

POA Annual Conference 2018

Annual Conference
VERBATIM REPORT



POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th – Thursday 17th May 2018

Index

Tuesday 15th May

Report - Standing Order Committee	1 – 3
National Chair's Opening Address including Minute Silence	3 – 7
Finance Officer's Report	7 – 9
Motions 1 – 19	9 - 26
Adoption of Annual Report 2017	27
Motions 21 – 31	27 – 39
Fraternal Address – Geoff Burrows – Honorary Life Member	39
Motions 32 – 43	41 – 48
Guest Speaker – Simon Rosario – GDPR Consultant	50 – 51
Motions 44 - 46	52 – 56

Wednesday 16th May

National Committee for Secure Health Care Services - AGM	57 – 58
Guest Speaker – Pete Hancox, Honorary Life Member & Chair of the Retired Members Committee	59
Motion 47 - 58	60 – 78
Guest Speaker – Helen Dyer, Director CASPA- Life with Autism	78 – 81
Presentations – Cronin Clasps, Health & Safety	
Rep of the Year and Toe by Toe Awards	81 – 89
Guest Speaker – David Wilson - Emeritus Professor of Criminology, Birmingham City University	90 – 93
Guest Speaker – Stephen Cavalier, Chief Executive Thompson Solicitors	93 – 95
Motion 63	96 – 98
Fraternal Address – John Clinton, General Secretary Southern Ireland POA	98 – 100
Motions 65	100 – 102

Thursday 17th May

Motion 20	102 – 104
Guest Speaker – Richard Burgon MP – Shadow Secretary of State for Justice and Shadow Lord Chancellor	104 – 108
Guest Speaker – Michael Spurr, CEO HM Prison & Probation Service	108 – 119
Guest Speaker – Professor Keith Ewing, President IER	119 – 122
Motions 66 – 85	123 – 140
Andy Darken – Outgoing Deputy General Secretary – Farewell Speech	140 – 141
Terry Fullerton – Outgoing Acting Vice Chair – Farewell Speech	141 – 143
Closing Speech – Mark Fairhurst, National Chair	143 – 144
Closing Speech – Steve Gillan, General Secretary	144

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Tuesday 15th May, Morning Session - Part 1

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference, good morning all. We don't have any announcements this morning, so it's straight on to my Vice Chair, Terry Fullerton, with the Standing Orders Report.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Good morning Conference. Welcome to Southport, the POA's 79th Annual Conference. As Chair of Standing Orders it is my intention to set out the Order of Business and I would like to thank the Standing Orders Committee for conducting the business of the Union. There is a lot of information which I need to share with you, so please ensure you have your Conference Agenda and Emergency motions to hand so that you can note the placement and changes as we move through the report.

Firstly you will note that in the Order of Business we have a number of fringe meetings scheduled during Conference. Can I urge delegates to support these fringe meetings and events wherever possible? Food and refreshments will be offered at each event but space is limited so please get there early to avoid disappointment. You should have all have registered by now and been furnished with the appropriate documentation for this year's 79th Annual Conference. Most of this was forwarded to you via POA circulars and you should have copies of those with you. For the avoidance of doubt each delegate should have an Annual Conference agenda booklet, report back booklet, two Conference papers, six emergency motions and two appeals to Conference. All of the other documentation is contained in your delegates' pack which you picked up this morning. If you need any assistance during the week do not hesitate to contact the conference staff in the Conference Office or any of the NEC.

During the course of this week delegates from all branches in England and Wales and Scotland will be required to attend the Conference Office to collect and sign for the revised Legal Advice Handbook for your establishment. The Legal Advice Handbook will also be uploaded onto the POA website in the legal services section for members to apply online and branch officials are reminded to keep the Legal Aid Handbook up-to-date and available for members.

Delegates wishing to address Conference should make their way to the front of the hall and take a seat. All the delegates *must* take up seats on the floor of Conference. I am assured that there is sufficient seating for all delegates scheduled to attend. Delegates, observers, providers, invited guests and honorary life members must wear your identification badge throughout Conference to assist the security team. Whilst we have no specific intelligence on security threats whatever, you want to be vigilant and report any concerns to a member of the security team. I would remind you that only delegates are allowed on the Conference floor and all observers and other invited guests must take up seats in the appropriate designated area. The NEC have determined that it will be necessary to hold some motions in camera. As a result of this decision, and for the avoidance of doubt, when the Chair of Conference advises Conference that motions will be heard in camera, all honorary life members, observers, invited guests and the security team will leave the Conference hall. Once these motions have been dealt with the Chair of Conference will advise the security team to allow honorary life members, observers and invited guests back into the hall. During the in-camera session will the security team please ensure all entrances to the hall are staffed and no one is allowed in or out during this period.

In moving the Standing Orders Committee Report to this 79th Annual Conference, the Standing Orders Committee seeks the approval of Conference for the following delegates to be appointed as scrutineers and tellers: Stewart McLaughlin from Wandsworth; Wendy Price from Drake Hall; Phil Tuck from Cardiff; Niall McIntosh from Whitemoor; Dave Cook from Swaleside and Duncan Williams from Littlehey. Can I call on the Chair to ask Conference to approve the scrutineers and tellers?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference can you show your approval for the scrutineers and tellers, please? Thank you, Conference.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you. The Standing Orders Committee in regard to the Order of Business for Conference are set out on the inside of the Conference Agenda, please take a moment to remind yourself of these rules throughout Conference. I remind delegates of the rules governing Conference and Procedures as set out in Conference Paper 3 of 2015. If you are unsure of any issues, please feel free to speak to the Standing Orders Committee, 'cause we're only here to help. For the 79th Annual Conference we received 109 Annual Conference Motions within the prescribed time. The Standing Orders Committee contacted all of the branches to confirm that the branch had held branch meetings and suggested that 28 motions were reworded in line with Conference policy. 24 were returned as not meeting

the criteria, giving us an agenda for this Conference of 85 motions. The Standing Orders Committee received 6 emergency motions. We have 2 appeals to Conference which I will deal with shortly and there were no appeals on placements from branches.

I'll deal with the placement of the emergency motions and advise Conference of some placement changes that Standing Orders Committee believe are relevant for the smooth running of Conference. I will remind Conference that the section containing proposed rule changes will require a two-thirds majority and the rest of the Conference agenda will require a simple majority. Therefore, Conference, we have an Agenda of 85 motions as contained in your Conference booklet, 2 Conference Papers and 6 emergency motions.

Conference, in order to expedite business throughout the week your attention is drawn to paragraph 1 of the Standing Orders Report. The procedure should any branch wish to remove the Chair, paragraph 2; should any delegate wish to raise a point of order, paragraph 3; and if any member causes a disturbance during the proceedings and refuses to obey the Chair's ruling, they shall be expelled from Conference and not allowed to return until a suitable apology has been tendered.

Delegates are reminded that all mobile phones must be switched off or set to silent throughout the duration of Conference. This also includes the NEC, FTOs, invited guests, observers and honorary life members.

