UK.

The highest rate is £1,076, whilst the lowest is £320 with a whole range of rates in between. Clearly this disparity leaves most of our Members suffering from an unfair detriment through no fault of their own. After all, firefighters across the UK have the same rolemap and carry out the same tasks.

Since CPD was introduced, we have lost around 30% of Grey Book posts in the UK, leaving fire service employers with a significant saving.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to negotiate through the National Joint Council that all firefighters across the UK are levelled up to the highest CPD payment.

GREATER MANCHESTER

12. ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND THE FUTURE PAY STRATEGY

Conference applauds the ongoing efforts to secure a national pay offer, operating through a global pandemic whilst being attacked by a Tory government.

Conference is concerned that adult social care could be included as a viable expansion of the firefighter rolemap.

Whilst other areas of the pay strategy/broadening of the role fall close to the existing rolemaps, Conference believes that adult social care is a step too far, with the potential to change the role of a firefighter beyond all recognition.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to remove adult social care from any future Fire Brigades Union pay strategy.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE

13. CONTINUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

Conference notes the changing way that Members of the Fire Brigade Union (FBU) choose to work. Members may wish to use their right to request flexible or reduced hours of work for many reasons, however Conference notes that childcare arrangements or looking after other family members is normally the main reason.

Conference is concerned that even with our Members changing their working arrangements, Grey Book Policy has not kept up with this, particularly with regard to CPD. Conference agrees that there is no such thing as half a firefighter, and therefore there should be no such thing as half CPD payment. Firefighters who are deemed competent are no more or no less a firefighter based on the hours they undertake.

Conference demands that the Executive Council urgently raises at the National Joint Council the issue of reduced CPD payments to Members who are deemed competent and have chosen to work reduced hours to ensure that these Members receive the same CPD payments as their full-time colleagues.

WEST MIDLANDS

14. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE WORK

Conference notes the industrial battle Members in the West Midlands had over the attempted imposition of out-of-role work through new recruit contracts.

Conference agrees that any new work agreed by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) should be undertaken through the National Joint Council and ratified by Conference.

Conference agrees that decisions to expand the role of a firefighter into care work and patient transport is inappropriate. Social care work and patient aftercare are occupations in their own right. Conference agrees that a Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) response to slips, trips and falls and patient transport are considered inappropriate for the role of a firefighter.

Conference notes that negotiations with our employers on the expansion of the role of a firefighter are ongoing and no elements have yet been excluded by Conference.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to end negotiations on any work that may require our Members to physically intervene with members of the public in the event of a non-injury slip, trip or fall incident.

Conference further instructs the Executive Council to end negotiations on any work that may require our Members to provide post hospital patient transport.

WEST MIDLANDS

15. FIREFIGHTER CONTROL REVIEW

Conference recognises the great work, often in challenging circumstances, by our sisters and brothers in Emergency Fire Controls.

Conference calls for the Executive Council (EC) to hold an Income Data Research review into the modern role of the Emergency Firefighter Control, taking into account the upskilling and ever-expanding work within but not exclusively, the following areas;

- Knowledge and understanding
- Mental skills emotional challenge
- Initiative and independence
- Increased responsibilities for personnel
- Skills and technology.

Conference instructs the EC to produce this report and report back before Conference 2023.

BEDFORDSHIRE

16. LEVELLING UP OF MATERNITY PAY AND PROVISION

Conference notes resolution 10, 'End Pay Disparity' was remitted to the Executive Council (EC) during Conference 2019, with a view to revamping the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) policy for maternity pay and setting the standard for all Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs).

FRSs are still falling short. FRSs pride themselves on being family friendly, yet maternity pay on the whole does not reflect this. Some FRSs pay 52 weeks full pay, others the statutory minimum – if one can pay, all should pay.

Conference, therefore, instructs the EC to resume the work to revisit the maternity pay provision within the Grey Book and support our Members in bringing a gold standard for maternity pay and provision across all the FRSs.

BEDFORDSHIRE

17. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS PAID LEAVE

Conference notes that domestic violence can be physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Paid leave for domestic violence survivors should be a right for employees affected.

Conference demands the Executive Council (EC) seek discussions with the National Joint Council about the introduction of Domestic Violence Paid Survivors' Leave as a right for Fire Brigades Union Members.

The EC should report back progress made by Conference 2023.

STAFFORDSHIRE

18. SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Conference notes the pay offer made by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service which Members in Scotland firmly rejected through a consultative ballot in February 2020. Conference also notes that the offer included ‘developing interventions to co-respond to slips, trips and falls to assist other recognised agencies.’

Conference applauds the strength and unity of Members in Scotland in rejecting this proposal and congratulates the hard work of Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Officials at all levels of the Union, ensuring that Members were fully briefed on the risks associated with this type of work.

Social care work and patient aftercare are distinct, separate and highly skilled professions, therefore Conference agrees that decisions to expand the role of a firefighter into Members providing either a primary, or a co-response to a slip, trip, or a fall and any form of domiciliary care, should be decided by Conference.

Conference notes the current position regarding negotiations with our employers on the expansion of the role of a firefighter and that no elements of work have yet to be excluded by Conference.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to immediately end negotiations on any work that may require our Members to provide either a primary, or a co-response to a slip, trip or fall and any form of domiciliary care. Conference agrees that such a Fire and Rescue Service response to slips, trips and falls, and domiciliary care are considered inappropriate for the role of a firefighter, and also fails to provide an adequate response to the public.

SCOTLAND

19. CONTROL STAFF PAY

Conference recognises the work previously carried out by our Union in relation to pay parity for Emergency Fire Control staff.

As part of all future pay negotiations, Conference instructs the Executive Council to make closing the pay gap between Emergency Fire Control Staff and the equivalent operational firefighter roles, a fundamental pillar of the demands in those negotiations.

All progress regarding this matter should be reported back to Members on a regular basis.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

20. SHIFT SYSTEM INSTRUCTION DOCUMENT

Conference recognises the difficulty local Officials have in resisting attacks on existing agreed shift systems from Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) senior managers. Conference also recognises the excellent work local Officials are doing in defence of existing agreed shift systems.

Currently there are many different shift systems in use across FRSs, this leads to confusion and uncertainty when negotiating locally on proposed shift system changes.

Conference calls upon the Executive Council to produce a national instruction document containing a set of clear guidelines and principles that all local Officials must adhere to when entering negotiations with local management on proposed shift system changes. This document is to be produced before the start of the Fire Brigades Union Conference 2023.

CLEVELAND

21. ADDRESSING THE NEED FOR AN URGENT CAMPAIGN TO DELIVER AN INCREASE IN PAY IN FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES (FRSs)

Conference notes with alarm the current cost of living crisis which has followed more than a decade of government imposed public sector pay restraint.

Estimates indicate that firefighter pay has now fallen more than four thousand pounds below where current pay rates should be had pay awards matched inflationary pressures over this period. It is already clear who is going to pay the price for the current failed economic model and poor political choices with working people expected to take the hit. This was made clear by the comments of Andrew Bailey the Governor of the Bank of England, who has publicly declared that workers should show restraint in the annual wage-bargaining process over the next few years.

Conference is aware that a Fire Brigades Union (FBU) pay strategy has been discussed for more than six years yet has still failed to address this shortfall via an acceptable pay increase and a sustainable model moving forward. Conference refers to the last physical Conference back in 2019, whereby the following was agreed;

Emergency Resolution 1 – Fire service pay and the future of the fire and rescue service – moved by the Executive Council, which included

‘(4) To take every step necessary to prepare members for industrial action should negotiations with our employers prove unsuccessful. This will include regular reports to the executive council in regards to campaigning, state of readiness, balloting arrangements and related matters.’

Emergency Resolution 6 – Pay strategy – moved by Cambridgeshire, which included;

‘(5) That plans are drawn up for a major campaign of lobbying at local and national level to highlight the gross underfunding of the fire and rescue service and to make the case for investment and for significant increases in pay for Grey Book staff.

(6) That members are consulted on the need to prepare for industrial action. This includes the need to prepare for strike action as well as developing plans for a withdrawal from all non-agreed or non-contractual work currently undertaken within the service.’

The General Secretary in delivering the position of the Executive Council to the debate and motions on pay states: *“But I can give assurance, the resolution is clear. There is no shirking from that from the Executive Council. That’s why this resolution has been brought here: to begin to set out in detail those timelines.”*

Conference is well aware that three years have since passed and the pay settlement that is desperately needed in our profession is no nearer now than it was at the start of the pay strategy, that is something that all of us must take responsibility for, and something we must collectively address.

To this end Conference instructs the Executive Council to organise;

- A full political demonstration and lobbying of parliament on Pay in the FRS to take place within 6 months of the close of Conference 2022
- Following the demonstration and lobbying of parliament above, a full consultative ballot on taking industrial action up to and including strike action will be conducted and the results kept confidential to the Executive council with a view to assess whether an industrial campaign and ballot can commence or whether work in specific areas or regions needs to be carried out in order to deliver a successful industrial ballot.

CHESHIRE

22. WORK OUTSIDE OF ROLEMAPS

Conference is concerned that the momentum gained around the broadening of firefighter rolemaps has slowed due to unprecedented circumstances.

Prior to the Covid pandemic Members were already undertaking activities outside of their rolemaps. During the Covid pandemic this has been exacerbated, Members have been put under pressure to collaborate with other partner agencies. Firefighters have been called to assist the police and ambulance service to undertake work outside of our agreed rolemaps, but on a voluntary basis.

As a result, the lines are becoming increasingly blurred as to what is in our rolemaps. Members are seeing a rise in assistance calls, which are often not of an emergency nature. On too many occasions other agencies are not on scene at the time of our arrival, leaving firefighters exposed to deal with incidents which they are not adequately trained for and equipped to deal with. Conference strongly believes that these types of incidents, along with many others currently being performed by firefighters across the country fall outside the rolemap.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to reinvigorate the negotiations with the Fire Service employers to seek a resolution in relation to pay and broadening of the role. If the employers respond negatively, the Union shall ballot Members to withdraw from all non-contractual, non National Joint Council rolemap work activity until a resolution is reached.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

PENSIONS

23. PENSIONS

Conference notes the work carried out by past and present National Officers that helped secure the legal victory on pension discrimination.

Conference further notes the work carried out by National Officers in securing an agreement with the Local Government Association (LGA) in October 2021, by terms of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

In respect of the MoU, Conference notes a number of Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs), and Fire Authorities (FAs), are refusing or delaying in signing up to the MoU thus restricting our Members accessing the pension that they are entitled to.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to instigate legal proceedings against any FRSs and FAs refusing to sign up to the MoU, with immediate effect, and proceed all cases through the courts until final conclusion.

