

CONFERENCE ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Addendum to CAC Report 2

Monday 23 September 2024

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AI AND AUTOMATION

Conference recognises that emerging and developing technologies present opportunities for workers and industries but come with challenges and risks which without regulation or protections will further entrench discrimination. Conference notes the ongoing ICO consultation series on generative AI and data protection and the round table with music industry representatives on Tuesday 17 September 2024.

Women, Black and Asian ethnic minority, disabled and LGBT+ workers are most vulnerable to discrimination by algorithm and AI.

Acknowledgement of AI in the King's Speech on 17th July and the publication of the TUC's Generative AI Toolkit, on 3rd September, reinforce the need to tackle this. The Generative AI Toolkit supports union representatives in negotiating policies with employers on the use of artificial intelligence (AI). Conference commends the work being done by union representatives in this area, but notes that significant policy development is needed to address the challenges of AI and automation in the workplace.

The roll-out of artificial intelligence in our lives and workplaces must be managed in a way that works for and considers people. Technologies should assist and facilitate human labour and creativity, rather than replace it wholesale.

Conference recognises that the potential impact of new technology on workers goes beyond job security, and can include work intensification, discriminatory algorithmic decisions and privacy issues. The use of AI systems like language software can replicate racist stereotypes, including linguistic discrimination by assigning speakers of African American English worse results. The unregulated collection of data can be used to victimise on the basis of special categories of personal data, including trade union membership, known as 'digital blacklisting'. It is therefore crucial that the voice of workers and human creators is heard in Britain's digital transition and working people be protected from unforeseen consequences.

Conference resolves:

Labour must prioritise legislation to prevent the misuse of AI and new technology in the workplace.

The interests of workers and businesses must be balanced; major corporations and bad bosses must not be allowed to use artificial intelligence in a way that exploits working people or diminishes their rights and pay. Workers need protection from AI-powered decision-making, particularly 'high-risk' decisions like recruitment, performance assessments and discipline

Conference calls on the Labour Government to take action so that the UK's employment rights framework is fit for purpose, in the light of current and future advances in AI. This must include:

- Trade unions to be consulted by the Labour Government in relation to AI policy to ensure that our members' rights are upheld, pay and conditions remain fair and that new rights are introduced urgently where necessary.
- The right for meaningful trade union consultation and negotiation on the introduction and use of new technologies at work, including the collection, handling and misuse of data.
- The right to switch off.
- A requirement for Equality Impact Assessments prior to new technology being introduced, so that employers can identify where some groups will be impacted more than others and be required to take action to reduce the impact.
- Statutory Workplace Equality Representatives with legal protections to ensure collective oversight of the misuse of AI and new technologies at work.
- Preventing use of AI for 'digital blacklisting' and discrimination.
- The right for workers to have a human connection when decisions about them and their job are being made.
- A comprehensive review of the redundancy framework, including consultation requirements and the level of statutory redundancy pay, to strengthen protections for workers whose jobs are at risk.
- The extension of public sector equality duties to ensure AI does not embed discrimination in public bodies. This should include a role for the EHRC in regulating the use of discriminatory AI systems, backed by statutory guidance and equality impact assessments.

Mover: Unite
Seconded: Musicians' Union

AN ECONOMY FOR THE FUTURE

Conference notes that workers and communities voted for change – a better future, not just better management and not cuts to the winter fuel allowance.

The Prime Minister’s speech, delivered in Downing Street on the 27th of August 2024, stated that the upcoming budget was “going to be painful” and warned voters to “accept short-term pain for long-term good”.

Fourteen years of Tory austerity has devastated Britain. Our schools, our NHS, our prisons- every single public service has been slashed by the Conservatives project of public destruction. Alongside this, profiteering has flourished, short-term profits are favoured over long-term investment and working people have paid the price through real-terms wage cuts.

For so long, workers have been told that if they work hard, they can have a decent life and access well-functioning public services- with the guarantee that their children will be better off. Austerity has destroyed this promise.