Any branch who wishes to second a specific motion should ensure that they inform myself or Glyn Travis as soon as possible so that we can inform the Chair of Conference before he seeks a seconder to the motion from the floor. Delegates should be aware if you second a motion you must speak at the time as you will not be allowed to speak once the debate has started. Again delegates if you intend to speak on behalf of your branch in any motion, will you please come forward to the front of Conference and occupy one of the seats during the moving of the motion. The Chair will call you to the rostrum to address Conference.

Any delegate addressing Conference must give their name and branch so that the recording facilities in use for the verbatim report can identify the moving branches. Will all delegates, observers and providers return to their seats quickly following any break in Conference so that the Chair can move business. Throughout Conference delegates may be required to attend the Office on official business. All delegates must ensure that at least one delegate remains on the Conference floor while Conference is in session.

In line with custom and practice, Conference, the Chair of Conference may call motions when guest speakers are attending and address Conference with the approval of Conference. The Welfare Committee AGM will take place at the direction of the Chair of Conference. The NCSHCS AGM will take place at some point on Wednesday morning.

Conference, can you please open your Conference booklet and make the following changes on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee Motion 20 will now be heard after motion 65 at 65(a). Turning to the Emergency Motions Booklet 1, emergency motion 1 from Liverpool will be heard at 6. Emergency motion 2 from the NEC will be heard at 62(a). Emergency motion 3 from the NEC will be heard at 62(b). Emergency motion 4 from the NEC will be heard at 62(c) and emergency motion 5 from Elmley will be heard at 62(d). Turning to the Emergency Motions Booklet 2, the emergency motion from the NEC will be heard at 11(a). Has everyone had the opportunity to make those changes in your Conference Agenda or does anyone need me to repeat those changes? If anyone needs me to repeat the changes can you just make me aware by putting your hand up and I'll go through it again. Everybody happy? Thank you.

Conference, for your information it's the intention of the NEC to hold motions 59-62(d) inclusive in camera. If at any point the NEC believe any other motion needs to be in camera, I will advise you during the course of Conference.

Comrades, I'm almost done and I can remember being here 12 months' ago saying exactly the same thing when I said to Conference I'm almost done, which is more than I can say for my favourite football team, Sunderland, who had been done months before. I'm back here 12 months' later saying exactly the same thing and Sunderland have done exactly the same thing, so we've had two relegations, so I'm pleased this is my last Conference 'cause I would end up watching Sunderland playing in the Conference League!

Can I now call Hewell to address Appeal 1 to Conference?

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Good morning all, Chair, NEC, Conference, Hewell branch wish to appeal against the decision to return and reject the branch motion and the branch motion reads: Conference mandates the NEC to seek an amendment to PSI 6 of 2010, where there is a fatal consequence of disciplinary process in the event of mandatory instructions and guidelines not being complied with. The motion is important to the branch membership of Hewell and we consider it is vitally important that you, Conference 2018, has the opportunity to debate what is a clear example of institutionalised bullying and corruption that must be challenged in some way. You can see from the branch correspondence the reason behind the motion and there is no confusion with the word fatal. At Hewell we have discovered

evidence that the appeal process is open to similar institutionalised bullying and corruption and gives false hope that we have a fair and transparent process. Please allow the appeal.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, the Standing Orders Committee have set out the reasons why we returned that motion in your appeals booklet, all of the information is contained with the appeals booklet and it's a matter for Conference.

Conference, we need the decision, all those in favour of accepting the appeal from Hewell, please show now? Thank you, all those against? That appeal has been rejected by Conference.

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Card vote please?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell have asked for a card vote, does he have the support of Conference for a card vote, if you support a card vote, please show? Thank you Conference, scrutineers and tellers, early in the day but you are required!

Thank you, Conference. There has been much debate on the table about allowing that to go to a card vote, listen, this is your Conference and I'll respect Hewell who want a card vote, they can have one. Over to Terry.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thanks Chair. Can I now call Hewell to address appeal 2 to Conference?

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference, the Hewell branch again wish to appeal against the decision to return and reject a branch motion. The motion reads that Conference instructs the NEC to bring its NEC election postal process into the modern, electronic era, as used by major political parties. This is a previously brought Conference motion from several years' ago and with our election turnout in mind we are asking to change what the current process is because it clearly isn't working. Conference, please accept our appeal.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, as in the first appeal all the information with regards to the reasons why the motions were returned is contained within your appeals booklet, a matter for Conference.

Thank you, Conference. All those in favour of accepting this appeal, please show? Thank you, all those against? That appeal has been accepted and we will inform you of placement later on this morning.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair. Can I now ask the Chair of Conference to seek Conference approval for the adoption of the Standing Orders Report?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, can you please show your approval for the adoption of Standing Orders? Thank you, any against? That's carried.

NATIONAL CHAIR'S OPENING SPEECH

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we don't have the Mayor with us this morning, apparently he's on a Royal appointment, so what we'll do while he's feeding the Corgis is we will go straight into a minute's silence for deceased members. I just want to mention two people, Pete Aldred from Cardiff, it came as a massive shock to me. Every time Pete used to phone me up the first words out of my mouth were, 'What have you done now, Pete?' And his reply would always be, without fail, 'Well, what it is Mark, they're trying to stitch me up again!'

<Laughter>

And then, of course, we've got Dick Knox from HMP Parkhurst. I actually travelled over to Parkhurst on a Sunday afternoon intending to see Dickie first thing Monday morning, and true to form Dickie had the last laugh on the NEC, because about five o'clock on the Monday morning Glen Holmes phoned me and said, 'Mark, you're too late, he's passed away.' And I can just imagine Dickie up there now laughing his little head off. Two great people that I got to know very well, so if we can all be upstanding for the minute's silence, please?

Conference, National Executive, observers, honorary life members and invited guests, welcome to the 79th Annual Conference of the POA, the professional trade union for prison, correctional and secure psychiatric workers. Conference, this is my first opportunity to thank you, the membership, for electing me, and for the position of National Chair of the POA, a position I am truly proud and privileged to accept and one I feel honoured to hold. Without your support I would be unable to fight to improve your working conditions and I thank you not only on behalf of myself, but on behalf of the National Executive Committee for your continued faith and unwavering support.

I would also like to place on record my sincerest thanks to you, the hard-working committee members for the dedicated

work you do, much of it in your own time. I can assure you it's appreciated but let's be honest, you and your members are the POA, and we will continue to support you no matter what the circumstances are. We'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate those two members, Dave Cook and Sarah Rigby who have recently been elected to the National Executive Committee. For those two this is the last time for at least five years that they will be able to enjoy some NEC bashing, so make the most of it because after this Conference you're going to join the rest of us on the coconut shy. Congratulations also to my new Vice Chair, Dave Todd, and Deputy General Secretary, Joe Simpson, and congratulations also to Jackie Marshall and Ian Carson on their re-election. We do have a vacancy, so all those who weren't successful this time, please continue to put in for vacancies because the last round proved that this Union is alive and well.

Conference during the week we have several guest speakers, including Phil Gyimah from the PCS, Helen Dyer, Director of CASPA, the Life with Autism charity that we are supporting, Professor David Wilson who's an ex-prison governor, now turned criminologist and, of course, a lecturer. We have another professor in the guise of Professor Keith Ewing who is Professor of Public Law at King's College, London and President of the Institute of Employment Rights. John McDonnell and Richard Burgon from the Shadow Cabinet in the Labour Party, who we are delighted to welcome and during the past 12 months, Conference, myself and the General Secretary have had unlimited access to the Labour Shadow Cabinet. And we are making good progress on influencing Labour party policy and indeed, its manifesto interrelation to the things that we face and that remain important to us. That's your safety and your future.

