

Resolution Date: 13/01/2015

Resolution Title: Offering Unite a Political Choice

This branch agrees to submit the following resolution to the Unite Rules Conference 2014:

Introduction

This rule change would increase the Union's range of choices, allowing Unite to support any candidate whose political programme is aligned to that of the Union, as determined at the policy conferences. It would also democratise the Political Committees. We acknowledge that some of the changes would place Unite in breach of some of the Labour Party's rules of affiliation.

In order to achieve this, the clauses set out below would need to be changed. Each relevant clause is shown with sections for deletion highlighted in **bold**. The amended clause follows (indented) with additions highlighted in **bold italics**. The relevant rule number is shown in square brackets.

After amending, rules and clauses should be renumbered as necessary.

[Rule 2: Objects]

2.1.5 To further political objectives **including by affiliation to the Labour Party**.

2.1.5 To further political objectives ***including by support for candidates in local, general and European elections whose manifesto is aligned to Unite objectives or policy.***

[Rule 10: Members in Retirement]

10.8 Retired members **who are also Unite branch CLP GC delegates** plus up to four nominees (***who must be a members of the Labour Party***) from the Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee, elected by the members of that Committee, are entitled to attend the Regional Political Conference and are eligible to stand for election to additional retired members seats on Regional Political Committees.

10.8 Retired members plus up to four nominees from the Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee, elected by the members of that Committee, are entitled to attend the Regional Political Conference and are eligible to stand for election to additional retired members seats on Regional Political Committees.

10.10 There shall be a National Committee for retired members, elected from the Regional Co-ordinating Committees in such proportion as may be determined by the Executive Council. This Committee shall elect an observer delegate to the National Political Committee **who must be a member of the Labour Party**, and, an observer delegate to the Executive Council.

10.10 There shall be a National Committee for retired members, elected from the Regional Co-ordinating Committees in such proportion as may be determined by the Executive Council. This Committee shall elect an observer delegate to the National Political Committee, and an observer delegate to the Executive Council.

[Rule 14: Executive Council]

14.7 The Chair shall preside over all Executive Council meetings, see that the business is properly conducted, and sign the minutes of each meeting when passed. The Chair shall also preside at the Biennial Policy Conference, the Rules Conference, the Finance and General Purposes Committee and in addition shall be a delegate to the Trades Union Congress **and Annual Conference of the Labour Party** (where appropriate) held during their term of office, and to such other conferences as the Executive Council may determine.

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Rule 22: Political Organisation – **The Labour Party**

Rule 22: Political Organisation

22.1 There shall be Regional and National Political Committees composed of **individual members of the Labour Party** to co-ordinate the Union's work **in the Labour Party**, acting under the direction of the Executive Council.

22.1 There shall be Regional and National Political Committees composed of ***elected branch political officers and delegates from the Regional and National Industrial Sectors and Regional Committee*** to co-ordinate the Union's ***political*** work, acting under the direction of the Executive Council.

22.2 Neither the Union, nor any constituent part of the Union, shall affiliate to or give support to the candidates of any other political party in Great Britain and Northern Ireland other than the Labour Party.

22.2 National and Regional Political Committees shall be entitled to affiliate to or give support to the candidates of political parties in Great Britain and Northern Ireland whose manifesto is aligned to Unite objectives or policy, including on equalities.

22.3 Each Branch of the Union in Great Britain and Northern Ireland shall be entitled to affiliate and elect delegates to **Constituency Labour Parties** in appropriate areas subject to agreement by the Regional Political Committee and approval of the Executive Council.

22.3 Each Branch of the Union in Great Britain and Northern Ireland shall be entitled to affiliate and elect delegates to ***participate in political activities*** in appropriate areas subject to agreement by the Regional Political Committee and approval of the Executive Council.

22.5 All Branch **Constituency Labour Party delegates** together with representatives from the Regional Industrial Sector Committees, Area Activist Committees and the Regional Committee, **who are Labour Party members**, shall be entitled to attend triennial Regional Political Conferences. The Regional Political Conferences shall elect Regional Political Committees. Retired members who conform with Rule 10.8 and community members who confirm with rule 3.3 are eligible to stand for election for Regional Political Committees. The size and composition of the Regional Political Committees shall be determined by the Executive Council from time to time.