HERTFORDSHIRE

OPERATIONS, HEALTH AND SAFETY

24. INADEQUATE AND DANGEROUS CREWING LEVELS

The NRC have consistently voiced concerns regarding the dangerous practice of deploying fire appliances to incidents with insufficient crew. Pumps being sent out with less than five riders, and often with just three riders, is becoming commonplace. Added to this, the practice of dual role of the driver and OIC or the driver and BA Team Leader, have also increased alarmingly as our employers continue to neglect the recruitment and retention required to maintain Retained staffing levels on stations.

Conference is aware of the critical shortages in Retained cover across Fire and Rescue Services. The solution to this will not be achieved by the removal of safety critical crewing levels. This practice puts our Members' lives at risk and the lives of the public we serve. The only solution to the shortage of available crews on Retained stations and appliances is for our employers to recognise that investment is required.

The Fire Brigades Union has been at the forefront of the health and safety agenda and has been the only Union to successfully campaign for our Retained Members.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to compile information from all Brigade Secretaries, which will provide an up-to-date picture of how widespread these practices are. The Executive Council will then formulate a national strategy aimed at reversing this safety critical trend. This strategy will be published by the end of 2022.

NATIONAL RETAINED COMMITTEE

25. HAZARDS TO FIREFIGHTERS HEALTH FROM EXPOSURE TO PERFLUOROALKYL AND POLYFLUOROALKYL SUBSTANCES (PFAS) AND PERFLUOROCTANOIC ACID (PFOA) CHEMICALS

Conference commends the work and action carried out under the DECON campaign.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to expand this campaign to include action based on the research studies and reports that have been carried out internationally on PFAS and PFOAs that have been proven to be hazardous to health.

WEST YORKSHIRE

26. DECON

Conference commends the progressive work undertaken by Professor Anna Stec, the University of Central Lancashire and the Fire Brigades Union to identify and mitigate firefighter exposure to cancer causing carcinogens.

Conference also acknowledges the absence of decontamination within National Operational Guidance (NOG).

This lack of inclusion falls short of protecting firefighters from exposure by not recognising it formally within national guidance documents.

NOG must include DECON principles to effect positive and necessary cultural change on the fireground enabling all firefighters to decontaminate and remove carcinogens effectively throughout the process of an incident.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to ensure that the principles of DECON, where relevant, are integrated into NOG at a national level.

OXFORDSHIRE

27. FIVE ON A FIRE ENGINE

Conference reaffirms its strongly held position that a fire engine should be crewed by a minimum of five firefighters (supervisory officer and four FF's).

Conference recognises the dangerous delays in the time it takes for firefighters to carry out rescues as a crew of four and that in some circumstances firefighters, in a crew of four, will have to wait for back up before committing fire crews into a burning building.

Conference notes that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic many brigade managers and Chief Fire Officers, all too easily, took the lazy, unsafe option of dropping fire engines to four when faced with crewing pressures in services already cut to the bone by 10 years of Tory led austerity.

Conference condemns this dangerous practice that is becoming all too common place. The public we serve deserve better. Our communities deserve a fully crewed fire engine of five firefighters, ready to safely effect rescues and extinguish property fires. Our Members deserve the safety of five firefighters on a fire engine.

Conference calls out the inactivity and dereliction of duty by so called 'public good' organisations, such as the NFCC and the Fire Standards Board, in this area.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to pursue a national standard of a minimum of five firefighters on a fire engine.

SOUTH WALES

28. COORDINATED ATTACKS ON FIREFIGHTERS SAFETY

Conference notes a coordinated increase in attempts to dangerously degrade safe working practices, policies and procedures that have been developed over decades to protect firefighter safety.

These attempts, commonly attempted through National Operational Guidance documents, compromise safety measures in order to address avoidable issues such as the building safety crisis, often prioritising private industrial profiteering before the welfare of our Members.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to utilise all avenues, resources and opportunities to resist any and all attempts to degrade the safe working practices we have collectively strived to develop and implement.

An attack on one is an attack on all therefore all Fire Brigades Union committees must unify to oppose these attacks.

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

29. OPPOSING THREE PERSON CREWING

Conference notes with dismay the complete disregard the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) shows towards firefighter safety in their pursuit of financial savings, as evidenced by the NFCC 'Working Patterns Project' which appears to be a bragging rights demonstration into how best to carve up safe systems of work.

Conference is also aware of the push towards three person crewing, small incident units, rapid response units or other such terms.

This highly dangerous response is putting firefighter and public safety at risk and must be opposed at all costs.

At Conference 2019 Resolution 40 'Critical Attendance Standards (CAST) Scenarios' was carried, it called for a review of the CAST scenarios along with the intervention windows and task analysis, to be shared by 2020. This doesn't appear to have been done.

Conference is aware that this practice of riding three is occurring whilst no employer risk assessment or task analysis has been completed.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Assign the relevant National Officer to work to advise a brigade committee where three person crewing is being undertaken or is proposed
- Commit to explore legal action under health and safety failures in any Fire and Rescue Service where three person crewing is being undertaken or is proposed
- Publicly shame the NFCC for putting firefighters and the public at risk and prepare campaigning materials for any brigade or region where maverick Chief Officers are advocating such a response model.

CUMBRIA

30. NATIONAL STANDARDS OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Conference instructs the Executive Council to raise with the National Employers Conference's concerns about the varying standards of Occupational Health services throughout Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) across the UK.

The employers have a duty of care to all Members and should ensure suitable and sufficient provisions within this area, resulting in an improvement in our Members health and wellbeing with a consistent approach across all FRSs.

LINCOLNSHIRE

31. RESEARCH INTO SUITABILITY OF BREATHING APPARATUS (BA) COMMUNICATIONS

Various resolutions surrounding standards of fireground radios has been discussed over recent years, notably a resolution from Scotland as amended by Shropshire at Conference 2017.

Research by Officials in Lincolnshire has highlighted serious concerns around the suitability of communication equipment used with BA, to a point where the manufacturers of BA communication equipment will only guarantee their products to a temperature of only 60 degrees Celsius.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to continue the research into this area to ensure these vital pieces of equipment are fit for purpose within the hot fire environment and report their findings back prior to Conference 2023.

LINCOLNSHIRE

32. FIREFIGHTERS EFFLUENT EXPOSURES

Conference notes the outstanding work completed by the University of Central Lancashire and Professor Anna Stec in the area of helping protect our Members against the long-term health effects of repeated exposures to toxic fire effluents.

In line with the recommendations made in the interim best practice report for 'Minimising firefighters' exposure to toxic fire effluents', Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to continue to work towards bringing all of the recommendations made in this report into practice across the UK.

Conference instructs the EC to progress the following recommendations as soon as possible;

- To work towards cancer and other illnesses being recognised as occupational hazards within Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs)
- To work towards all FRSs being required to monitor toxic fire effluent exposures across all of their staff
- To work towards a national policy of enhanced cancer screening for all operational personnel within FRSs once they have served a set number of years or, where suitable monitoring exists, where they have been recorded as having a set number of toxic fire effluent exposures.

BERKSHIRE

33. HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S)

Conference applauds the work carried out by H&S reps across the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) during the Covid-19 pandemic. The work carried out was vital in keeping our Members safe at work whilst still completing more regular H&S duties.

Conference agrees that H&S work carried out by FBU Officials is vital and a highly important part of the objectives of the FBU.

Conference demands that the Executive Council write to all Fire and Rescue Services to lay out H&S expectations and the rights of the FBU afforded to our Members and representatives under H&S law.

Conference agrees that any FRSs who ignore H&S rights or mistreat FBU H&S Reps will be robustly challenged by the FBU using all means available including industrial and/or legal action.

SHROPSHIRE

34. DECON – FIRE STATION BUILDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Conference commends the progressive work undertaken by Professor Anna Stec, the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and the Fire Brigades Union to identify and mitigate firefighter exposure to cancer causing carcinogens.

Conference also acknowledges that many of the 11 steps promoted by the UCLan interim best practice document can be undermined by outdated fire station building designs that fall short of protecting firefighters from exposure.

Conference also recognises that many stations fall short of providing facilities that enable firefighters to decontaminate and remove carcinogens effectively post incident.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to ensure that every Fire and Rescue Service embeds the principle of Decon in all future fire station designs. That retrospective work is undertaken where current building stock is unlikely to be replaced and to ensure, where identified, that any shortfalls that undermine Decon and the mitigation of exposure are addressed.

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

35. SUPPORT FOR FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU) BRIGADE AND REGIONAL OFFICIALS

Conference notes that approximately one in four people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year, with one in six in the UK reporting experiencing a common mental health problem such as anxiety or depression in any given week. It is also well-established that poor mental health can often lead to physical ailments which only serve to compound existing problems.

Conference is aware of the stresses placed upon Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Officials of all levels in the pursuance of their daily duties, and understands that more often than not those engaged in helping others may be the most in need of help themselves.

The stresses placed on FBU Officials are at times disproportionate to the levels of support and training that is provided, and it is not surprising so many struggle to gain purchase in the face of ever increasing workloads. For the FBU to continue to function we must address the issues of health and wellbeing of Officials, the expectation placed upon Officials and the level of training provided to carry out the myriad of tasks required.

In addressing these issues Conference instructs the Executive Council to devise and conduct a simple survey of Brigade and Regional Officials to ascertain what support they require and how they feel that support should be delivered. Conference further instructs that this work is completed within the next 12 months, that a report of the findings is compiled and that regional meetings are then convened to discuss implementation.

MERSEYSIDE

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY

36. NATIONAL FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL GUIDANCE AND THE LACK OF FIRE BRIGADES UNION NATIONAL DIRECTION FOR BRIGADE OFFICIALS.

The National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) and Fire and Rescue Service Brigade Managers are acting collectively through National Operational Guidance (NOG) and other associated guidance. The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) must also act collectively when challenging NFCC policy.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Respond to all correspondence received regarding NOG and other associated guidance from the NFCC
- Review NFCC guidance and where appropriate issue its own national collective guidance for Brigade Secretaries
- Issue monthly Brigade Secretaries Circulars, advising of any FBU national collective guidance on NFCC publications
- Conduct virtual meetings to discuss NFCC publications and potential FBU national collective guidance. All Brigade Officials will be invited and these meetings will be chaired by an FBU National Officer with the aim of allowing Brigade Officials influence over the FBU response to NFCC guidance. Meetings will be at least every quarter or more frequently where necessary.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

37. NATIONAL APPLIANCE AVAILABILITY STANDARDS

In the past Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) were required to meet standards for response times, known as standards of fire cover and these were subsequently abolished. In recent years FRSs throughout the country have seen a steady decrease in appliance availability, particularly in rural areas who are largely reliant on on-call RDS staff. This has undoubtedly resulted in potentially preventable fire deaths and firefighters being put at higher risk.