Britain cannot wait for growth, nor turn back to failed austerity.

We need a vision where pensioners are not the first to face a new wave of cuts and those that profited from decades of deregulation finally help to rebuild Britain.

Tory austerity left a black hole worth hundreds of billions in our public services.

- The decade before the pandemic, saw day-to-day health spending at 18% below the EU14 average, and NHS waiting lists are now at record highs.
- Public sector pay is down 19% in real terms since 2010, and we have hundreds of thousands of unfilled vacancies.

Decades without industrial planning have left a public investment gap of £500 billion below the OECD average since 2000.

Net zero cannot be delivered without more money and we cannot ask workers to pay for it with their jobs.

Conference recognises that a new economic settlement is needed to rebuild our country in the interest of working people. A Labour government cannot be held back by an economic dogma that restricts real investment and asks working people and pensioners to bear the brunt of cuts while wealth accumulates at the top of society.

Conference resolves that Labour will address this in the October budget and will commit to:

1. Reverse the introduction of means-testing for the Winter Fuel Allowance
2. Ending fiscal rules which prevent borrowing to invest
3. Commit to public services and infrastructure, ensuring any public expenditure gaps, at a minimum, are restored through taxing wealth and that there are no further cuts to welfare provision for working people and pensioners.

4. Introducing a wealth tax on the top 1%, an excess profits tax, equalise capital gains tax with income tax and apply national insurance to investment income
5. Delivering the investment necessary for a workers' transition to Net Zero

Mover: Unite

Seconded: Communication Workers Union

BORDER SECURITY COMMAND

On the 18th July, the UK hosted the European Political Community summit, which committed to deepening international co-operation. Conference notes that small boat crossings and Europe-wide people smuggling gangs are undermining our border security and costing lives.

Over the last 14 years of Tory rule, immigration has soared despite increasing public disquiet around this problem.

Rather than a serious plan to confront this crisis, the Conservatives have offered nothing but desperate gimmicks over the past fourteen years. With the arrival of this new Labour Government, Conference welcomes the scrapping of the Rwanda scheme as a first step on this path to reform.

Conference now calls on the Labour Party to:

- Introduce the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill to establish a new Border Security Command and deliver new counter-terror powers to tackle organised immigration crime
- Hire additional caseworkers to clear the Conservatives' backlog and end asylum hotels, saving the taxpayer billions of pounds.
- Negotiate additional returns arrangements to speed up returns and increase the number of safe countries to which failed asylum seekers can swiftly be returned.
- Act upstream working with international partners to address the humanitarian crises which lead people to flee their homes, and to strengthen support for refugees in their home region.

Mover: Wellingborough and Rushden CLP
Seconder: Hammersmith and Chiswick CLP

CLEAN ENERGY MISSION

First Step: Switch on Great British Energy noting the Labour government's actions to lift the ban on onshore wind and grant permission for new solar farms on 8th July 2024.

Conference recognises:

- The damage done by 14 years of chaotic Conservative policymaking on energy, leaving working people vulnerable to dictators like Putin.
- The impact sky-high energy prices have had on families and businesses across the country.

Conference calls on the Labour government to:

- Pass a bill to create a National Wealth Fund, investing in clean industries and create 650,000 new high-quality jobs.
- Pass a Great British Energy Bill to establish Great British Energy, a publicly-owned clean energy generation company, headquartered in Scotland which will ensure that the British people benefit from clean energy investment and create jobs and build supply chains in every corner of the UK.
- Deliver its mission for a clean power system by 2030, accelerating towards net zero.
- Deliver a Warm Homes Plan to upgrade five million homes and cut bills for families.

Mover: Sefton Central CLP
Secunder: Rutherglen CLP

CRIME MISSION

On 24th July, national crime statistics were published showing shoplifting has shot up to a 20-year high and theft has risen by nearly 20% over the past year.

These figures show the disgraceful dereliction of the last Tory Government on law and order – they deserted our town centres and high streets, leaving local people facing soaring levels of street crime.