We now have a Labour party that is committed to restoring your right to strike and returning private prisons back into the public sector. And I understand that many of you have got long memories, like myself, we remember the last Labour party promising was the Earth. Well, we are the POA and we are influencing the Labour party at this moment in time. They're a fresh approach, it's a fresh era, but like you, although I do take them on face value, the proof will be in the pudding, so if they get into power we await for them to deliver on their assurances to us.

We did invite David Gauke, the Secretary of State, but he declined.

We also have addressing us Michael Spurr, our Chief Operating Officer. Delegates should note that they have been granted facility time on Thursday, due to Mr Spurr addressing Conference. Now I'm well aware of the issues, that some delegates feel strongly about in relation to Michael Spurr. We delivered a vote of no confidence to Michael last year after Conference; we told him we thought it was a disgrace that he'd accepted a bonus payment for performance, maybe he wants to come to address you and explain himself? I understand that many of you have got strong feelings about that, if you want to walk out, then walk out. Nobody's forcing you to listen to him. If you don't want to accept a day's facility time that's your choice, don't accept it, but we're a professional body and I'm interested to see what he's got to say. And, you know, it wouldn't do you any harm to sit and listen and listen to the flannel that we have to put up with every time we're in meetings with him and his directors. And we have asked Michael if he's willing to take questions but we're waiting for him to get back to us, so what I would like to suggest is if anybody's got any questions you'd like to ask, write them down and give them to the admin girls on reception and we'll go through them. If he accepts questions then we'll happily put you in front of him, or at least if he doesn't then I've got those questions in order for me to reply to him on your behalf.

Pete Chapple's not attending as you can see, due to medical reasons, we wish him all the best during his recovery and look forward to welcoming him back to work once he's fully fit. We also have several awards to give out, including the Cronin Clasp, Health and Safety awards and the Toe to Toe awards.

I would also encourage you Conference to attend the many fringe meetings we have this week. Refreshments will be provided and there's some very interesting meetings including Justice for Colombia, Far Right Terrorism on the Rise, Prostate Cancer and, of course, an update on our pensions challenge.

Well, Conference, it's been a busy 12 months and I want to focus on the main issues that we have faced: violence. Violence continues to rise and now sits at 23 of our colleagues being assaulted each and every day. More concerning are the serious assaults on staff that are increasing. It's clear that our employer has a failed strategy to reduce violence, it's also clear that the POA have influenced the political agenda in our desire to run safe prisons. Without our intervention we'd never have got the PAVA pilot off the ground. I've read all the arguments against PAVA but none of them hold any weight at all. I visited two of those sites and I'm yet to speak to a member of staff who has got anything bad to say about carrying PAVA. You see Conference, there's no longer safety in numbers, in fact, one of the worst assaults we've ever witnessed which required one of our colleagues to have life-saving surgery, happened in a gaol that had its target staffing figures in place and was receiving detached duty to further bolster its numbers, and that was at HMP Bedford.

It's a sad fact that some of the prisoners that we look after have disintegrated into feral, violent, disrespectful individuals who have no fear of consequence and despise authority. And this has a knock-on effect on those prisoners who want to change their lives and get on with their sentence. When dealing with such prisoners no amount of interpersonal skills or gaol craft will change the way they behave. Society and indeed, senior managers, simply have to accept that a small proportion of our prison population needs robust management and if that strategy involves staff keeping themselves and

other prisoners safe by deploying PAVA, then that's what we do, we must have to deploy PAVA. We *must* be given that option, that's why we will continue to insist that PAVA is rolled out nationally, including at juvenile establishments and the female estate. We're even looking into the psychiatric hospitals as well and, of course, the private sector, you're not forgotten, we keep insisting with your directors that those protective measures are essential for you. It may take some time for us to achieve the rollout into those establishments that we want them in, but we will not take no for an answer. And please don't think that the rollout is imminent. The PAVA pilot is due to end at the end of this month, and then our employer will look at the statistics and the surveys that they have conducted and all the data, and then they will ask for ministerial approval if that's what they want. We continue to get cross-party support in favour of PAVA and we will continue to apply pressure politically. We want you, the members of the frontline, to have the tools to do your job, to protect yourselves, and to quell the violence that you face on a daily basis. And when myself and the General Secretary meet with the Secretary of State to discuss PAVA, I will be telling him, on your behalf that we will not accept anything less than a national rollout of PAVA. Not to allow PAVA is simply not an option that we will accept.

It's also down to the POA that we have body-worn video cameras in gaols and we are shortly rolling out rigid cuffs; all measures that will help you to stay safe, keep our prisons safe, and ensure control, order and discipline are restored. We also now have the introduction of batons in the open estate during night patrol states; again without pressure from the POA, this would never have been achieved. Your safety is non-negotiable.

We recently demonstrated this at Lindholme when a branch remained an unsafe place due to their health and safety concerns being ignored. Instead of their management engaging with the local committee to remedy the situation, the first thing they did was inform their directors, who then called me and the General Secretary, threatening us with court action. Well colleagues, they can threaten us as much as they like, but when your safety is at risk we will never, ever repudiate any action that you take. Eventually, after some considerable time and after the intervention of NEC reps and the local committee, we managed to get a resolve and avoid court action. But would it not be better for the employer to talk and resolve these issues first, instead of issuing us with threats in court? What a way to conduct business. Shame on you, HMPPS!

Pay: Pay continues to be an issue and this year's submissions are late again because of the dithering from this government. We're hopeful that we're going to get an outcome before summer recess in July. If that's not possible, we're in the same position as last year where you will be receiving a late pay award. Unacceptable. Interestingly enough for those of you who've read the submissions from the employer, they want everybody to have a consolidated award, but they want F&S to have more than closed grades. And by the way they've only budgeted for a 1% pay rise. Simply not enough. After years of pay freezes, pension increases, national insurance rises, we need and deserve, like the rest of the public sector, at least a 5% consolidated award, and we need that now. It just demonstrates to me exactly what your employer thinks of you when all they can recommend and budget for is a 1% pay rise. While our Chief Operating Officer, Michael Spurr, gets awarded a £20,000 bonus for performance. Near enough a new recruit start salary awarded in a bonus for the worst performance this service has ever witnessed. If he'd have been a football manager, he'd have been sacked seasons ago. We want pay parity, we want closed grades to be recognised and we want new recruits to be paid better, to not only entice people into the job but to help retain staff. Apparently the recruitment drive is a massive success and they have exceeded their targets of recruiting 2,500 prison officers. In fact the Secretary of State claimed a few weeks ago that they've recruited 3,000 staff since 2016 when the recruitment drive began. What he failed to mention to the general public was that during that same period over 3,200 people have left the job, and we are still more than 3,000 officers short compared to 2010 numbers when the cull began. But don't worry, colleagues, we put him right on that and we highlighted that in the media. But while we're talking about recruitment being such a success. If it is a success we don't need detached duty. Why would we need detached if we're recruiting all these staff? So I would expect that to end sooner rather than later. And then we come onto OSG pay which is simply inadequate. That's why we can't recruit OSGs and we have thousands of vacancies for that grade across the country. After recently conducting an indicative ballot, the results were extremely positive with 80% of OSGs telling us that they are prepared to take industrial action over pay and retirement age. So watch this space.