This resolution would seek to stop this and introduce accountability at the highest level to what Conference believes to be our most important job, that of keeping our firefighters and communities safe by providing an adequate emergency response when needed.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to investigate the introduction of a nationally agreed formal appliance availability measuring and recording mechanism. This will allow FRSs to Benchmark their performance, with a formal record of this. Measuring performance will enable FRSs to plan for improvement and measure the success (or otherwise) of their emergency response and availability strategy.

Conference instructs the EC to develop this mechanism through negotiation with our employers.

NORTH WALES

38. MATERNITY POLICIES

Conference demands the Executive Council (EC) coordinate a campaign for national standardisation on maternity policies across all Fire and Rescue Services for the purpose of equality for all our female Members.

Due to the differences in maternity policies across the country Conference believes that there needs to be a strong national campaign of solidarity to ensure equal terms and conditions amongst our female Members. This campaign will include the EC negotiating with the National Joint Council to raise the minimum standards.

CUMBRIA

39. NATIONAL FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL (NFCC) DIRECT ENTRY

Conference notes with concern the NFCC programme for 'Direct Entry' applicants into the role of Station Manager and Area Manager.

Conference acknowledges that one of the aims of this programme is to improve the diversity of Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in the UK and in isolation this is indeed an admirable goal.

However, firefighting is a dangerous profession that is only made more so by placing managers in operational supervisory positions with little to no experience of actual incidents.

Conference does not believe that this will have a positive effect on the diversity, culture, or the operational capabilities of FRSs.

Conference, therefore, instructs the Executive Council to conduct research of our own, into redressing current barriers for promotion for firefighters from the equality sections within FRSs and publicly oppose the NFCC Direct Entry programme with the Home Office, National Joint Council, NFCC, Local Government Association and other appropriate bodies.

ESSEX

40. REDEPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Conference notes that an ever-increasing ageing workforce highlights the need for redeployment opportunities for Members who find themselves unfit for work through no fault of their own and outside of ill-health retirement processes.

Conference, therefore, calls on the Executive Council to engage with the Employers to ensure redeployment opportunities are maintained, rather than lost as is currently happening.

DORSET & WILTSHIRE

41. TRAINEE FIREFIGHTER FITNESS AND JOB-RELATED TESTS

Conference notes that nationally many Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) are now undertaking different methods for testing the physical attributes of potential firefighters during the recruitment process. Many FRSs still undertake all of the testing commonly referred to as the 'Job Related Tests', others undertake some elements of this practice. This could be seen as a lowering of recruitment standards, a lowering which could put trainee firefighters and their colleagues at unnecessary risk of accident or injury.

Conference agrees that extensive positive action work should be undertaken to encourage under-represented groups to apply to FRSs, however, the lowering or removal of physical standards as a means of addressing a lack of diversity is a risk to both firefighters and the public.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to work with the relevant Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Sections, as well as initiate any required research, to identify the most appropriate physical testing at the recruitment stage for the role of a firefighter, what the required standard should be, and the method(s) of testing that should be undertaken to achieve this.

This work should be completed and reported to the next full Conference, through the structures of the FBU if it can be done before then, or if this is not achievable then a full update via the structures of the FBU should be provided before Conference 2023.

DERBYSHIRE

GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION

42. ABOLISH THE HOUSE OF LORDS

Conference notes that the current Parliamentary system does not work in the best interests of Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Members. The House of Lords is an important part of the legislative process which has seen legislation passed that negatively impacts on FBU Members.

Conference notes that the House of Lords is made up of unelected Peers.

Conference is opposed to having a chamber that is part of our democracy and law-making processes that involves unelected representatives.

Conference agrees that the House of Lords should be abolished and replaced with a smaller and democratically elected second chamber.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to campaign for the abolition of the House of Lords and argue for a democratically elected second chamber.

WEST MIDLANDS

43. RECOGNITION OF THE ROLE OF EMERGENCY FIRE CONTROL STAFF

Conference recognises that Emergency Fire Control Staff (firefighters' control) are a vital part of Fire & Rescue Services frontline response.

Conference is appalled that the United Kingdom Government Home Office do not share the same view, something which was clearly demonstrated by the omission of Emergency Fire Control Staff from the eligibility criteria for receipt of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal.

Conference calls for the Executive Council to take immediate action to ensure that the role of Emergency Fire Control Staff is acknowledged as 'Frontline' by Government and Employers.

Progress regarding this work should be reported back no later than Conference 2023.

CONTROL STAFF NATIONAL COMMITTEE

44. FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU) OPPOSITION TO THE POLICE, CRIME, SENTENCING AND COURTS BILL

Conference notes the arbitrary and vague nature of the Policing Bill's restrictions on 'noisy' and 'annoying' protests and its provision to limit protest if it is 'disruptive'. Conference also notes the fact that the Bill could lead to fines on protest organisers.

Most alarming is the fact that the Bill threatens freedom to protest and potentially to picket. This could present clear legal restrictions to workers and FBU Members exercising their right to organise and protest.

Conference is clear that the right to protest, noisily or otherwise, is essential in a democratic society and that the Policing Bill is a conscious effort to undermine this right and criminalise opposition.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC);

- To join the call for the revocation of the Bill (to Kill the Bill)
- To support, and affiliate to any organisations where it is in the Unions interests, subject to the discretion of the EC, and make provisions for regions to support protests against the Bill
- To encourage FBU Members to become involved in demonstrations against the Bill.

CHESHIRE

45. BUILDING RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENT – PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

The Grenfell Tower disaster has exposed multiple failings in the building safety regime in the UK, including in the development, testing and certification of materials for the construction industry. The privatisation of the Building Research Establishment (BRE) has been exposed as a disastrous decision, opening the testing regime to commercial pressures and commercial interests.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to lobby for the BRE to be returned to full public ownership. This shall ensure greater accountability, including a clear obligation to act in the public interest and without pressure from business and commercial interest. Oversight of this restored public testing and research facility should be by a board, representative of tenants and residents, local and national government, trade unions representing workers in Fire and Rescue Services, the construction industry and local government.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

TRADE UNION AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

46. SUPPORT FOR THE NHS

Conference knows all too well the pressures put on public services, none more so than our NHS. Following years of purposeful and malicious underfunding and degradation, conditions for the Doctors and Nurses (who pulled our country through this pandemic) are at an all-time low, leaving some workers with no choice but to leave the profession they love. This Government continues to lurch further and further to the right and, in doing so, continues to force privatisation on our NHS.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to actively and unwaveringly stand with the NHS and their associated Unions and reaffirm the Fire Brigades Union support by strengthening our ties, nationally and locally, in the spirit of Solidarity: An injury to one, is an injury to all.

HUMBERSIDE

47. RIGHT TO FOOD CAMPAIGN

Conference notes that the UK is experiencing a crisis of food poverty born out of the political choices and systemic failings created over the past four decades, which have now reached a tipping point for so many in our communities. This is a scandal in one of the richest nations in the world and highlights the inequality of the UK in 2022.

The Right to food campaign led by Ian Byrne MP and Fans Supporting Foodbanks aims to make access to food a legal right for all, to have 'Right to Food' enshrined into legislation in Parliament and to end the scandal of hunger and foodbanks once and for all.

Conference notes the use of food banks was increasing before the pandemic and has risen dramatically during the pandemic. It is likely that the situation will get worse.

The Trussell Trust Foodbank data collected between April and September 2021 shows that the need for emergency food remains well above pre-pandemic levels. The number of food parcels for children has increased at double the rate for adults, compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Conference, enshrining a 'Right to Food' into law would confirm Government obligations on food poverty and introduce avenues to hold Government bodies accountable for violations.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Join and support the 'Right to Food' campaign, which aims to put the human 'Right to Food' for all onto a legislative footing in Parliament
- Add the Fire Brigades Union as a signatory to the 'Right to Food' Campaign Pledge
- Actively support Ian Byrne MP and Fans Supporting Foodbanks in this campaign across the UK.

OXFORDSHIRE

48. DEFEND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Conference notes the Conservative Party manifesto of 2019 contained plans to legislate for minimum train services during periods of industrial action.

Conference agrees that this can only be seen as an attack on train workers right to strike.

Conference condemns any attack on any workers right to strike and Conference agrees to support our brothers and sisters in the railway industry with defending themselves against this potential authoritarian attack.

Conference agrees that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) is likely to face similar threats on our profession and our right to strike in the coming months and years. Conference therefore agrees that the FBU should be prepared and poised to take this fight on immediately should it materialise.

Conference agrees that should our right to strike be threatened, the FBU will consider all options available to defend ourselves against such an attack, including industrial action.

WARWICKSHIRE

49. SOLIDARITY ACROSS BORDERS

Conference is appalled by the treatment and conditions that refugees suffer and are subjected to whilst taking refuge in the camps of Calais. Conference agrees that refugees deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and opposes the populist and xenophobic attitudes directed at refugees by the far right and Conservative Party.

Conference recognises the very many reasons why those fleeing war, persecution and the increasing effects of climate change would want to seek asylum and refuge in the United Kingdom. Many refugees have family in the United Kingdom, speak English and have been unable to settle elsewhere due to persecution and hostility. All they seek is an opportunity to live and thrive in safety. Conference resoundingly rejects the false narrative that refugees are risking their lives in order to reach the United Kingdom to access free welfare and housing provisions without any desire to contribute to society and the economy.

Conference applauds the solidarity visits by the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) to the refugee camps in Calais. It is right that our Union's solidarity does not recognise borders and our solidarity is not confined to our profession. Conference condemns the small minded and bigoted attacks on this initiative and utterly condemns any cowardly anonymous attacks.

Conference also recognises the important educational aspect of these visits. Listening to the refugees personal stories and understanding their circumstances is crucial in tackling the false and divisive rhetoric that is pushed by the right-wing media and those who are ignorant to their plight.