Conference believes Labour must crackdown on antisocial behaviour to deliver on it's commitment to rebuild public confidence in policing and increase the proportion of crimes solved.

Conference calls on the Labour Party to:

- Put 13,000 neighbourhood police and PSOs back on the beat in communities across the country so that they are visible and present in local areas.
- Introduce new Respect Orders to give the police new powers to ban persistent adult offenders from town centres to stamp out issues such as public drinking and drug use.
- Introduce the Victims, Court and Public Protection Bill to ensure victims of crime and antisocial behaviour get the support they deserve.
- Force fly-tippers and vandals to clean up the mess that they have created in their communities.
- Scrap the effective immunity for some shoplifting introduced by the Conservatives and create a new specific offence for assaults on shopworkers that will protect them from threats and violence.
- Stop young people being drawn into crime by creating a new young futures programme with a network of hubs reaching across every community.

Mover: Norwich North CLP

FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 1

Conference believes that the election was a resounding rejection of the Tories. The public, sick and tired of austerity, economic mismanagement and crumbling public services, used their votes to demand change.

Conference is under no illusion about the challenges facing our new government; no quick fix will repair the damage done over the past 14 years.

However, Conference is clear that the government does not have the luxury of time and therefore welcomes the Deputy Prime Minister's letter to local leaders on 16 July, and speech to the Local Government Association Councillors' Forum on 18 July 2024.

Conference welcomes the promise that this government would be "laser focused on pushing power out of Whitehall and lighting the touch paper of growth across our regions", and its commitment to providing greater stability to councils through multi-year funding settlements and ending wasteful competitive bidding.

The manifesto recognised that good local government jobs deliver better services that communities can rely on and must be at the centre of providing capacity and support to councils.

Conference calls on Labour to:

Invest in high-quality local government services and safeguard jobs, alongside a fairer system for distributing the funds and longer-term settlements;

Rebuild the important range of public services that local government provides as part of its economic growth strategy;

Work with the recognised trade unions, Local Government Association, Metro Mayors, Labour councils and councillors to develop a workforce strategy including good jobs with decent pay and conditions and end outsourcing.

Mover: UNISON

Seconder: FBU

FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2

Conference reiterates its solidarity with the bereaved, survivors and residents of the Grenfell Tower fire, in light of the public inquiry report published on 4 September 2024.

Conference condemns the cladding manufacturers, private contractors, BRE, RBKC and the TMO for their roles in the Grenfell Tower fire.

Conference hopes that those found guilty of breaching the law will swiftly face justice for their crimes.

Conference condemns Westminster government policies of deregulation and austerity, which were central reasons for the safety failures at Grenfell Tower.

Conference is appalled by the continued cladding crisis, which leaves more than four million people living in residential buildings over 11 metres tall in fear for their safety.

Conference is horrified that half of the 4,600 known buildings of 11 metres or more with unsafe cladding have not started remediation.

Conference demands that the Labour government and local authorities prioritise justice for Grenfell and making every home safe for people to live in.

Conference demands that ministers consult with tenants, residents, trade unions and housing campaigners on the inquiry recommendations, and the speedy implementation of the most urgent, agreed practical measures.

Conference demands the Labour government:

Provide sustained investment in local government and the fire and rescue service, including fire inspectors. Ensure building control is only carried out by local authority staff, not private contractors. Bring fire testing and research under public ownership and control. Establish a statutory advisory body, including the FBU, to oversee fire safety policy, research, training and guidance.

Mover: FBU

Secunder: UNISON

GROWTH MISSION

Labour fought and won the General Election on the promise of economic stability after fourteen years of Tory chaos.

Noting the publication of the Labour government's Budget Responsibility Bill on 18th July 2024, Conference recognises:

The necessity of avoiding a repeat of the disastrous Liz Truss 'mini budget', which wreaked havoc on the finances of working people.