We also have now two separation centres, extremist units as they're more commonly known; one at Frankland and one at Full Sutton, and we did have concerns about those centres before they opened. I recently visited Frankland and I have to say how impressive it really is. It's pleasing that the employer has got something right. They listened to our concerns and they acted. And speaking to the staff at Frankland in that centre, they were telling me how impressed they were with the training they received prior to that unit opening, informing me that it's the best training they've ever undertaken in the service. They worked as a team, they learnt from each other and the staffing levels ensured that there was a safe but very relaxed environment. And although it's a high-pressure area, the staff are happy to work there. If the staff are happy, I'm happy. So, credit where it's due, well done HMPPS for getting something right.

Unfortunately comrades, they get an awful lot wrong. Recently highlighted by the collapse of Carillion. When are they ever going to learn? Our employer hoodwinks the public into expecting the works contract to save the tax payer £115 million, and guess what? It hasn't saved a penny. In fact since these contracts were awarded in 2015, our prisons have never been in such a sorry state of repair. It's obvious that prisoner frustrations over their living conditions, created by profiteering companies more concerned with shareholders than providing a service to us, have resulted in POA members being

assaulted. Make no mistake about it, the POA were influential in that contract coming back into the public sector. We

publicised our thoughts, we lobbied parliament and we applied pressure. What we need now is for the Amey contract to be brought back in-house as well, because they are just as pathetic.

When I talk about lobbying parliament, I'd just like to thank those members who gave up their own time to attend our recent lobby of parliament, which was a massive success and well attended. It does make a massive difference. We had plenty of politicians attend, from all parties, including a few lords. We gained some valuable support and thanks to those contributions from members who attended, politicians were left in no doubt whatsoever as to the reality of the state of our prisons.

Thank you also to those who attended on Saturday at the TUC rally. Although it was a wet day, again another success and I think it's really important that we attend such things.

I'm pleased to say that because of our lobbying of parliament, we have massive support from a whole host of politicians to reduce our retirement age to sixty, because they recognise the importance of you being able to retire at that age. But in order to keep that pressure up, we do need to continue to lobby politicians. I'd like to see us organise a rally where thousands of POA members march through the streets of London. Now is the time to do that. We've had much publicity of late, and we need to keep that momentum up. And when I talk about publicity, it always amuses me that some members think we are silent, that we have no teeth. Let me tell you this. Nothing could be further from the truth. I think we've had more publicity over the last 12 months than we ever have. TV, newspapers, radio, every week we seem to be giving interviews for some media outlet. In fact only last week we had a major newspaper piece about the announcement from government that ten prisons were receiving additional resources to go back to basics. More searching, more patrols, body scanners, searching at the gate, repairs completed and sales refurbished. All things that myself and the General Secretary had highlighted with the Prisons' Minister just a few weeks ago. It's nice to see that he's listening.

You know when we talk about the media, comrades, you need to understand how the media works. If they want to write a story about us or there's an interest for them, they contact us, and we will never refuse, and we're always in the news lately. We can phone up every news agency in the country with a story that we want them to publish, but if they're not interested they won't take it on. So please don't think that we're not trying. We do our best, and as I say at the moment the media are very interested in the POA.

Probably the most important issue for prison officers, I feel, is your retirement age. Well for interest, we're now included in the Emergency Services Bill. That's going through parliament and that's going to increase sentences for assaults on emergency workers. So if we are in the same category as emergency workers, and if we are an essential public service, which we obviously are, why are we being treated like Whitehall pen pushers? We're frontline staff, we face violence on a daily basis, we work in the most stressful and violent workplace in this country, so let us retire aged 60 instead of forcing us into death in service, mental breakdown or physical disability. Give us our retirement age of 60 and give us it back now!

Colleagues, we await a government response and every time we meet with government ministers we tell them the same thing: you need to allow us to sit down with the employer and negotiate a retirement age that will see us live in dignity when we retire. But it has to be a retirement age of 60 and that offer has to come as a standalone offer with no strings attached. And we await those negotiations to begin, and the answer we constantly get is we're waiting for Treasury, we're waiting for Cabinet Office, to approve the funding to sit down and talk to you about retirement age.

And as you know, we've launched our legal challenge against changes to our pensions. This will be a lengthy process, but we're doing everything we can to challenge these changes, so please bear with us.

Comrades, we have had many successes over the last 12 months. We are moving this Union forward and we will continue to fight for your rights. Our successes include RMPs in every goal as a requirement, due to the PSI we forced on the employer. Success. PAVA in goals due to your NEC. Success. Batons in the open estate due to your NEC. Success. Pension changes being challenged in court due to your NEC. Success. OSG pay and retirement age being challenged due to your NEC. Success. Carillion contract being brought back into the public sector. Success. Lifetime protection for staff who've passed promotion JSACs. Success. Judicial reviews of unsafe goals, the threat of court action to our employer if they fail to keep you and prisoners safe. Success. Prosecutions being reopened and lengthier sentences given when chief constables and the CPS say it's not in the public interest. Success. And we recently won an employment tribunal at Ashworth when we walked out. Our comrades there on strike. Success. And as late as last night, I got confirmation from the employer that they are now prepared to sit down with us and negotiate a new disputes resolution procedure. Success. We have achieved more in the last 12 months than I can remember at any other time. We have done this without having to walk any member to the gate, without being threatened with breaches of High Court injunctions, without anyone being intimidated or bullied by managers, and without anybody losing pay. We've done this because our employer is prepared to sit down, negotiate and engage. And as long as the employer is prepared to do that, I'm prepared to sit with them, because that's the way business should be done. But make no mistake Conference, I understand better than anybody that there is only so

much talking that you can do before you say enough is enough. And when that time comes, we will act and we will always support branches who protect their health and safety.

Finally, comrades, I think it appropriate if I send our solidarity to those affected by the Windrush scandal. British citizens, invited to this country to build it and make it great again, brought up families, paid tax and national insurance for 30, 40 or 50 years, now getting told that they're no longer wanted. It's a national disgrace!

<Applause>

We stand in solidarity with the Windrush generation as we stand in solidarity with those affected by the Grenfell disaster, as we stand in solidarity to those families of Hillsborough who, now the truth is finally out, still await their justice, as we stand in solidarity for our comrades who were involved in Orgreave during the miners' strike, who still await their justice. And the common theme, Conference, a Tory government. We will continue to fight together as one in unity. Unity will always be our strength.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, enjoy Conference.

<Applause>

And conference, just to keep you awake I now hand over to Steve Gillam for the finance officer's report.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: I know everybody likes a finance report.