Conference instructs the Executive Council that the FBU solidarity visits to the refugee camps in Calais are vitally important, justified and must continue. Conference agrees that these visits should expand when possible and may involve solidarity visits across any other borders where our solidarity is needed.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER

50. DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF BANKING & FINANCE

Conference condemns the 'business as usual' approach the banking and finance sector has taken post the 2008 crash, the UK still has a substandard banking system and there are numerous concerns around the lacklustre regulation and measures that have been introduced in the past decade.

Conference applauds the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) 2012 pamphlet on public ownership of the banking and finance sector in the UK, as a contribution to the debate after 'The Great Recession.'

Conference reaffirms the FBU motion that was successfully moved and passed at the Trades Union Congress 2012. It helped facilitate debate and discussion on the issue across the labour movement and build opposition to the Tory-led coalition government.

Conference believes that the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that the levers of the state are required and most effective at responding to crises. Regulation alone is not the antidote to a dysfunctional and corrupt banking and finance system, there must be full democratic ownership.

Conference believes the salience of the case to tackle the existential threat of climate change signals the need to reignite the discourse on public ownership of banking and finance.

Conference supports the demand for public ownership to extend to banking and finance like other privatised sectors including energy, water, mail, broadband and transport.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to commission research that will make a renewed case for full public ownership of the banking and finance sector and the creation of a publicly owned banking service, democratically and accountably managed in the UK.

SOUTH WALES

51. END THE BLOCKADE – 60 YEARS TOO LONG

International trade union solidarity has a proud history of supporting comrades in need and saving countless lives.

This year marks 60 years of the US led inhumane economic blockade of the Republic of Cuba.

The impact of the blockade on the lives of Cubans has been brutal. In 1997 the American Association for World Health reported that it had “dramatically harmed the health and nutrition of large numbers of ordinary Cuban citizens” and “caused a significant rise in suffering - and even deaths - in Cuba” through “critical shortages of even the most basic medicines and medical hardware.”

This Conference supports the statement from Bruno Rodríguez, Cuban Foreign Minister when speaking at the UN, June 2021

He said –

“The human damage of the blockade is incalculable. No Cuban family is spared from the effects of this inhuman policy. Nobody could honestly state that it has no actual impact on the population...The blockade is a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cuba’s people. According to Article II c) of the Geneva Convention of 1948, it constitutes an act of genocide...This is an extraterritorial economic war against a small country, already adversely affected by the recession and global economic crisis caused by the pandemic that has deprived us of much-needed income.”

Conference instructs that an all Members circular is produced as soon as possible encouraging members to;

- Join the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and attend events and meetings in their respective areas
- Take part in the boycott of anti-Cuban companies and encourage others to do so
- Add their names to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign letter to U.S President Joe Biden urging him to end the blockade.

Additionally, Brigade committees should invite a speaker from the Cuba Solidarity Campaign to their respective committees if available in their area.

GREATER MANCHESTER

52. BUILDING SOLIDARITY

Conference believes that solidarity is at the heart of building a strong Union and a strong trade union movement. Solidarity should be built into all activities of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). This should include building links with other workers and other trade unions, and this should be done at branch, brigade, regional, national, and international level.

All branches and all committees of the FBU are urged to build solidarity into all activities and meetings. It should be on the standard agenda of every committee of the FBU.

Building solidarity should include;

- Building links with local branches of sister unions
- Affiliating to local trades councils
- Building solidarity with local strikes
- Workplace collections for striking workers
- Organising FBU delegations to picket lines.

Conference instructs the Executive Council, in order to build that solidarity, to increase the notification to Members of strikes and disputes and to utilise resources such as Strike Map to assist with this.

SHROPSHIRE

53. A SOCIALIST GREEN NEW DEAL

Conference notes the United Nations latest climate report predicting that temperatures are likely to rise by more than the vital 1.5C limit in the next two decades, bringing widespread devastation and extreme weather.

Conference applauds the work of firefighters in tackling the catastrophic effects of the climate emergency.

Conference believes, as with Covid-19 pandemic, the climate crisis exposes sharply the inequalities in society in the UK and internationally and we must ensure that workers are at the heart of any future programme which includes unshackling trade unions from restrictive anti Trade Union legislation.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to support and campaign with organisations that share the following aims creating a Socialist Green New Deal that will shift power from capital into the hands of workers, and will include;

- Creating millions of secure, well-paid, unionised green jobs
- A workers-led 'just transition' from high emission jobs to alternatives
- Just climate adaptation, investing in Fire and Rescue Services, flood defences, and resilient infrastructure
- Retrofitting all homes by 2030 with mandatory building standards including removal of all unsafe cladding
- Public ownership of energy creating an integrated, democratic system. Large-scale investment in renewables, rapidly phasing out fossil fuels
- Public ownership of transport - majorly expanded, integrated, free, including rail electrification, high-speed rail and electric buses
- Universal basic services including Mail, Broadband, National Nature service and National Care Service
- Repealing all anti-trade union laws, so workers can freely take industrial action over wider social and political issues, from public safety to climate change
- A global socialist Green New Deal, cancelling debt and freely sharing technology and resources internationally.

SHROPSHIRE

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

55. COVID AND KEY WORKERS – CLAPPING IS NOT ENOUGH

Conference notes that the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed sharp inequalities in our society. Some big businesses have made huge profits and some individuals in the UK and across the world have increased their enormous wealth significantly.

Meanwhile, the pandemic has disproportionately hit working class people and communities and especially black and minority workers.

Conference notes that millions of workers have been designated ‘key workers’, including Fire Brigades Union Members. Such workers have been required to carry on attending the workplace with all the additional risks that this brought.

Conference notes that key workers are in both the public and private sector and we reject any attempt to create divisions between different groups of workers.

Conference notes that despite the huge contribution made by millions of key workers many face appalling attacks from their employers or from government in the form of fire and re-hire, redundancies and continuing pay restraint in the public sector.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to build a campaign for all workers in response to the sacrifices made during the pandemic;

- For unity of public and private sector workers
- To oppose fire and re-hire
- To scrap public sector pay restraint
- For pay rises for all workers
- For investment in public services.

Conference instructs all committees and Officials of the Union, including the Executive Council, to support such initiatives in any way possible.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

56. COST OF LIVING CRISIS

Conference notes with concern the escalating crisis in the cost of living.

Conference notes that inflation is set to soar to its sharpest increase in decades alongside huge increases in the cost of energy. At the same time, workers are being hit by a National Insurance hike leaving some paying hundreds of pounds more each year.

Conference also notes the impact this will have on Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Members which added to a decade of below inflation pay rises will be catastrophic.

Conference recognises that the root of this crisis lies in the hands of the global political elite and billionaires who continue to drive a neo-liberal agenda exploiting and squeezing all workers across the globe in a never-ending pursuit of profit.

Conference also recognises that successive governments here in the UK have assisted and been complicit in driving down the living standards of firefighters.

Conference believes that without a united approach by all workers, reversing this sustained attack and increasing the standards of living of firefighters, including fair pay rises, will be impossible.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to develop a campaign and education programme with this in mind which will include approaching and encouraging other unions to join us in organising on pay and living standards for all workers, including the option of joined up industrial action on the issue.

STAFFORDSHIRE

57. WORKERS' RIGHTS MANIFESTO (LABOUR PARTY)

Conference recognises the clear support the Labour Party, under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn, gave to the Fire Brigades Union and the commitment in the Labour Party 'Workers' Rights Manifesto' (2019) to repeal anti-trade union legislation, including the Conservatives undemocratic Trade Union Act 2016 amongst many other positive commitments regarding workers' rights.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to gain a commitment from the current leader of the Labour Party that the 2019 Labour Party 'Workers' Rights Manifesto' be included in the next Labour Party General Election manifesto.

CLEVELAND

58. CARE 4 CALAIS

Conference demands that regular support for Care 4 Calais is set up by the Executive Council, so that Regions provide a voluntary contingent to be sent on a regular basis on a rotating basis akin to Grenfell silent walk before lockdown, in order to provide support and donations collected within region.

LANCASHIRE

59. LABOUR PARTY DISAFFILIATION

This Conference recognises that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) re-affiliating to the Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn was a proactive step in our collective struggle to bring about a more just and progressive socialist government.

However, since the election of Sir Keir Starmer, we have watched with a growing sense of unease as the Labour Party has seemingly attempted to purge itself of socialists, actively distance itself from working men and women and sought to align itself with big business.

Conference is no longer convinced that the aims and objectives of the Labour party reflect those of the FBU. With this in mind Conference demands the FBU disaffiliate from the Labour Party nationally with immediate effect.

MERSEYSIDE

EDUCATION

60. POSITIVE ACTION

Fire and Rescue services (FRSs) nationally suffer from under-representation of black and minority ethnic firefighters, failing to build a workforce reflective of their community demographics. The benefits of having an appropriately diverse workforce are well known - they improve public confidence in the service and help forge stronger connections within those communities, allowing for more effective fire safety and prevention work which in turn lead to fewer incidents and fewer injuries and deaths.

Many FRSs have initiatives aimed at redressing this balance including 'positive action' where they attempt to engage with under-represented communities. These programmes are often poorly understood by the workforce and wider public, leading to controversy.

The Fire Brigades Union with its proud tradition of promoting equality must acknowledge the value of these initiatives and support the underlying principles.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to create a training package to deepen understanding around the scope, limitations, approach, need and effectiveness of 'positive action', including 'myth-busting' and best practice, and make it available to all Members by Conference 2023.

BGEMM

61. NATIONAL ORGANISERS SCHOOL

Conference recognises the continuous hard work being carried out with the new professional recruitment presentation, online recruitment and the introduction of 'Phoenix' the new membership system. New ballot thresholds imposed on trade unions following the implementation of The Trade Union Act 2016 have highlighted that organising has never been so important.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to convene an annual Organisers School to be included in the national education program, affording organisers the opportunity to continually develop their skills, be updated on all membership and GDPR issues and share good practices.

HUMBERSIDE

62. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Conference recognises that EIAs, are a well-established and credible tool for demonstrating due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which is required by law.

These assessments and their application therefore must become core business of the Fire Brigades Union.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to add EIA training into our national trade union education programme to support those in elected roles. Education should begin as soon as is reasonably practicable and a report on progress should be delivered to Conference 2023.

TYNE & WEAR

63. ORGANISING EDUCATION

Conference recognises the important role that organising has in maintaining and growing our trade union. This duty falls on the shoulders of every Member and Official, however, this essential task is the prime responsibility of the Brigade Organisers.

Education goes back to the very roots of trade unionism. It is only through education that we can hope to improve the lot of the working person. The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has an enviable education provision ensuring that our Officials are well prepared to work on behalf of the membership.

