

Mover: Unite

Seconded: Labour Business

Composite motion: women and the economy

Conference notes the Government failed to perform Equality Impact Assessments on any Covid-19 measure.

The pandemic has exposed and deepened the structural inequalities in our society. The global pandemic has threatened the progress of women at all levels of society. The crisis has hit women disproportionately hard, particularly migrant women, those facing racism, disability discrimination, young women and single parents the majority of whom are women. Yet Government policies have steadfastly refused to address these inequalities and have been skewed towards men and follows a decade of austerity hitting women's incomes, jobs, economic security and safety.

86% of austerity cuts fell on women; during lockdown mothers were 47% more likely to have permanently lost their jobs or quit than fathers (Institute for Fiscal Studies).

69% of the low paid are women frequently on zero hour contracts and without sick pay making quarantining very difficult.

Women are: more likely to have been working in a sector that shut down during lockdown work disproportionately in front-line occupations including health care, retail and childcare therefore more likely to have had to work in unsafe conditions took on more responsibility for home schooling than men more likely to have lost savings and earnings during lockdown and at greater risk of being disproportionately affected by future cuts to work, benefits and employee rights, just as during the Conservatives austerity policies of 2010 to 2019.

There has been a gendered response to business support with schemes to support typically male businesses like pubs, but less support, and even ridicule, about sectors dominated by women

The success of women world leaders in handling the pandemic resulted in significantly fewer deaths. This success could be transferred to UK businesses taking women with them through the technological revolution, where future jobs and training are critical to the UK's economy.

There is ample evidence to show the disproportionate impact on women's employment. However, we note that there are no similar assessments of the grants and other business support measures provided. There has been a gendered response to business support with schemes to support typically male businesses like pubs, but less support, and even ridicule, about sectors dominated by women like beauty and weddings.

Women were under-represented in business ownership before the pandemic and that ownership is shrinking. This represents a huge potential that should be unlocked in the

recovery because it is good for business and it is good for society. Labour must listen to all the business community and ensure that it pursues policies to improve diversity.

Conference welcomes the Women and Equalities Select Committee 'Unequal impact? Coronavirus and the gendered economic impact' and Women's Budget Group, 'Creating a Caring Economy', reports. Women's work in the caring economy has been laid bare by the pandemic: in the home, healthcare, childcare, social care, education, women are at the heart of the social infrastructure. In the pandemic, reliance on the care economy becomes evermore critical, whilst exacerbating gender inequalities.

We need to seize the opportunity to rebuild with a gender positive economic strategy that empowers all women, ends poverty and puts achieving our equality at the heart of creating a better society for all.

Conference calls on Labour to develop this strategy, building on our policies ensuring a socialist green new deal creates decent jobs for women across all sectors and expanding public services, including;

Repeal all anti- trade union laws and create new rights and freedoms for trade unions to help them win a better deal for working people,

Maternity, promotion and redundancy protection for pregnant and new mothers,

raising women's incomes with substantial increases in public sector pay and minimum wage and safeguard existing collective bargaining structures (e.g. NJC in the Fire and Rescue Service),, and delivering pensions justice

Strengthen employers' duty to make reasonable adjustments which would significantly benefit disabled women and provide support for business

The Shadow Secretary of State for Women and Equalities to call for planning for women's economic and social equality, including closing of the gender pay gap, to be at the heart of any initiatives and policies proposed by the Government, including those generated by its Build Back Better Business Council; to campaign for the Government to carry out Equality Impact Assessments of future policies, particularly those involving the Treasury and DWP, to ensure this happens.

Making equality criteria central to procurement decisions, urge the government to award contracts to businesses that recognise women's contribution at the Board and Executive level and women's business ownership.

Develop economic strategies that invest in the infrastructure of a caring economy - public services, childcare, education, health, social care, the environment, safe, affordable public transport and a national independent living service with public ownership and provision of social care at its core, with support for existing successful systems.

Decent homes and social security for all. A national funded strategy supporting women facing domestic violence and abuse. Continuing to support access to justice, restoration of legal aid, and international trade agreements that deliver peace, ethical and fair trade. Labour should commit to Equality Impact Assessments of all Budget statements and Comprehensive Spending Reviews, holding the Government to account on equality.

Berwick-Upon-Tweed CLP

Brighton, Kemptown CLP

North Somerset CLP

Labour Business

Bristol South CLP

Unite

Old Bexley and Sidcup CLP

Aylesbury CLP

Fire Brigades Union