That economic stability is essential to keeping inflation and mortgages as low as possible and therefore the importance of maintaining strong fiscal rules that promote economic stability, while allowing for investment to grow the economy

The Labour government's commitment to delivering economic stability, following years of economic chaos and short-termism under the Conservatives.

The importance of economic stability for families who have suffered from a cost-of-living crisis, with high prices for energy, food and other essentials.

Conference calls on the Labour government to:

Protect family finances by passing a Budget Responsibility Bill to introduce a fiscal lock, strengthening the Office for Budget Responsibility.

Introduce a Draft Audit Reform and Corporate Governance Bill to create a certain and stable environment for investment necessary to grow the economy

Create a more stable investment environment, including a Planning and Infrastructure Bill to reform planning and unlock housing and infrastructure.

Deliver its mission to boost growth, aiming for the highest sustained growth in the G7.

Mover: Bristol Central
Seconded: Hinckley and Bosworth

HEALTH MISSION

Conference notes that:

New official data, as of August 2024, shows 7.6 million on an NHS waiting list, with over 300,000 patients waiting longer than 52 weeks.

This Labour Government inherits an NHS that is broken, after 14 years of Conservative mismanagement in England and 17 years of SNP mismanagement in Scotland.

Conference welcomes:

The commitments set out in the Mental Health Bill and Tobacco and Vapes Bill to reduce pressure on our NHS and improve public health.

A full and frank assessment of the state of the NHS that Labour inherits, noting that diagnosing the scale of the problem is essential in treating it.

Conference calls on the Labour Party to:

Tackle the crisis in the NHS waiting list through delivering on the manifesto pledge to deliver 40,000 NHS appointments every week, during evenings and weekends.

Invest in the technology and equipment needed to build an NHS fit for the future through doubling the number of CT and MRI scanners, allowing the NHS to catch cancer and other conditions earlier.

Recruit and train the NHS staff needed, including the manifesto commitment to recruit 8,500 additional mental health staff.

Steadfastly protect the founding principles of the NHS, a comprehensive, free at the point of use service with access based on clinical need, not the individual's ability to pay.

**Iford North CLP
Norwich South CLP**

INFRASTRUCTURE 1

Conference recognises that the lack of industrial strategy and effective growth targets for rail freight under the previous government, combined with years of underfunding, means rail freight is at a significant disadvantage.

Conference also notes that on 12 July 2024, Carpetright filed notice of intent to appoint administrators and that, despite a rescue deal, more than 1,500 jobs were subsequently lost, in the latest of many retail closures.

The UK retail sector is an essential part of our economic and community infrastructure. It has an economic output of over £112 billion per year, directly employs around three million people and is present in every community across the country. However, analysis by the British Retail Consortium shows that 6,000 retail outlets have been lost over the last five years. Retail closures have left shop vacancies within our communities and workers facing redundancy. Action to address the issues facing the retail sector will be a critical step in establishing an effective industrial strategy.

This Conference believes that a thriving retail sector must be a central element of Labour's Plan for Growth.

Conference congratulates the Secretary of State for Transport on her excellent work pushing forward the Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill.

Conference therefore welcomes the 'Rail and Urban Transport Review', published on 21st August, which outlines the need for a long-term vision for transport infrastructure, including setting a goal of doubling the mode share of rail in a decade and a more ambitious rail freight growth target.

This comes at a challenging time for rail freight. High electricity costs contributed to Royal Mail's 10th July announcement to scrap their electric rail fleet and has also seen operators running diesel-powered trains under electric wires.

Conference further notes that Labour's 'Getting Britain Moving' report outlines the need for Great British Railways to manage freight contracts and introduce a statutory duty to promote the use and growth of rail freight.

Conference therefore calls on the Labour Government to:

Continue to work with trade unions to develop and deliver a real industrial strategy.

Set a real and ambitious rail freight growth target and track access charges, make available more rail freight paths, setting a goal for an integrated green sector and fix affordable electricity for rail freight operators.