To ensure that our Organisers are enthused, prepared, and equipped to make the best possible use of their time, Conference calls for the Executive Council to explore the viability, effectiveness and possible options for an annual organising school, education days or event where the latest and best practice can be learnt and shared.

Details of this should then be shared at the earliest opportunity via the FBU structure.

DERBYSHIRE

EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS AT WORK

64. ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL (ADAE) TRAINING AND APPLICATION

As Members of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) it is 'the duty of every member to treat others with dignity and respect and to challenge offensive behaviour of any kind' (Rule B3(3) of the FBU Rule book). We proudly have an ADAE policy which allows us to challenge racism, sexism, and all forms of discrimination but these behaviours are still seen in our workplaces and within our membership.

Conference should be aware that there have been great inconsistencies in how the ADAE process is implemented and executed. Often this is down to misconceptions or unfamiliarity with the process, possibly due to time elapsed since training.

There have also been clear breaches of the policy including Members being given representation after the ADAE process has determined that representation should be withdrawn.

Our Union provides a thorough three-day training course available to train reps in becoming an ADAE investigator. This training is for reps who have experience within the Union and are Fairness at Work trained. Therefore, there are numerous reps earlier on in their Union pathway that are unfamiliar with the ADAE process and how vital it is for our Union and the values it represents.

Many regions within our Union believe it to be best practice for one of the two investigators carrying out the ADAE investigation to be from our equality sections. Reps from Equality sections can bring their lived experience of being from an underrepresented group to the process ensuring fairness and equality.

There is also a lack of qualified Officials to carry out the ADAE process in many regions.

To make sure our ADAE process is fit for purpose, Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Provide initial training on the ADAE process as part of the 'Introductory Branch Officials Course' so that Reps are aware of the process and able to support members without being trained as an investigator
- Provide 'refresher' training to all those who are currently ADAE qualified, to address misconceptions and cement understanding
- Provide courses and push for more ADAE qualified Officials in each region
- Reword the All Different All Equal Policy on Page 13 to include that one investigator of the ADAE process must be from an equalities section wherever possible.

In cases where the ADAE policy is misused, abused, or wilfully ignored, Internal Union Discipline should be applied as per the Rule Book.

This work should be completed as soon as possible and before conference 2023.

NATIONAL WOMENS COMMITTEE

65. RESIDENTIAL COURSE BLOCKING RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION FOR PRIMARY CARE GIVERS.

Women have been working as operational firefighters since the 1980s. Recruitment and retention of women firefighters has slowly improved since then. However, women still make up a small minority of operational positions.

This is even more noticeable as progression through the ranks is considered.

This is due in part to individuals being forced to attend residential courses as part of the training required for promotion. Some recruit courses for trainee firefighters are also held on a residential basis. This process is a barrier to many who have caring responsibilities, disproportionately affecting women, and as such has a negative effect on women applying or being successful.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to conduct a national survey on current residential courses, promotional and otherwise attended by Fire and Rescue Service staff. This will establish whether these are able to be offered at more accessible locations on a daily attendance basis ensuring better support for all our Members who are the primary care givers.

The results of this survey are to be reported back through the Fire Brigades Union structures within 12 months of Conference 2022.

NATIONAL WOMENS COMMITTEE

66. ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL (ADAE)

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) have been leaders in the struggle for equality and fair treatment for all. The ADAE concept, unique within the trade union movement, has at its very core a commitment to oppose, challenge and eradicate all forms of discrimination within the workplace. Equality is embedded into every union activity.

The principles of the policy are to uphold fairness at work for all and to ensure inappropriate behaviour is not welcome amongst our membership. By doing this, it provides security to those with protected characteristics in the Fire and Rescue Service.

Whilst Conference can recognise that the implementation of this policy was ahead of its time and highly commended, in reality it is not fully abided by, carried out successfully or enforced in a number of cases.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to fully review the ADAE policy bolstered and enforced including thorough consultation with the B&EMM, NWC and LGBT Sections of the FBU. In particular, we need the equality sections to be more integrated into the process, including introducing a mandate to notify the relevant secretary of a section when one of their Members is the complainant in an ADAE investigation so appropriate support can be provided by the section.

B&EMM

67. OUR UNION TACKLING MISOGYNY

Conference has been shaken by the high-profile incidents involving male violence against women in recent times. Conference remembers the victims; Sarah Henshaw, Sarah Everard, Sabina Nessa, Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry to name a few, there are countless more. On average, a woman is killed by a man every three days in the UK.

Conference is shocked at the involvement and aspects of response of the police in these tragic incidents. An apparent misogynistic culture within police forces is now rightly being interrogated. Some claim that these are a few 'bad apples', however we exist in a society which contains misogyny so it is not surprising that these cultures would also be present in large, traditionally male dominated organisations.

The GMB's independent investigation into sexual harassment within their union shone a light onto institutional sexism within the Trade Union movement. We cannot ignore this staggering issue.

Toxic misogynistic behaviours are also familiar to us as workers in the Fire and Rescue Service. Jokes about rape and domestic violence are not uncommon, although perpetrated by a small minority. Colleagues and ex-colleagues of ours have also been convicted of these crimes.

The upholding of misogynistic cultures has also been demonstrated within our Union both historically and recently. Female Members have been treated in shameful ways, by fellow Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Members including Officials.

Conference must stand together to create safe workplaces for women.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to;

- Support the campaign to make misogyny a hate crime
- Publicly condemn misogynistic behaviours seen in our workplaces and the wider world
- Encourage Members to challenge and report instances of misogyny or sexism in the workplace, home or elsewhere
- Be vocal to employers on what constitutes misogynistic behaviour, where it exists in our workplaces, how it must be quashed and how victims must be heard and supported to justice
- Introduce mandatory sexual harassment training for all FBU Officials.

NATIONAL WOMENS COMMITTEE

68. STATION FACILITIES

Conference calls upon the Executive Council to ensure that Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) are maintaining the standard of facilities on fire stations that are set out in the Fire Brigades Union minimum facilities document.

The equality and inclusion work should not be used as an excuse for FRSs to revert to solely unisex facilities which should be provided as an addition to male and female facilities, not an alternative, to ensure that women's safe spaces are maintained.

DEVON & SOMERSET

69. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

The Fire Brigades Union (FBU) rightly demand that equality is embedded into all facets of Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) whether that be decision-making, consultations or negotiations. Without this specific consideration under-represented groups could be marginalised and left behind.

To be true to these demands we must also reflect them.

Conference demands that EIAs are carried out on all significant decisions made by the Executive Council and Regional Committees.

Conference believes that formalising this process, we will hold ourselves to the standards we expect of others and truly support and protect those that institutions have persistently let down.

LEICESTERSHIRE

70. SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEX DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING AND MISOGYNY

Conference is appalled that instances of sexual harassment, sex discrimination, bullying and misogyny are still a reality faced by far too many women Members and Officials with devastating outcomes.

Research shows that 97 per cent of young women in the UK have been sexually harassed, and 81 per cent of women of all ages have experienced sexual harassment in public.

While it is appalling, it is not surprising that these unwanted behaviours manifest within the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), often going unchallenged, unrecognised and unreported all too often passed off as banter and minimised, leaving the victims feeling bullied and ashamed and fearful of calling it out, or “making a fuss”.

Conference calls on all Officials and Members to lead by example, call out any unequal and discriminatory treatment and recognise the profound impact this has on our democracy, the diversity of our Officials, our ability to protect our Members and to start to effect long overdue change for good.

Conference instructs that the FBU Executive Council should lead the change by;

- Supporting and conducting an immediate independent investigation and review into structural sexism, bullying and sexual harassment within the FBU with terms of reference set by the Executive Council, committing to adopt all recommendations from the independent review in full;
- Ensuring that the appointment of independent investigators and any subsequent recommendations from the review involves the full democratic participation of the FBU National Equalities Sectional Committees.

This investigation should report back to Committees no later than Conference 2023.

SCOTLAND

71. FIRE SERVICE PROVISION FOR FIRE GROUND CATERING

Conference notes with concern the increasing use by Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) of voluntary sector organisations to provide food and refreshments to Members of the service attending prolonged incidents.

Conference is concerned that some of these organisations do not uphold the core values of FRSs in their commitment to inclusivity.

One such organisation 'Rapid Relief Team' (RRT) were established by Plymouth Brethren Christian Church (PBCC).

Research into PBCC reveals that they operate policies that exclude Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people from their membership and that they have actively campaigned against LGBT equality.

Conference believes it is wrong for our Members to be expected to accept charity from people who do not share the values of inclusion and respect for difference.

It is the responsibility of FRS employers to ensure that firefighters receive food and refreshments during prolonged deployment at incidents and that they are failing with regard to their obligation to ensure partners embrace the services core principles.

Conference calls on Brigade Officials to raise their concerns with their FRS should they be engaging the volunteer sector to perform this role.

Conference also calls for the Executive Council to raise the matter with the National Joint Council as some Services are potentially failing in their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

LGBT COMMITTEE

72. PROMOTING INCLUSION, CHALLENGING SEXISM, RACISM, HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

Conference notes with concern an apparent increase in sexist, racist, homophobic and transphobic abuse of Members and Officials of our Union. Conference further notes that on occasions this abuse is being perpetrated by Members and Officials of our Union.

Conference acknowledges that the Executive Council are already taking a proactive approach in establishing a working group to look at the issues of sexual harassment and wider equality issues.

In addition to the working group Conference also believes our Union would benefit from further external independent assistance to advise on how as a Union we challenge and tackle the issues we currently face and instructs the Executive Council to explore this.

LGBT COMMITTEE

73. AN INCLUSIVE UNION, KEEPING THE T IN LGBT

The Fire Brigades Union has a proud history of standing up for equality and diversity and fighting to make Fire and Rescue Services inclusive workplaces.

Conference notes with concern the emergence of some political lobby groups who seek to exclude Trans from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans equality movement.

Some of these lobby groups are growing in influence and are making demands for reform of the Equality Act 2010. The Conservative government has long hated this legislation and reforms by them would water down the protection people with protected characteristics already benefit from.

Conference calls on all Officials and Members to be vigilant of these groups. Our Union is built on inclusion and we will continue to represent all minorities.

LGBT COMMITTEE

74. TOXIC MASCULINITY

Conference notes that with continued support from the Fire Brigades Union (FBU), Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) are slowly becoming a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Whilst this progress is encouraging the rate at which we are able to effect further change falls far short of our trade unions aspirations.