22.5 All Branch ***political officers*** together with representatives from the Regional Industrial Sector Committees, Area Activist Committees and the Regional Committee, shall be entitled to attend triennial Regional Political Conferences. The Regional Political Conferences shall elect Regional Political Committees. Retired members who conform with Rule 10.8 and community members who

confirm with rule 3.3 are eligible to stand for election for Regional Political Committees. The size and composition of the Regional Political Committees shall be determined by the Executive Council from time to time.

22.7 The Union shall be represented at **the Labour Party Annual Conference** by delegates elected by the Regional Political Conferences, the National Political Committee and others as determined by the Executive Council.

22.7 The Union shall be represented at **political activities** by delegates elected by the Regional Political Conferences, the National Political Committee and others as determined by the Executive Council.

22.9 The Union shall support a parliamentary group of **Labour Party** MPs who are members of the Union. Such support shall be determined by the Executive Council.

22.9 The Union shall support a parliamentary group of **Unite sponsored** MPs who are members of the Union. Such support shall be determined by the Executive Council.

[Rule 17: Branches]

17.3 Branches shall have direct access to a proportion of membership subscriptions. Such a proportion and access arrangements to be determined by the Executive Council, and may be conditional on performed compliance with financial reporting requirements. These funds may be used to meet the cost of administering the Branch; for recruitment and other campaigns approved by the Executive Council; for local affiliations; to assist members or their dependants who have suffered misfortune; or for any other worthy cause, subject to any provisions elsewhere in these rules, **and that no general purposes funds shall be used for political objects**. Any payments made in connection with any form of industrial action must be made strictly in line with Executive Council guidance applicable at the time.

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[Appendix I: Guidance – Rule 6 - Lay Office EC Guidance - Item (1), para 3, p69]

For example, the Executive Council accepts that membership of Area Activist Committees should not be restricted in the way prescribed by Rule Six and should be open to all activists, including those who cannot be workplace representatives because of their circumstances. **Additionally, membership of Regional Political Committees should not be denied to Unite members playing an active part within the Labour Party at all levels, whatever their other circumstances.**

For example, the Executive Council accepts that membership of Area Activist Committees should not be restricted in the way prescribed by Rule Six and should be open to all activists, including those who cannot be workplace representatives because of their circumstances.

6.2 In order to be eligible to be a candidate for election to, or hold office on, the Executive Council and/or any committee, council or other body of the Union provided for by these rules, the member in question must be an accountable representative of workers, with the exception of Area Activists Committees **and Regional Political Committees** as specified elsewhere in these Rules.

6.2 In order to be eligible to be a candidate for election to, or hold office on, the Executive Council and/or any committee, council or other body of the Union provided for by these rules, the member in question must be an accountable representative of workers, with the exception of Area Activists Committees as specified elsewhere in these Rules.

6.2.1 Only members who are elected to represent workers will be eligible to participate in any body of the union, including any conferences, but with the exception of branch and workplace meetings (which all members can attend) and Area Activists Committees **and Regional Political Committees** as specified elsewhere in these Rules.

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[Appendix 2 - Rule 10 – Members in Retirement EC Guidance]

10.8.1 The number of such retired members' seats on Regional Political Committees will be determined by the Executive Council. **As an interim measure for the current electoral period, 2 seats will be added to each RPC to be filled by retired members [Labour Party members] elected in the interim period by the Regional Retired members' Co-ordinating Committee, thereafter** elected at the Regional Political Conference.

10.8.1 The number of such retired members' seats on Regional Political Committees will be determined by the Executive Council, **and delegates will be** elected at the Regional Political Conference.

10.10 There shall be a National Committee for retired members, elected from the Regional Co-ordinating Committees in such proportion as may be determined by the Executive Council. This Committee shall elect an observer delegate to the National Political Committee **who must be a member of the Labour Party**, and, an observer delegate to the Executive Council.

10.10 There shall be a National Committee for retired members, elected from the Regional Co-ordinating Committees in such proportion as may be determined by the Executive Council. This Committee shall elect an observer delegate to the National Political Committee, and, an observer delegate to the Executive Council.