Mark's already said it, but to be fair I wish that Pete Chapple a very swift recovery and hope he's back at work very soon. He does a tremendous job just like previous finance officers have, including Pete Hancox, who actually put us on a good foundation moving forward. So, colleagues, I can advise Conference that in line with rule 12.17 of the Union's rules and constitution, I have received two finance questions related to the audited accounts for 2017. A question from Littlehey, which was in on time, and a question from Grampian regarding a motion they have, which actually constitutes a finance question but was received out of time on 8th May. However, on behalf of the NEC, I will give clarity in relation to that for the cost of the POA in relation to motion 2 so as that Conference are in a position of strength when it comes to listening to that motion from Grampian. So in relation to the finance question from Littlehey, it says, 'Can we please have a clarification as to the price bracket for hotels used by members of the NEC.' Members of the NEC come under the finance manual and hotels in London are rated at £90 and outside London £65. In reality this is the same for all delegates on Union business. London is a difficulty and the finance officer makes sure that the most affordable rate is booked through Calder Conference, but Conference, it is difficult in getting accommodation under £100 in London. But that would apply not just to the NEC, that would apply to all delegates. So, for example, when we held training at the Marriott Hotel, that was over the limit of what the finance manual said, but delegates stayed there as well, as did the NEC, and it was in excess of £90. We actually have a deal with the Danubius Hotel in London which keeps costs down for those delegates and particularly NEC members who have to do business in London. Some accommodation for NEC officials outside of London is kept below the £65. So, for example, when the Premier Inn is used and other hotels, and I also know that some NEC members regularly stay with relatives when an overnight is required, saving the POA in hotel fees. The only exception is Annual Conference when the rate is over £65 in Southport for the Ramada, but this is offset by getting back a rebate from Sefton Council, which was negotiated, which has been explained to Conference on numerous occasions.

In relation to the Grampian questions, how much it costs on a yearly basis for honorary life members and their partners to attend over the last two years, how many are invited and how many accept, as I've already explained we didn't really have to produce the figures for this, because it wasn't in line with the rules and constitution in relation to 12.17, but for clarity, in 2017 at last year's Conference, 34 honorary life members were invited, of which 21 attended, of which it included partners. 13 did not attend and one honorary life member donated their subsistence and travel to the welfare fund. The total cost for last year was £7,818.02. For this year, 36 honorary life members have been invited, of which 22 are attending. Of those 22 honorary life members, 13 have their partners in attendance. 14 are not attending and again one honorary life member donating their subsistence and travel to the welfare fund. The total cost for this year is down on last year and is £6,979.81.

Conference, as in previous years, although not required to do so under the rules and constitution, all NEC and fulltime officers monthly claim forms have been brought to Conference. If anyone wishes to scrutinise those forms, they will be made available during the week. Our accountants are also present as I will be, with the working papers, should any individual wish to view them.

Conference, also in relation to, the same applies to the salaries and pensions of fulltime officers. There is no requirement under our rules and constitution to publish them or indeed under the anti-trade union legislation, which we all know as TULRCA 1992, which has since been amended by the Trade Union Act of 2016, but the reality is my fulltime officers have insisted that it's fully published so as that there is total transparency and there can be no innuendo or anything like that,

whether it's on social media or in the pubs or anywhere else. So you have all the facts and figures of employees' salaries and pensions for your scrutiny as well.

Colleagues, it is now my duty, on behalf of the National Executive Committee to present the Union's accounts for the year ending 31st December 2017 commencing with the income of the Union. There was a small increase in membership during the year of 400 which is the first time in many years because we've seen a decline year-on-year since 2010 because of austerity measures. And with a full year of 30p subscription increase, which initially took effect in June 2016, income increased by £48,000. Contributions from the Relief Fund of £200,000 accounted for an overall increase in the income of the Union for the year of £140,000. With this increase in income and reduction in some costs we generated a surplus for the year of £133,799. I will now highlight the main areas where cost changes arose.

The magazine costs remain stable in the year, however the advertising income received fell by £10,000 which meant the net cost increased by this amount. We are not expecting the income from the magazine to increase in future years so have budgeted conservatively for the cost to remain at the same level for this year at least. Salaries and superannuation costs rose only slightly by £21,000; we had some staff that also left that have not been replaced so we should see savings from that in future years. No regional meetings or special delegates conferences were held in the year, whereas in 2016 the cost to the Union was £12,000, however, we have prudently budgeted for £50,000 for any such meetings that may arise this year. Travelling and meeting expenses decreased by £50,000 mainly due to the reduction in travel cost related to attendance on training courses because of the withdrawal by the TUC of some training course places and due to the fact that some courses are now held online or run by the General Federation of Trade Unions which we are now affiliated to. Printing, postage, stationery, miscellaneous which includes ballots and telephone increased by £60,000 this was mainly due to two additional ballots held last year, one for the vacant position of Vice Chair and one for the National Chair election that we had not budgeted for or foreseen occurring. So that cost is an additional £60,000 that we haven't budgeted for.

This year a new affiliation fee of £20,000 was paid for the General Federation of Trade Union Affiliation, it is hoped this will assist in reducing costs in future years as it has indeed done this year. Rates and water rates increased by £6,000 due to the rates review carried out by the council at Cronin House. Repairs and renewals fell by £23,000 this was due to the additional work completed in 2016, including improved disabled access at head office. For 2018 we have budgeted a cost of £100,000 as we have anticipated major refurbishment works required being carried out at headquarters and other offices. The contribution to the Provident Benefit Fund decreases overall by £62,700. Although legal and professional charges have increased by £15,000 this is due to additional work being carried out by our accountants throughout the year and additional fees have been paid to Thompsons for issues outside of the agreed cap fees. However, it should be noted that pleasingly Thompson's fees were over £500,000 under the cap fee of £1.2 million which is a major success for this Union and the way that we handle our legal services. We managed to reduce training fees by £42,000 mainly by moving courses in-house and no longer holding them in hotels by our affiliation with the General Federation of Trade Unions. So that is a significant saving and one that will assist this Union in moving forward.

Next year's budget currently shows a potential deficit for the year of £146,000 this is mainly due to the anticipated work to be completed on Cronin House and other areas of £100,000 and potential cost of IT upgrade that is also needed as well.

Turning now to the balance sheet our net current assets fell by just under £62,000 principally due to the amounts held in the bank by the separate fund accounts, namely relief and national levy, the former due the increased contribution paid into the general fund and the latter due to increased expenditure from within the Provident Fund. The overall net assets of the Union fell by £95,000 and now stand at £4,312,000.

Finally, colleagues, I must also report on the amount paid by the Union and death benefit, which sadly was £178,000. That, colleagues, concludes the report to Conference on the 2017 accounts.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Are we happy to adopt the Finance Officers' report, Conference? Please show. Thank you. Just before I lead onto the AGM of the Welfare Fund Charity which Steve will move, just the results of the card vote. Number of votes in favour: 12,999; number of votes against 9,239. So Hewell you will have appeal 1 heard at 47a. And appeal 2 at 53a. I'm glad I let it go to a card vote now, well done, Hewell. Over to Steve.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much. In moving the POA Welfare Fund Accounts there obviously are no welfare motions so I can just move straight onto the Welfare Fund Accounts Finance Officers' report 2017. Colleagues, it is now my duty to present the Welfare Funds Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2017. As agreed at last year's Conference members' contributions increased to £1. This, along with a slight increase in the number of contributing members, increased subscriptions received by £91,000 to £240,764. The gift aid due on these contributions for the year amounted to £57,000. This amount, along with £42,000 from 2016, has been now recently received from HMRC. Pleasingly we've just received some more money, £19,000 for the period of 2015 from HMRC which I am pleased to say amounts totally now, that we've got back from the tax man, £118,289.76 which has now finally been paid. The Welfare Fund also greatly received a £20,000 grant in the year from the CSIS Charity Fund. All of the above have resulted in an increase

in income by £115,000 from last year to a total of £318,000. 98% of membership contributions were given out as grants during the year and of the total grants over £237,000, £100,000 was provided for the residential rehabilitation for the Fire

Fighters Charity. The other cost, including travel and subsistence and stress and bereavement counselling helpline, fell by £3,000 to £12,000.