Too many Members within FRSs are still being negatively affected and undermined by outdated practises, ideas and opinions, which in part can be attributed to toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity hampers the development and progression of all within FRSs as it seeks to reward behaviours ascribed to the so-called traditional masculine ideology. This covers a range of issues such as suppressing emotions, a lack of openness about mental health and the rejection of femininity in all its supposed forms.

For us to progress as a society we need to start seeing and expressing our emotions and seeking help as a sign of strength, only by acknowledging our behaviours can we begin to grow.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to devise, produce and disseminate a training package designed to assist in recognising and addressing toxic masculinity within FRSs. This work should be carried out as quickly as possible with the training package to be disseminated within the next 12 months.

MERSEYSIDE

75. ALL DIFFERENT ALL EQUAL (ADAE)

Conference recognises the importance of the ADAE Policy. Conference also notes that it is important as a Union we continue to learn, evolve and improve and that transparency and accountability must be at the heart of all that we do.

Conference notes that Section 4 of the appeals section of the ADAE policy states:

'If, upon the basis of all the evidence before it, the representation appeals committee considers that the regional committee should not have refused or granted representation, it may reverse or amend the decision as it considers appropriate, in its absolute discretion. The decision of the representation appeals committee will be final and shall be conveyed in writing to the parties, the general secretary and the regional secretary'

Conference notes that it is important that we are accountable and transparent, it is equally important that we learn from our mistakes, or we will continue to make them.

Conference therefore demands that section 4 of the appeals section of the ADAE policy be amended to read:

'If, upon the basis of all the evidence before it, the representation appeals committee considers that the regional committee should not have refused or granted representation, it may reverse or amend the decision as it considers appropriate, in its absolute discretion. The decision of the representation appeals committee will be final and shall be conveyed in writing to the parties. The general secretary, and the regional secretary will also receive a full written report from the representation appeals committee detailing reasons that the decision was reversed or amended, that they may share with their regional committee.'

LONDON

ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND (AIF)

76. ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND (AIF)

Conference acknowledges the importance of the AIF. Approximately 95% of Members have signed up to it, so it is clear the benefits are widely recognised. It cannot be overstated the impact the AIF has on Members' lives when they suffer an injury, or to their families in the event of the death of a Member.

However, Conference appreciates that there are restrictions within the existing scheme, and consequently room for improvement.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to set up a task and finish group to ensure that the benefits of the AIF are the best that they can be for our Members, that they pay out in the maximum amount of circumstances and that the scheme offers best value for money. The task and finish group shall complete their work before the end of 2022 to allow sufficient time for all Members to be consulted over any proposed changes prior to Conference 2023.

Conference instructs that the relevant rules shall be amended as necessary once a decision has been taken on any changes to the scheme.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER

77. MODERNISING THE ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND (AIF)

Conference instructs the Executive Council to research the feasibility of the inclusion of two specific areas for the modernisation of the AIF. The findings to be reported and necessary arrangements made for (hopefully) a positive outcome to follow. The two specific areas are;

- Mental illness
- Cancers.

We must have a modernised AIF fit for the 21st century that reflects the work we do and the messages that we promote.

SOUTH WALES

78. ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND (AIF) REVIEW

Conference welcomes the presence of the AIF and the support it has provided to Members and their families since its inception. Conference also notes that the AIF has not recently been reviewed and therefore calls on the Executive Council to review the fund rules to bring it up to date and review the rates awarded within.

After completion of a review of the rules training is to be provided to Officials in the correct application of the AIF.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

79. REVIEW OF ACCIDENT INJURY AND DEATH BENEFIT FUND (AIF) RULES

In light of the excellent work done on contaminants, and with consideration to the work due to be undertaken on mental health Conference instructs the Executive Council to undertake a full review (identifying any necessary rule change) into the AIF rules to ensure adequate provision is in place to help Members who are suffering from poor mental health, or cancers.

DEVON & SOMERSET

LEGAL

80. NATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS FOR OUTCOMES FROM EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS AND EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL APPEALS

Conference recognises the importance of changes in employment law handed down in Employment Tribunals and Appeals (ET/EAT) which benefit Members and the requirement for employers to implement these beneficial changes within prompt timescales.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) that when these decisions are advantageous to Members, that the EC look to negotiate with employers nationally through the National Joint Council rather than Brigade Officials negotiating locally so that such changes are implemented in a timely and consistent manner.

WEST YORKSHIRE

81. SUPPORT AND FAMILY LAW

Conference recognises our Union supports and defends its Members' employment rights through our representatives and legal services. Support for our Members in matters relating to family law should be integral to the Fire Brigades Union.

Many of our Members are facing difficulty and expense navigating issues involving family law. Separation and child arrangement orders being particularly challenging and likely to have an effect on work. Advice, financial support, negotiated discounts, mentoring and partnerships with other organisations are examples of support that should be considered.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to explore ways in which we could provide additional support for our Members when faced with dealing with the complexity of family law and report back to Members at Conference in 2023.

TYNE & WEAR

82. JUDGES DON'T RUN OUR UNION.

Conference notes that trade unions in the UK are subject to some of the worst anti-union legislation in Europe. These include provisions for courts to interfere in the business and decision making of trade unions.

Conference notes that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) has seen such interference by the courts in our democratic structures, including a decision by an Employment Tribunal that a policy of the Union was redundant. Such a decision can only be made by the FBU and its Members through our own democratic structures.

Conference reminds all Members and Officials of the Union of the provisions of Rule C2 that:

'The supreme government of the Union shall be vested in the Conference...'

No individual Member or Official has the authority to determine, overturn or end policies of the Union except through the democratic structures of the Union and ultimately through Conference.

STAFFORDSHIRE

83. MATZAK

On the 21st Feb 2018, the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ) ruled that Mr Matzak, a Belgian volunteer firefighter, whose on-call time when not at his place of work constituted working time. This ruling resulted from the interpretation of European Union Working Time Directive (WTD).

It is noted that the primary motive of the WTD is that of the welfare of the individual worker and not remuneration. However, given the low pay and poor retention rates of UK Retained firefighters this is a situation that cannot remain fully unexplored.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to seek immediate legal advice and guidance with the aim to explore enacting the ECJ ruling within FRSSs.

ESSEX

ORGANISING AND MEMBERSHIP

84. GROWING THREAT OF THE NATIONAL FIRE CHIEFS COUNCIL (NFCC)

Conference notes with concern, the increasing involvement of the NFCC in issuing guidance on policy and procedure.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to run a campaign to raise Members' awareness of the severity of this threat.

WEST YORKSHIRE

85. THE FUTURE OF ORGANISING IN THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU)

Conference commends the efforts of the General Secretary, National Officers, Executive Council and Officials and Members of the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) for their continued commitment to organising within our Union.

It is a fact however that organising is not dogmatic and is an ever-changing process designed to progress our victories and activism within the movement. Nor is it bureaucratic rather it is the very essence of the day-to-day work of an active trade union member regardless of the roles we hold.

Whilst the Trades Union Congress organising agenda, much of which the FBU has adopted should be congratulated it simply is not always wholly applicable in every circumstance. A number of our sister unions have adopted an 'Industrial Organising' approach and one which Conference believes is more in keeping with the history and traditions of the FBU.

Conference believes that an industrial organising approach and strategy focused on local brigade issues will increase membership, activism, and improve Members' conditions.

Conference instructs that following any necessary rule changes;

- Each region appoints an Official responsible for organising within the region
- The National Officer responsible for organising should convene a national committee consisting of the aforementioned regional officials to critique the current organising strategy within the FBU, and endeavour to create a new strategy based on an 'industrial organising approach' and set out its targets and campaigns for the coming year
- Communication should take place with sister unions who have adopted 'Industrial Organising' to develop best practice
- The Organising committee should meet quarterly and each region should submit an organising report to the relevant committees following Executive Council business meetings
- The regional Official responsible for organising should ensure the organising strategy is implemented and the expected work carried out alongside the brigade organisers.

GREATER MANCHESTER

86. RETIRED AND OUT OF TRADE (ROOT) MEMBERS

Conference notes the continued attacks on our Members and Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) from both Central Government and more recently the NFCC. One of the ways to counter these attacks is by using the skills and knowledge of Members, Reps and Officials that has been built up over many years. Retired Reps and Officials are often great sources of information and can provide advice on strategy, tactics and previous agreements within regions and individual brigades. They are also free to contact the press without being subject to policies of the former employer.

We have seen the benefit of utilising ROOT members to aid campaigns locally by providing vital statistical information and also providing lobbying assistance.

Nationally there are over 6000 ROOT members that are largely an untapped resource for existing Reps and it is an area that should be exploited to harness the knowledge and experience of retired Members.

Conference therefore calls upon the Executive Council (EC) to;

- Establish the role of a ROOT Organiser within each Region reporting directly to the Regional Executive harnessing the knowledge when required and appropriate of the ROOT Members within each respective region
- Each ROOT Organiser appointed by the Regional Committee should work supporting individual Brigade Organisers on areas as deemed necessary by Regional Executives or on request by Brigade Committees
- Each appointed ROOT Organiser to be retired themselves in order to operate freely without fear of sanction from Individual FRS's.

To facilitate the establishing of a ROOT Organiser the EC will bring any necessary rule changes to Conference 2023.

CHESHIRE

87. RETAINED RECRUITMENT

Conference demands the employment of a full-time member of staff to visit all retained stations for the purpose of recruitment.

Due to the high turnover of RDS staff and the rural location of stations it would be beneficial for the Fire Brigades Union to employ a recruiter to increase membership which would be self-funding due to membership being increased. There is a local concern that there are local strongholds of FRSA developing in some rural counties. This post will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

LANCASHIRE

88. RETIREMENT GIFT

Conference recognises the commitment of its Members to the Fire Brigades Union (FBU). When a Member retires from the service, some brigade committees present Members with a basic retirement certificate, only arranged if the Member requests one at a local level. This feels underwhelming and does not reflect the commitment and dedication to the FBU that the retiree deserves.

Many Members have paid contributions for their entire career, amounting to thousands of pounds. It would be a small token of appreciation and would pay homage to the Member, if we could present them a retirement certificate and a small gift.

Conference instructs that Brigade Officials are allowed to ask region to purchase gifts from the FBU online shop, up to the value of one months' wholetime subscription, this would only apply for retiring FBU Members with ten or more years continuous membership in the FBU.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

89. STRENGTH AND UNITY

Conference instructs the Executive Council to promote an awareness of the dedication, loyalty and integrity of Fire Brigades Union Officer Members in representing all Members and to promote the pathways for Members to access their representation and support.

OFFICERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

90. ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Conference instructs the Executive Council to utilise the Officers National Committee and wider Officer membership for technical, strategic, and specialist advice on national and regional issues that could affect the Fire Brigades Union membership.

OFFICERS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

91. UNIFIED INTERVIEW STATEMENT

Conference instructs the Executive Council to produce a generic preamble pre interview statement for Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Officials to utilise during internal union discipline interviews. This should be produced by the relevant Officials in head office, to assist all Officials of the FBU when undertaking interviews in line with the rules and policies of the FBU.

HUMBERSIDE

92. SIMON SAPPER REPORT

Conference notes the work already undertaken by Simon Sapper and the subsequent report and recommendations made to the Executive Council (EC).

Conference instructs the EC to provide a record of what recommendations from the Simon Sapper report have been concluded and the current situation regarding those recommendations that have yet to be concluded or acted upon.

The EC must report back a record of progress to all Brigade Officials ahead of the next Conference, or within one calendar year - whichever is sooner.

HERTFORDSHIRE

93. FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU) ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

Conference notes the Executive Council (EC) Emergency Resolution 2 at Conference 2019, with regard to FBU organisation and structure review, notably the move to two elected National Officers. Conference also notes the workloads for National Officers, following the vacation of the second elected post in the summer of 2021.

Conference further notes the many fronts opened up by our detractors, along with Covid, which has highlighted a strain on the workloads at Head Office. This may in part be reflected in the growing delay for information responses and assistance that is requested from Head Office Officials.

Conference instructs the EC to run the election for the vacant National Officer post without any further delay.

HERTFORDSHIRE

94. FIRE BRIGADE UNION (FBU) ELECTIONS

Conference notes that in a number of cases of consulting Members in recent years, the FBU has utilised a mixed system of postal and online balloting. This system has the potential for increasing turnout and participation of Members.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to conduct a trial of such hybrid voting for appropriate brigade, regional or sectional elections, the details to be determined by the EC. The EC should produce a report of this trial in advance of the next Conference and, if appropriate bring rule changes or other proposals to a future Conference.

Conference instructs that the relevant rules (requiring postal ballots) shall be suspended under any such trial.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER

95. BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT NETWORK

Conference notes that the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) Annual Reports indicate that since 2007 there have been more than 400 member deaths and more than 200 dependent deaths.

Local FBU reps are often the first point of contact for advice by workmates or surviving family members when a firefighter or a firefighter's partner dies. Not all FBU Reps have experience in dealing with the domestic practicalities that follow a death and most would welcome knowing where to turn quickly for basic advice or for signposting to reliable bereavement services.

Conference understands that there are already a number of support avenues which provide an essential service to Members including FBU Legal Services, Accident Injury and Death Benefit Fund (AIF), FBU pension representations and FF100 Lottery, although none provide immediate support in the event of bereavement.

Bereaved Members regularly miss out on basic advice and are financially and emotionally worse off as a result, local bereavement support services are often oversubscribed/under-funded and vary enormously by region.

In addition to the practicalities of seeking help there's the need to be on guard against fraudsters and scammers.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to create a Bereavement Support Network, comprising a small volunteer group consisting of FBU Members and at least one FBU Official to provide the help and advice that bereaved firefighters and their partners sorely need to help them deal with the immediate practicalities concerning the death of a loved one.

KENT

96. PAY, SUBSIDIES AND TAX RELIEF

Firefighters, in line with other public sector workers, carry both the financial burden of austerity and the responsibility of the C-19 global pandemic upon their shoulders to prop up the UK economy and keep this country moving forward.

Despite the unquestionable sacrifices public sector workers have made Conference is in no doubt that these workers also carry the burden through relentless pay restraint that has been overwhelmingly outstripped by the rapidly rising cost of living.

Firefighters face increasing pressures to live, raise and support their own families as costs rise and pay in real terms falls.

Conference recognises the pressures of balancing the responsibility of life with the commitment and sense of duty to serve our communities. Pressures that have buckled and broken many Members and resulted in poor mental health, failed relationships or worse still suicide.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to campaign for enhancements in subsidies such as child care and single parent allowance for public sector workers.

To work within the Trade Union Congress and coordinate a collective demand to the UK Government that this disparity is immediately addressed through pay that aligns to inflation or increased subsidies to compensate.

HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF WIGHT

97. NATIONAL OFFICERS

Conference is concerned about the amount of work currently being undertaken by National Officers. As such Conference demands that the Executive Council support any rule changes that increase the number of national officers within the Fire Brigades Union.

CUMBRIA

98. MILEAGE AND FUEL ALLOWANCES

Conference instructs the Executive Council to align the current mileage and fuel allowance rates paid to Fire Brigades Union lay officials and representatives, to the HMRC mileage and fuel allowance rates.

NORTHERN IRELAND

99. TIERED FIRE BRIGADE UNION (FBU) MEMBERSHIP

Conference notes the cost-of-living crisis facing the UK, and the wage suppression of our Members.

Conference therefore proposes a tiered membership subscription payment rate, to reflect the national pay scales in operation across Fire and Rescue Services.

Currently any trainee firefighter or firefighter (Control) receives full membership benefits at no cost for the initial period of three months.

As a development firefighter, the wage is considerably lower than that of a competent firefighter.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to create a middle subscription band to reflect this difference, and on completion of the development period, the full amount is then payable.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

100. DEVELOPMENT FIREFIGHTER AND DEVELOPMENT FIREFIGHTER (CONTROL) MEMBERSHIP FEES

Conference recognises firefighters and firefighters (Control) spend vast amounts of time training to be competent in role. Whilst this takes place, they are at financial disadvantage compared to competent firefighters to the sum of approximately £7,000 following the 2021 pay settlement. With the ongoing social financial issues, the impact of the difference in pay hits Members hard.

Rule B2 (1) (viii) states: –

‘The weekly contribution of Ordinary members shall be:

Full-time members who are competent firefighters or whose weekly rate of pay is equal to or above that of a competent firefighter shall contribute 1 percent of the Firefighter (competent) weekly rate of pay. Job share members who are competent firefighters or whose full-time weekly rate of pay is equal to or above that of a competent firefighter shall pay half of 1 percent of the Firefighter (competent) weekly rate of pay. Retained members shall contribute one third of the trade contribution of full-time members, plus 3 percent of the trade contribution of full-time members rounded to the nearest penny. Volunteer members shall contribute annually a flat rate fee as set by the Executive Council.

Where members pay by the calendar month the contribution amount payable shall be calculated from the weekly contribution rates.

Where members are paid less than the Firefighter (competent) weekly rate of pay the Executive Council shall publish each year the relevant contribution rates for each pay band.’

As this is already an agreed rule Conference demands that the rule is applied to affected Members. This will include firefighters in development and firefighters (Control) in development.

AVON

101. NATIONAL OFFICER POSITIONS

Conference recognises the hard work that National Officers do on a day-to-day basis not only nationally but assisting local Officials also. Conference also recognises that workloads have increased for all officials of the Union including National Officers.

Conference believes that the present position of having three National Officers (one elected and two appointed) is unsustainable and undemocratic.

Conference agrees that there should be four elected National Officers and instructs the Executive Council to enact the points below in order to carry out the will of Conference.

- Make any consequential rule changes to the rule book arising from this resolution
- Commence a National Officers election no later than three months from the conclusion of this Conference to bring the number of National Officers to 4 (two elected and two appointed)
- Allow the two appointed National Officers to complete their agreed term and then commence elections for these two National Officer positions.

CLEVELAND

102. FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU) HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S) RELEASE POSITION

Conference notes the efforts taken by Fire Brigades Union (FBU) H&S Reps up, down and across the whole of the UK in the battle to ensure firefighter and community safety in the face of adversity by the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) in the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, FBU H&S Reps work tirelessly to usher in a new era of firefighter safety with respect to contaminants and psychological wellbeing, upholding the finest traditions in breathing apparatus safety as the fire sector struggles to resolve the decades of poor and reckless application of building regulations.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to create a full-time release position for the role of regional H&S co-ordinator, in recognition of the crucial work carried out in the role of H&S and to provide them with the means to do this work with the full support and recognition of the FBU.

BEDFORDSHIRE

103. ONLINE VOTING

Conference recognises the recent excellent work by Head Office and other Officials, in particular Brigade Organisers, to develop the new membership database, online application forms and app that can be downloaded by individual Members, creating vital organising tools in the most up-to-date and convenient forms.

Conference also recognises that many organisations, trade unions and political parties have now moved their voting systems to online platforms including the 2019 hybrid consultative ballot on Fire Brigades Union (FBU) members pay and conditions for which the opportunity to vote online was provided, as per Head Office Circular 20190183MW.

Previous Conference policy instructed the Executive Council to;
'...make the necessary preparations for future online voting, including recommending a definitive list of which Brigade, Regional and Sectional positions will be covered, and to bring any necessary Rule changes to Conference 2020.'

Conference recognises the impact that the COVID 19 pandemic has had on workloads and the delays this has caused to delivering Conference Policy.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Council to provide feedback on the progress of moving FBU ballots and elections to a secure online platform and set a completion date for moving to online voting for all relevant, identified FBU elections and ballots, no later than Conference 2024.

SCOTLAND

104. UPLIFT OF MILEAGE RATES

Conference notes changes to Officials' mileage rates at previous Conferences. Since the last change, the cost of living and the cost of fuel has dramatically increased.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to review the current mileage rate for Union business and to uplift the rate at the earliest opportunity. Any uplift will take into consideration the HMRC mileage rate for the years 2021/2022.

SUFFOLK

105. ONLINE VOTING

Conference notes that in a number of cases of consulting Members in recent years, the Fire Brigades Union has utilised a mixed system of postal and online balloting. This system has the potential for increasing turnout and participation of Members.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to conduct a trial of such hybrid voting for appropriate brigade, regional or sectional elections, the details to be determined by the EC. The EC must then produce a report of this trial in advance of the next Conference and, if appropriate, bring rule changes or other proposals to a future Conference.

Conference instructs that the relevant rules (requiring postal ballots) shall be suspended under any such trial.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

106. COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

Brigade Secretaries' circular 2022HOC0090AD issued on 11th February 2022 to Fire and Rescue Authorities and Fire and Rescue Services states that *'...the only officials who are authorised to make a collective agreement on behalf of the FBU in respect of new and/or changes to duty systems are the FBU General Secretary, and/or the FBU Assistant General Secretary and/or one of the FBU's National Officers, who will all have been elected or appointed...*'

Conference instructs the Executive Council to explain why this decision was made with no consultation with Regional and local Officials and why this communication was received by our employers before local Officials. Conference also instructs the Executive Council to provide a rationale and an explanation of the impact this circular will have on local industrial relations.