From Appendix 4 Rule 22 – Political Organisation – **The Labour Party** EC Guidance

Appendix 4 Rule 22 – Political Organisation EC Guidance

[Introduction]

The political direction of the union rests with the Executive Council. The lay member political structures of the National and Regional Political Committees, frame recommendations for the EC and implement agreed policy and campaigning positions, **especially with regard to the Union's relations with the Labour Party.**

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[1. Basis for attendance]

- all Unite branch **delegates** (inc community members and RM+ members) **to CLP GCs**
- **all members of the Labour Party** on the Unite Regional Committees

- up to four nominees (**who must be a members of the Labour Party**) from each of the Regional Industrial Sector Committees elected by the members of that RISC
- up to four nominees (**who must be a members of the Labour Party**) from each of the Area Activist Committees elected by the members of that AAC
- up to four nominees (**who must be a members of the Labour Party**) from each of the of the 4 Regional Equalities Committees elected by the members of that Regional Equalities Committee
- up to four nominees (RM+ **who must be members of the Labour Party**) from the Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee elected by the members of that Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee.
 - all Unite branch **political officers** (inc community members and RM+ members)
 - **up to four nominees from** the Unite Regional Committees
 - up to four nominees from each of the Regional Industrial Sector Committees elected by the members of that RISC
 - up to four nominees from each of the Area Activist Committees elected by the members of that AAC
 - up to four nominees from each of the of the 4 Regional Equalities Committees elected by the members of that Regional Equalities Committee
 - up to four nominees (RM+) from the Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee elected by the members of that Regional Retired Members' Co-ordinating Committee.

It is also recommended that members of the Unite Executive Council resident in a region should be invited to attend that Region's conference if they **are Labour Party members and** are not covered by the above categories.

It is also recommended that members of the Unite Executive Council resident in a region should be invited to attend that Region's conference if they are not covered by the above categories.

There will be a Labour Party membership card check prior to each conference so all attendees must bring their card with them along with their union card.

[2. Organisation]

Notification to **CLP** delegates, Committee delegates and appropriate members of the Executive Council should be undertaken by the Regional Secretary with advice on eligibility provided by the Unite Political Department as required.

A Notification to delegates, Committee delegates and appropriate members of the Executive Council should be undertaken by the Regional Secretary with advice on eligibility provided by the Unite Political Department as required.

3. Rule 6 applies for all regional nominees to serve on the National Political Committee who must be accountable representatives of workers as defined by the Executive Council. **At the level of the Regional Political Committee, as per the EC Statement carried at the 2011 Rules Conference, Rule 6 should be generally applied other than Unite members who are LP activists should not be denied the opportunity to stand for election to the RPC general seats.** Community members are entitled to stand for election to the RPC general seats; RM+ members are entitled to stand for election to additional RPC seats designated for retired members.

3. Rule 6 applies for all regional nominees to serve on the National Political Committee who must be accountable representatives of workers as defined by the Executive Council. Community members are entitled to stand for election to the RPC general seats; RM+ members are entitled to stand for election to additional RPC seats designated for retired members.

4. Unite MPs, MEPs, MSPs and AMs from the Region may attend the Regional Political Conference on an ex officio basis.

Each Regional Committee is entitled to elect 3 of its members to the Regional Political Committee, **who must be members of the Labour Party**. This election is carried out separately to that of the Regional Political Conference.

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[Regional Political Committees]

In each Region the Young Members' Committee shall elect an observer delegate (**Labour Party member**) to the Regional Political Committee.

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[6. Elections to the National Political Committee]

The Executive Council will elect or appoint 3 members including the Chair of the Council (**if a Labour Party member**), of whom at least 1 shall be a woman and all of whom are Labour Party members.

The Executive Council will elect or appoint 3 members including the Chair of the Council, of whom at least 1 shall be a woman and all of whom are Labour Party members.

There will be 1 seat for an observer delegate (**Labour Party member**) on the National Political Committee elected from and by the Retired Members' National Committee.

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[Delete the following in its entirety:]

7. Labour Party Conference delegation

In previous years the Unite delegation to the Labour Party Conference has been formed by the National Political Committee with additional delegates being appointed by the Executive Council.

With the reduction in numbers of the National Political Committee and in order to maintain the size of the Unite delegation as commensurate with the union's status as the largest affiliate further delegates should be elected as follows (all of whom must be members of the Labour Party):

1 from each of the NISCs (23)

1 from each of the National Equality Committees (4)

1 from each of the Regional Committees (9)

1 from each of the Regional Women's Committees (9)

1 from the London & Eastern and West Midlands Regional BAEM Committees (2) plus 3 from the Executive Council (3).

Should the delegation not reflect the Union's Rules on minimum gender and ethnic proportionality the EC will use the additional member system to achieve compliance with Rule.

The extra delegates listed above will mean a further 50 delegates in addition to the 26 full delegates and 1 observer delegate from the National Political Committee plus such numbers of Union officers as determined by the Executive Council.