Turning now to the balance sheet. As at year end 2017 the charity held just under £500,000 in the bank. The other debtors of £132,000 amended with the gift aid due from HMRC, and as previously mentioned, that £118,000 has now been received in April of this year. Overall the surplus in the year of £69,000 helped increase the overall reserves of the charity to a total of £636,000. Looking forward I can advise Conference that once again this year the CSIS Charity Fund has made a very generous donation to the Welfare Fund of £25,000 that will be used to help our members facing distress and hardship. That, colleagues, concludes my report of the Welfare Fund.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Steve. We need to adopt that report, can you show your approval for that report please, Conference? Thank you very much. Thank you, Steve. Conference, we're now going to move on with business starting with motions. Motion 1, Hindley, do we have a seconder for Hindley? Thank you, Feltham.

MOTION 1

Amend Rule 2.3 to read:

The POA affiliate to the Labour Party.

HINDLEY

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP/YOI HINDLEY: NEC, Conference, the motion reads: Amend Rule 2.3 to read: The POA affiliate to the Labour Party. Nothing like having the first motion, Conference, but in light of the National Chair's opening address, in light of the changing political map and in light of this rule change needing a two-thirds majority, we believe this is not the right time to be amending Rule 2.3. Though as a socialist and a believer in the right of our full Trade Union, rights negotiations should continue between the POA and the Labour Party to determine if they will abolish Section 127. I believe they will and I believe in the future we should amend Rule 2.3 but now is not the right time, so the Hindley branch seek permission to withdraw this motion at this time.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Hindley. Conference, do we have permission to withdraw motion 1, please show. Thank you, that's withdrawn.

Motion 2, Grampian.

MOTION 2

Amend Rule 6.3 (e);

Honorary life members and their partners will be responsible for their own costs of attending Annual Conference and will no longer be subsidised by the membership.

GRAMPIAN

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: They've moved the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Formerly moved, Conference, that motion is formerly moved. Do we have a seconder for that to be formerly moved? Leicester, thank you.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, for the NEC. At my last Conference in sunny Southport... I tell you what, I won't miss Southport. Oh, by the way, the Chair said those coming on the NEC, new members can't bash the NEC, never stopped me while I've been on the NEC. Right, let's get on with... I was hoping Grampian would tell me why they were bringing this motion so I could work out what the concerns were from Grampian. We heard from the Finance Officer the cost of our honorary life members to somewhere like Conference is about £6,000. These are members, if you look at the rules, that have got in the position of being honorary life members because they've made an outstanding contribution to this Union. That's why you elected them for honorary life members. And we're going to say to them, 'Don't come to Conference and if you do pay for yourself?' It's costing about £6,000-7,000, have you heard that? Really? You want to go with this motion? Conference, please reject this motion, thank you.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Asking you to reject the motion. I don't know how far Grampian go back, but there's a man sitting at the back there, if it wasn't for him you wouldn't be here. We all wouldn't be here 'cause this POA was high on bankrupt, well, bankrupt in name. Peter Hancox pulled them out of it. You heard the General Secretary say before, 'We've got to let these people come now; they're there for a reason.' Yes, they come to follow Conference, but

they're there, go and speak to them; you need to experience, them people have got experience. You've got a man up there, Jim Dawson – pensions, go and speak to him about your pensions. I see there's motions about pensions this week. I think some of them should be debates not votes, but never mind, we'll speak about it later on. But use them so please reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: No more speakers indicating there, Conference, straight to the vote: all those in favour of this motion please show. All those against? The motion is lost. Motion 3, Low Newton, do we have a seconder for Low Newton? Thank you, Feltham.

MOTION 3

Add the following to Rule 26.7 after basis of the complaint.

When a complaint is made against a member, the General Secretary (or in their absence their deputy) furnishes the person accused with full disclosure of the complaint in order to allow a comprehensive defence against the complaint to be made as soon as possible after receiving the complaint.

LOW NEWTON

MICK LONGSTAFF – BRANCH CHAIR, LOW NEWTON: Morning, Conference. Motion 3 which reads: Add the following to Rule 26.7 after the basis of the complaint. When a complaint is made against a member the General Secretary, or in their absence their deputy, furnishes the person accused with full disclosure of the complaint in order to allow a comprehensive defence against the complaint to be made as soon as possible after receiving the complaint. At the moment the person who has the complaint made against them has no right in the rules and constitution of this Union to be granted full disclosure. All we're asking for is the right for that person to make their defence. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Feltham, do you wish to speak on this as a seconder? No. No more speakers indicating. Replying for the NEC, Andy Darken.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Morning again, Conference, speaking for the NEC against the motion. It sounds OK when the mover put the motion but if you look at the rules, quite clearly it's within the remit when the complaint is made for the General Secretary, or in his absence the Deputy General Secretary, to determine the progression of that complaint. And from my experience, and I've had a number of complaints come in in the last 12 months, I've referred them back to the complainant and said, 'I'm not accepting this complaint.' If this motion were passed, and looking where he wants it placed, I wouldn't be able to do that. A complaint would come in and we'd have to progress the complaint every time because we've got to tell the complainant what the complaint is and allow a defence. It takes away the discretion of the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary to refer the complaint back and say, 'This is not within the ambit of the conduct committee, we don't want to progress this.' That can't be right that this motion would come in, so it sounds right but it would take away the discretion of the General Secretary and DGS to refer complaints back to the complainant and not progress it any further. So, Conference, please reject this motion, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Andy. Right to reply, Low Newton? Straight to the vote. Conference, we need a two-thirds majority for a rule change; all those in favour of this motion, please show. Against? That motion is lost.

Motion 4, Cookham Wood, do we have a seconder for Cookham Wood, please? Humber.

MOTION 4

Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with all employers for the introduction of "Spit Hoods" similar to those used by 17 of the UK's police forces.

COOKHAM WOOD

TERESA ELLINOR, DELEGATE – COOKHAM WOOD: Conference, Chair, first time at Conference. Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS to agree the introduction of 'Spit Hoods' across the prison service and mental health estate similar to those used at 17 of the UK's police forces. Such a facility would be used only when proportionate, appropriate and justifiable to protect prison staff from serious health implications from being spat at, including the uncertainty of infection from bodily fluids and the need to go on antivirals causing nausea and impacting on personal life. It's important that staff are given the right tools to ensure their own safety and that of others when managing incidents. Spitting is a form of assault and staff have the right to go to work and expect to stay safe and be protected at the duty and care of their employer. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well done first time speaker, that deserves a round of applause, Conference, come on.