DORSET & WILTSHIRE

107. FIRE BRIGADES UNION (FBU) RULE BOOK UPDATE

Conference notes that the FBU Rule Book has served us well and continues to do so. However, it can't be ignored that many rules are now rendered irrelevant by modern technology, procedures and practices, and that some of the text is not in line with current best practice, for example using gender specific pronouns.

It is our duty as Officials to ensure that during our time in post we not only serve the current membership, but also ensure that we leave it in the best possible condition to serve Members in the twenty-first century.

Following our centenary, and the excellent work to leave a legacy for future generations of Members, it is now time to conduct a full review of the Rule Book to remove or amend unnecessary rules and amend language where required.

Conference instructs the Executive Council (EC) to form a working party made up of the appropriate national officials, EC Members and representatives from each of the equality and trade sections to review the rules of this Union. This work should be completed before the next rule change Conference for presentation and ratification.

DERBYSHIRE

108. INCREASE TO OFFICIALS' ALLOWANCES AND SUBSISTENCE

Conference notes that our Officials are the lifeblood of this Union and without their tireless work this Union would not be able to function as it does.

Conference notes that most Officials work entirely in their own time, giving up precious family and leisure time to ensure Members are represented to the best standards in Fire and Rescue Services.

Conference notes that Officials' allowances and subsistence have not increased in many years.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to increase all Officials' allowances and subsistence in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each year following Conference 2022.

LONDON

109. REGIONAL OFFICIALS AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS - OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OR PAID WORK

Conference notes All Members' circular 2019HOC0400MW which states;
'Outside Employment or Paid Work by Senior FBU Officials

The Executive Council is aware that due to the pressures of the cost of living and a decade long squeeze on real wages, some FBU members have had to undertake outside employment. The union campaigns to improve pay and conditions so that such additional earning should not be necessary. Nevertheless, the policy set out here does not relate to the activities of non-officials.

*This statement does **not** address the activities of officials of the union other than those set out below.*

To be clear, the policy set out here applies only to FBU officials who are on trade union release where the employer is reimbursed by the FBU. It applies to all members of the Executive Council and all Regional Secretaries.

None of these categories of FBU official shall undertake any outside employment or paid work of any kind.

If any doubt arises as to whether this policy applies, the matter should be raised with the General Secretary and President.'

Conference notes that due to years of austerity firefighter wages have fallen well below inflation.

Conference instructs the Executive Council to allow where it does not impact and or infringe upon their full-time Union role that EC Members and Regional Officials be allowed to have outside employment.

LONDON

CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS

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1. The Executive Council shall decide the venue and date (or dates) on which the Conference will be held.
2. The Standing Orders Committee as established under Rule C2 will issue a preliminary notice to all Branches at least 20 weeks before the Conference is due to be held; such preliminary notice to inform Branches of closing date for the receipts of resolutions, amendments, amendments to rules and delegates' names.
3. The Standing Orders Committee shall issue a preliminary agenda containing the resolutions received from the Brigade/National Sectional Committees which have been accepted for inclusion by the Standing Orders Committee acting in accordance with Standing Order No. 5 not later than six weeks before Conference is about to be held. Policy statements from the Executive Council shall also be issued not later than six weeks before conference is about to be held. A Brigade/National Sectional Committee shall have the opportunity to submit amendments to Executive Policy Statements prior to Conference.
4. The Standing Orders Committee shall issue to the Secretary of each Brigade/National Sectional Committee and delegates a Final Agenda containing all motions and amendments, together with amendments to rules, accepted for inclusion by the Standing Orders Committee in accordance with Standing Order No. 5. These documents, together with delegates' names shall be issued not less than 14 days before Conference is due to commence. Any resolution which has been rejected by the Standing Orders Committee shall be circulated to each Brigade and National Sectional delegation, prior to Conference, with the Standing Orders Committee's reason for rejection. There is a facility to allow resolutions which have been rejected to be amended in a timely manner for reconsideration by the Standing Orders Committee.
5. Resolutions, amendments, amendments to rules and other business for Conference must be returned electronically by the Chair or Secretary of the Brigade/National Sectional Committee by whom they are submitted. Resolutions must deal with one subject only and not be of omnibus nature.
6. The order in which the resolutions are to be discussed shall be decided by the Executive Council in consultation with the Standing Orders Committee.
7. Brigade/National Sectional Committees shall not be allowed to submit more than three resolutions. Similarly the Executive Council shall not be allowed to submit more than three resolutions.
8. Notwithstanding the provision of the above rule, the Executive Council or any Brigade/National Sectional Committee shall, subject to the approval of the Standing Orders Committee, be permitted to submit emergency resolutions for the consideration of the delegates' to Conference.
9. Brigade/National Sectional Committees are required to co-operate with the Standing Orders Committee in order that resolutions and amendments of a similar nature shall be composited. Any Brigade/National Sectional Committee which ignores a written request from the Standing Orders Committee, to consider a pre-conference compositing proposal, shall have its resolution removed from the Conference Agenda.
10. The Standing Orders Committee will circulate to the delegates attending Conference copies of the composite motions they have approved.
11. The Standing Orders Committee shall submit to the President of Conference a programme of all resolutions and amendments approved by them as being in accordance with the rules and Standing Orders, together with all suggestions for the proper conduct of the business of Conference. They shall also provide all delegates to Conference with a programme of Conference business no later than the night before the opening morning of Conference.
12. The Standing Orders Committee will report to the Executive Council any violation of the rules or Standing Orders that may be brought to their notice with any recommendations agreed upon.
13. The Executive Council shall nominate two Tellers and two ballot Scrutineers from the names of delegates attending Conference. Names shall be submitted to the Conference delegates for approval.
14. The method of voting at each Conference shall be voice or show of hands, at the discretion of the President. Where, however, a division is challenged by delegates to Conference, voting shall be by card. Before Conference commences the leader of each Brigade Committee delegation shall be supplied with a list showing the voting figures to be used for Trade votes, Political Fund votes and for Accident and Injury Fund votes. Such figures shall record a vote equal to the membership figure of each Brigade as shown on FBU Membership records at 31st December each year. The leader of each Brigade Committee delegation shall be supplied with a voting card, indicating the name of the Brigade which shall be recorded by tellers. When a card vote is to be taken a warning device will be operated and sufficient time will be allowed for delegates to return to the Conference hall. The voting figures will be recorded and tallied by computer. The President will receive a record of the total of the votes in favour, votes against and votes not cast.
15. The voting on a challenge to the President's ruling decision shall be taken by the Vice-President (or someone approved by Conference in his/her absence) and shall in the first instance be by a show of hands. Where the result is unclear and/or in doubt the Vice-President or delegates may call for a numerical count of standing delegates by tellers. Standing delegates must clearly show their delegates credential cards as identification of their rights to vote. On the day (or days) on which Conference is held, the President shall inform Conference of the number of delegates in attendance and entitled to vote, and support for a challenge must be by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the stated number.

16. On the day (or days) on which Conference is held, delegates shall assemble at 09.30hrs prompt, adjourn at 12.45hrs, re-assemble at 14.00hrs and adjourn at 17.15hrs. Comfort breaks will be 11.00hrs to 11.15hrs and 15.30hrs to 15.45hrs.
17. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the production of a daily Record of Decisions of Conference which shall be distributed to Delegates as soon as possible after each session has concluded. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the production of a booklet containing the detail of the Record of Decisions of Conference which shall be distributed to all members as soon as possible after the Conference has concluded and in any case no later than 4 weeks after Conference has concluded.
18. At each Conference, the agenda compiled by the Executive Council shall be taken as the first business of Conference immediately following the Executive Council and auditor's reports.
19. The Chair will be taken by the President or in his/her absence by the Vice-President. In the absence of the President and Vice-President, the delegates shall elect a Chairperson from among their members.
20. After the opening of Conference the Executive Council shall present their report for the past year which shall be laid on the table for discussion. The items on the report shall be discussed seriatim and not as a whole. Delegates may move the reference back of the whole or any part thereof. Each speaker limited to five minutes.
21. Such reports shall be given precedence over all other business provided that where a resolution on the Agenda bears directly upon any part of the report, such resolution may at the discretion of the President be taken in conjunction with such part of the report.
22. The mover of the resolution shall be allowed seven minutes, the seconder five minutes and any or each subsequent speaker, three minutes. The mover of an amendment shall be allowed five minutes and the seconder three minutes. No person shall speak more than once on a question, except the mover of the original resolution, who alone shall have the right to reply. Should the proposed mover of a composite resolution through no fault of his/her own, be absent from the Conference hall when he/she is called, any other delegate representing a Brigade/National Sectional Committee involved in the composite shall be allowed to move the resolution.
23. Facilities will be made available to enable any speaker to address Conference. If the President rises to call a delegate to order or any other purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereupon, resume his or her seat and no other delegate shall arise until the President authorises the discussion to proceed.
24. Should any delegate cause a disturbance at any session of Conference, and refuse to obey the President when called to order, he/she shall be named by the President and shall be expelled from the hall for the remainder of the session, and shall not be allowed to take part in Conference proceedings without the consent of the Conference delegates.
25. Previous question, next business, or the closure may be moved and seconded by delegates only who have not previously spoken in the debate and there shall be no speeches on such motions. Should the closure be carried, the mover of the original motion shall have the right to reply.
26. Should the President consider there is no direct difference of opinion among the delegates, he/she shall have the power to stop the discussion and submit the proposition to the vote of the Conference.
27. Members not being delegates and organisers may attend the Conference as visitors only and shall not be allowed to speak.
28. In the case of Special Conferences, the above Orders shall be adhered to as closely as possible. The Standing Orders Committee shall be in session from the outset of any Special Conference in order to allow resolutions to be submitted from Brigade/National Sectional Committees. Neither the Executive Council by decision nor the President by his/her ruling shall have the power to deviate from this Standing Order at any Special Conference.
29. These Standing Orders may be suspended, if such suspension is agreed by at least two thirds of the votes cast by the delegates attending Conference.
30. Alterations to the Standing Orders of Conference may be submitted by Brigade/National Sectional Committees or the Executive Council, not later than the closing date for resolutions and are to be circulated to all Branches not later than six weeks before Conference is to be held. Changes to Conference Standing Orders must receive at least two-thirds of the votes cast by the delegates to Conference.



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