- Continue to recognise the importance of the retail sector within the UK's economic and community infrastructure.
- Reform business rates and tackle the uneven playing field between online and bricks and mortar retailers, as an early priority.

- Tackle the employment issues facing workers in the sector through the introduction of the New Deal for Working People.
- Ensure union representation of retail workers on the UK's Industrial Strategy Council.
- Invest in our high streets and deliver training and skills to ensure that the workforce is ready for the challenges of the future.

Mover: USDAW
Seconded: ASLEF

INFRASTRUCTURE 2

Conference welcomes the Labour Government's decision on the 1st August 2024 to examine the proposed takeover of Royal Mail by Czech billionaire, Daniel Kretinsky, under the National Security and Investment Act.

Conference recognises privatisation has failed customers and workers and that the company's recent leadership has grossly mismanaged Royal Mail's finances, while continuing to prioritise shareholder interests over its own employees.

Conference recognises the company has manufactured a crisis in service quality, staffing and morale to facilitate USO reform, in conjunction with Ofcom. Their current Universal Service Obligation (USO) reform plan solely focuses on cost-cutting and extreme price increases, rather than utilising its trusted workforce and unrivalled national infrastructure to develop new growth opportunities and to maximise social value in supporting our NHS and communities.

Conference agrees the Government must now urgently intervene and act to secure the future of Royal Mail, protecting the interests of customers, workers and the country, as follows:

As part of the assessment of the proposed takeover, ensure stronger contractual obligations are provided, including on the future of the USO, the need to protect jobs and on preventing asset stripping or the splitting of the company.

Ensure that any final decision on USO reform is taken by the government, rather than Ofcom and Royal Mail's failed leadership team.

Facilitate a new business governance and ownership model that truly aligns the interest of employees, customers and the company.

Mover: CWU
Secunder: ASLEF

MAKING WORK PAY FOR PUBLIC SERVICES: COMPOSITE 1

Conference welcomes the Employment Rights Bill announced in the King's Speech on 17 July 2024, which the government has promised will lead to a Fair Pay Agreement in adult social care.

The sector is critically short of funding and suffers too much from its scarce resources leaking out in the form of profits, excessive executive pay, and other wasteful practices. The sector should only be focussed on delivering world-class care for those who need it.

Conference notes that there are around 131,000 vacancies in the sector, with thousands of our society's most vulnerable people not receiving the levels of support they need.

Conference notes that employment in the sector is frequently insecure and largely underpaid, often illegally so. Proper sick pay remains elusive for thousands of care workers, alongside training and progression opportunities. Conference is particularly alarmed at the exploitation of the migrant workforce.

Therefore, Conference welcomes Labour's manifesto plan to establish a Fair Pay Agreement in adult social care to set fair pay, terms and conditions, along with training standards.

Conference welcomes wider plans to create a National Care Service, underpinned by national standards leading to a sustainable sector delivering for the workforce and those they care for.

Conference calls on our Labour Government to:

Support the development of a Fair Pay Agreement in adult social care;

Deliver a credible workforce strategy and tackle the exploitation of migrant workers;

Work with unions demanding change and the development of a National Care Service.

Mover: Unison
Secunder: GMB

MAKING WORK PAY FOR PUBLIC SERVICES: COMPOSITE 2

Conference welcomes the King's Speech announcement that the Employment Rights Bill will reinstate the School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB), working with National Joint Council unions including GMB to ensure national terms and conditions, training, career progression and fair pay rates for support staff are delivered.

Conference notes:

Labour's manifesto commitment to "value and recognise the professionalism of the entire school workforce and address recruitment and retention challenges."

Nearly half of school support staff in England work in an academy school.

The Low Pay Commission has listed many school support staff roles as 'low-paying occupations' as term-time only contracts and outsourcing of non-teaching support roles has kept overall pay low.

GMB members' concerns that insufficient training, development and pay for frontline staff supporting pupils identified with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) contributes to staff shortages.

Conference believes:

Properly valuing and recognising the professionalism of all school support staff is essential to fulfilling Labour's manifesto commitments.