<Applause>

Replying for the NEC, Ian Carson.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Thanks, Chair. Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to support this motion and we thank Cookham Wood for bringing this. The spit hood is designed as a restraint device, intended to prevent someone from spitting or biting and clearly designed to increase levels of safety, so how can we not support that? But we face a number of challenges, colleagues, 'cause when I Googled spit hoods, as you do, this is what I got on the website, BBC, the liberal press: cruel spit hoods, concerns of the use of spit hoods on children. Well some of the children that we lock up ain't really children, are they? You know, 25 (inaudible) and 6'8". 'Cruel and dangerous spit hoods.' They're the challenges we face.

During his speech the Chair outlined our achievements on health and safety, and let's add smoke hoods to the list. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: No more speakers indicated so straight to the vote. All those in favour please show. Thank you. Any against? That's being carried. Maybe we could get Jamie Carragher to sponsor our spit hoods.

<Laughter>

Motion 5, Styal. Secunder for Styal. No secunder? Oh, just in time, Moorlands.

MOTION 5

Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS for a full and comprehensive review of the Policy/PSI's covering Bedwatches.

STYAL

DELEGATE, STYAL: Chair, NEC, Conference, honorary life members, motion 5 reads, 'Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPSS for a full and comprehensive review of the policy PSIs covering bed watches.' Conference, there are a few reasons Styal's brought this motion to Conference. Firstly, the numerous disciplinary investigations and hearings leading to warnings and dismissals from this service of our members is on the increase whilst our staff are on bed watches. So why is this happening? It is our belief, local security strategies differ from prison to prison and this causes confusion. Although the National Security Framework pays particular attention to bed watches, in paragraph F71a external escorts, prisoner escorts and bed watch function, it is our committee's belief that there is a lack of clarity and of do's and don'ts on bed watches. Whilst researching different prisons' local policies on bed watches, it was interesting to see how strategies on bed watches differ from establishment to establishment. I noted one prison have hand-held walkie-talkies on bed watches when an officer goes for a break. My immediate thoughts to that was ... as seen in Peter Kay's *Phoenix Nights*, where a Max and Paddy are trying to do security radios and I think it's Max says, 'Can you hear me now? Put plenty of vinegar on them chips!'

<Laughter>

So on that particular goal whenever that happens, it's what happens if he is getting his chips and he gets a call from the walkie-talkie? He's kicking off, 'Get back, get back' so ... it's a valid point because if that prisoner is kicking off, you can just imagine that officer running back with his three bags of chips, falling over with the chips in his hands.

But on a serious note, what are the implications for the staff from that prison who are on a break and didn't answer the walkie-talkie? Would they be tested in an investigation? I noted another prison double cuffed their prisoners when staff are on a break. Again in practice probably a good idea, but if you're an officer on from another prison in that goal and you don't do that, are you open to investigation?

Secondly, risk assessments on bed watches with regards to restraints in hospital also causes confusion. A risk assessment often states cuffs to remain and to be removed only at the discretion of the duty governor. We have an occasion where prison staff are too afraid to remove restraints, in fear of being investigated again, by a duty governor. Therefore in the middle of an operating theatre, we've had staff arguing with the surgeon on duty to take the cuffs off. Too often these days it seems staff are at risk of investigation whilst on bed watches, this more prevalent during night states when staff are more susceptible of accusations on being asleep, either by the healthcare people there, duty governors skulking around wards or staff on staff unfortunately. We have found now that staff at prisons are no longer allowed to take home entertainment systems on bed watches, like personal laptops or handheld devices, the increase in staff falling asleep has increased. Now again this policy speaks nothing of what staff are allowed to take on bed watches. But what we asked NEC to negotiate with the prison service is staff be allowed to take some items to keep them alert. The prison service might say, 'We pay good money for staff to undertake the bed watch function and we're not paying them to watch films on laptops or handheld phones, nor to play games on computers or to read books on Kindles.' Having completed bed watches for years, I defy anyone during a night bed watch in a dimly lit hospital side room or ward, being able to keep awake with nothing else to do but check restraining on a prisoner at intermittent levels. It's impossible. We're not suggesting staff bring karaoke machines

in and have a singalong in the ward; what we're suggesting is that items be allowed to keep staff alert and lucid, to enable a fully secure bed watch.

Finally, rest periods for the staff also need to be addressed as far too often staff are accused of abandoning the bed watch simply for having a break, which is coincidentally funded by the prison service in subsistence claims for foods purchased whilst on the bed watch. Again, we just ask for clarity on bed watches. That's all we're asking for. Support the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Styal, and I knowing your governor, she'd approve of karaoke machines on bed guards, believe you me! Replying for the NEC, Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion and we thank Styal for bringing it to Conference and agree with everything that you've said. Happy to speak to the department and ask them to bring the deregulation of this policy forward. As I've mentioned, deregulation, a word of warning, colleagues: deregulation is the process that all PSIs and PSOs are currently going through. They've been replaced by policy frameworks which have less mandatory actions, giving governors more empowerment. So colleagues, when these policy frameworks come to your establishment, make sure you get in there with your governor and have your say. Don't be rolled over. Make sure the policies are safe for your establishment. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Jackie. Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That motion is carried.

Motion 6, Leeds. Secunder for Leeds please? Liverpool.

MOTION 6

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to make Personal Protection Strategies annual mandatory training for operational Support Grades due to carrying out night duties as part of the staffing compliment of establishments. Also to amend PSO 1600 to reflect appropriately.

LEEDS

DAVE PURSGLOVE, BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: Morning Conference, NEC. Motion 6. The Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to make Personal Protection Strategies annual mandatory training for operational support grades due to carrying out night duties as part of the staffing compliment of establishments. Also, to amend PSO1600 to reflect appropriately. The reason we're asking this is a lot of establishments have it as a local agreement but there's nothing that's in there that's a mandatory policy for OSGs. It's imperative that they get year-on-year training in my opinion, to protect them. You never know what's going to happen on nights if you have to decant a wing due to a fire or whatever. Appropriate training should be available and it should be part of the policy. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Dave. Replying for the NEC, Andy Baxter.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking in support of the motion. I'd like to thank Leeds for bringing the motion and thank them for their explanation. Our band 2 colleagues should be annually refreshed in personal protection techniques due to the sometimes prolonged contact that they have with prisoners. The employer argues that band 2s only supervise risk-assessed prisoners. Our experience differs. As Leeds points out, our band 2 colleagues are at as much risk of assault as any person in a uniform. I'm sure that when an irate prisoner is intent on assaulting a white-shirted member of staff, they don't take the time to check the epaulettes to establish the grade of their target. Let's get our OSG colleagues who work days and nights the skills to get out of a difficult situation. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: No speakers indicated. Straight to the vote. All those in favour please? Thank you. All those against. That motion is carried.

I now call emergency motion 1, Liverpool, which is placed at 6a. Secunder for Liverpool? Preston.

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Morning Conference. In February 2018, following incidents, we became aware that there is no clear policy in place to move prisoners to protect the health and safety of members and governors have the right to simply refuse due to population pressures. Therefore, Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to agree a policy that facilitates the movement of problematic prisoners from one establishment to another in order to reinforce good order and discipline within that establishment.