Conference calls upon our Labour Government to work with NJC Unions to:

Ensure all support workers in schools are covered in the definition of School Support Staff and by the SSSNB, including academy schools.

Ensure that pay awards for School Support Staff negotiated under the SSSNB are implemented.

Reform SEND provision to increase accountability so that all children receive the inclusive education they deserve.

Bring outsourced school workforces back in-house.

End the scandal of Term Time Only contracts for school support staff.

Mover: GMB
Secunder: Unison

OPPORTUNITY MISSION

Conference notes new analysis, released by the Education Policy Institute on the 16 July 2024, which shows that poorer pupils are now 19 months behind their better-off classmates by the end of secondary school.

Conference welcomes the work already started to address this issue by this Labour government in the form of the Children's Wellbeing Bill, which seeks to boost standards and deliver free breakfast clubs for all primary school pupils.

Conference further calls on Labour to:

- Deliver on the manifesto commitment to recruit 6,500 expert teachers and specialist mental health support in school, noting the positive progress already made and acknowledging that the increase in poor mental health is related to social and economic factors that need urgent attention.
- Tackle teacher attrition and vacancies through respecting and supporting the teaching workforce, starting by introducing a new Teacher Training Entitlement to ensure teacher stay up to date on best practice with continuing professional development.
- Address the acute recruitment and retention crisis in support roles.
- Create a curriculum that is rigorous and broad, which supports children to succeed in life and work.

Mover: Bexhill and Battle

Second: Liverpool West Derby

PROCUREMENT

Conference welcomes:

The Labour manifesto commitment to fully delivering its plan to “Make Work Pay” and the Employment Rights Bill announced in the King’s Speech.

Labour’s “Make Work Pay” commitment to a new Procurement Bill, the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation and a National Procurement Plan that recognises decent pay and union recognition under mandatory social value weightings.

Conference notes that:

On 11th September the Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds gave a ministerial statement to the House of Commons on co-investing with Tata Steel UK.

Following months of difficult negotiations with the company, unions were able to secure extensive investment commitments, as well as a comprehensive skills and retention package. Those commitments have now been strengthened and locked in by the Labour government’s intervention.

Conference believes that:

Trade union recognition and the right of workplace access to promote it must be enshrined when contracting and determining strategic suppliers such as Amazon.

Labour’s procurement plan is central to delivering other manifesto commitments improving public services and energy security to industrial policies that onshore high-quality skilled jobs and supply chains in industries like hydrogen, nuclear, defence manufacturing and steel.

The UK must make far greater use of social and environmental clause in procurement contracts as well as steel content targets to ensure that UK producers get a greater share. UK primary steel production is a key strategic interest which should be supported where possible.

UK national security is dependent on an interventionist state building an economy with good jobs at its core and an industrial strategy that recognises energy and manufacturing sectors are interconnected. A wide range of challenges face the UK steel industry and a just transition to greener steel making, with many relating to the way procurement is undertaken within the UK.

Labour’s plan to grow the economy relies upon its manifesto commitment “to modernise trade rules and agreements so they work for Britain.

Conference calls on the UK Labour Government to:

- Fully partner with trade unions to co-design plans to Make Work Pay.
- Reaffirm its commitment to a just transition protecting jobs, the environment, and the economy.

- Implement its National Procurement Plan and deliver its manifesto commitments.
- Ensure unions have a voice in the Social Value Council and the review to strengthen social value commitments, including fair pay, and a steel task force to identify how procurement can be reformed as part of the Steel Strategy and wider Government work to ensure UK steel producers are not disadvantaged against international steel producers.
- Guarantee defence shipbuilding contracts are built and procured in UK shipyards
- Set up a comprehensive Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism in-line with the European Union's to ensure that the UK steel market is protected from cheap high carbon steel imports effecting procurement contracts.
- Seek repeal of UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement clauses mirroring WTO restrictions on domestic content requirements

Mover: GMB
Seconder: Community