Colleagues, this problem isn't particular to Liverpool. I'd say every gaol in the country has problematic prisoners who we

can't get rid of. Our inability or failure to move these problematic prisoners is a direct threat to the health and safety of our members. What we're after at Liverpool is a return to some form of 28-day laydown. Please support the motion.

JIM STARKIE – BRANCH CHAIR, PRESTON: Supporting this motion. We know at work it's a one-sided game. I'm just going to give you some examples really. A few years ago, there was a prisoner on a review. The governor turned up and the prisoner said, 'I know you from somewhere.' And the governor said, 'No you don't,' and the prisoner carried on saying, 'Yes I do.' And then he remembered. He said, 'You're the fellow that visits that prostitute next-door to my mum, on a regular basis.'

<Laughter>

That prisoner was on the bus the day after along with his document.

<Laughter>

It's a true story.

On the 20th March this year, during the night, about 11 o'clock at night, four staff members' cars were set on fire on the car park. Earlier that day there was a prisoner in the segregation unit who was restrained. After that restraint he threatened to burn staff cars that day. He was still there in the segregation unit four weeks later. No need to say anymore. Please support this.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks for that Jim. I always wondered what governors did in their lunch hour!

<Laughter>

Replying for the NEC, Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. Colleagues, this takes us back to the days of the old laydown cells where prisoners were moved to other establishments to give staff a rest; prisoners who every time their cell door was opened were fighting with staff; prisoners who wore staff out. We are fully aware that some governors refuse to move prisoners who have assaulted staff, so that prisoners don't see that as a way to get a transfer, and we agree with that. However, I remember prisoners who were looking for ways to get a transfer being sent to the furthest establishment in the opposite direction from where they wanted to go, disrupting their visits and contacts with others. Colleagues, if a prisoner needs to go, then they must go. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Liverpool, do you wish to reply?

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: No thanks.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour. Thank you. Any against? That motion's carried.

Motion 7, Ian Carson for the NEC. We've got indication that Oakwood have seconded this motion.

MOTION 7

Conference award Mr Andy Darken Honorary Life Membership.

NEC

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, it gives me great pleasure to move motion 7 on behalf of the NEC in that Andy Darken honorary life membership. The definition in the rules relating to the qualifications for honorary life membership is that the individual has made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Union, and let me tell you that Andy Darken demonstrates that in spades. Andy epitomises all that's good about the POA. As a local and national official he's been known to strike fear into the hearts of those who choose not to heed his wise counsel. Andy's got the rare talent of being highly respected not only by his colleagues but also by many of the managers that he's crossed paths with. Andy's a highly respected individual and a retired member once said to me, 'You may not always agree with Andy Darken, but you should always listen closely to what he has to say.' On a personal note, it's been an absolute pleasure to work with Andy over the last five years and I want to wish him a long and happy retirement. Conference, please award Andy Darken honorary life membership of the POA in recognition of his outstanding contribution.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: We've got one speaker indicated.

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: In support of this motion. Andy for Feltham has done so much over the last 25 years. In our darkest times at Feltham, where Feltham was getting a lot of negative media publicity and Andy carried the branch. He's been a mentor, a colleague, he's done so much for us and I'd like to thank him on behalf of Feltham for everything he's done for us. Thank you, Andy and all the best, for your retirement. Conference, please support the motion, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Unfortunately Jane, you have to speak after the main speaker as a seconder and Mr Darken would rile me if I allowed a breach of the rules, so ... straight to the vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, Conference, well done Andy. That's carried.

<Applause>

Motion 8, speaking for the NEC, Joe Simpson. Holme House has seconded.

MOTION 8

Conference award Mr Terry Fullerton Honorary Life Membership.

NEC

JOE SIMPSON – NEC: Thank you Chair. Conference, NEC, I've got mixed emotions on this one because myself and Terry have been friends for the last 23 years. We served both locally and nationally and when this was proposed I asked if I could speak on it. So here we go. Conference, this is to award honorary life membership to Terry 'Mindy' Fullerton. Terry joined in 1909 ... sorry 1990!

<Laughter>

At Ashwell, and once Holme House was opened up he joined Holme House as one of the founding members of that branch in 1992. The first time we met was when I was sat in the governor's office at Holme House Prison fighting for my job. I was working at Northallerton at the time and after a little ... disagreement with the number one governor, where I'd allegedly said I would smash his face in, he decided that Holme House was employing new prison officers and my interview was at one o'clock! So I got to Holme House and that's when Terry Fullerton saved my bacon that day. Otherwise I wouldn't have been here.

One thing you forgot, Chair, when you were talking about success. You now all work in a smoke-free workplace and it's absolutely down to the fantastic work that Terry Fullerton done on your behalf since 2012.

<Applause>

Able assisted of course by his FTO and I kept him right on everything 'cause he's got the world's worst memory, he really has! He is the only branch official that got facility time on a weekend granted by the area manager so he could go and plaster her daughter's house.

<Laughter>

And not only that, he charged her 600 quid for the privilege!

<Applause>

Everybody kept asking Terry what he's going to do when he retires. Well listen ... if there was an Olympic event for doing absolutely nothing, he'd win the gold medal every time! He would be Olympic champion. However, when he does turn his hand to things, he goes all out for it. In particular Terry's love, before he joined on the NEC, was his brand new Volvo 850 and he lived in a nice little village just north of County Durham called Stanley, which is twinned with Kabul ...

<Laughter>

And I rang him up 'cause I lived in Durham at the time, and I says to him, 'Do you want to come over for a drink?' He said, 'No,' he said, 'Me car's been scratched again. I'm gonna clean out the garage and I'm gonna put my car in it.' Alright. Rang him up the next day. 'How did you get on?' He said, 'Took me four hours to empty that garage and I put the car in and the car's six inches too long.'

<Laughter>

It's been an absolute privilege for me to work with Terry. Anybody who knows me knows I've got a very quick temper. Terry's

been a calming influence on me, particularly when he takes me outside a governor's office and tells me to shut up! And he was one of the reasons why I put up for the NEC and I was elected in 2007. That's all down to him, his teaching, his patience with me, and that's what I needed at that time, and he will always be my big brother. All I can say now Terry is ... thanks very much for everything that you've done for me, thanks very much for everything that you've done for the Union and its members, and it's now time for you to go and enjoy your retirement and be with your grandkids, and I wish you all the best mate and we'll stay in touch. Conference, please support the motion.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: More than happy to support the motion. I come with actually a message probably from the acting governor of Durham Prison, who knows Terry very well, as Joe also knows him, 'cause they used to call him 'the German student'.

<Laughter>

And he also keeps telling us that Terry started, when he started work he used to work for Gateshead Council as a plaster. So, there's where your plastering comes from, but on a personal note I'd just like to thank him, he's always there if you need to phone him, he contacts you, and I wish him all the best for the future.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: No other speakers, Conference. Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you Conference and well done Terry, well deserved.

<Applause>

Motion 9, NEC, Dave Todd. This has been seconded by Manchester.

MOTION 9

Conference award Mr Greg Mullineaux Honorary Life Membership.

NEC

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference and guests, it gives me great pleasure to move this motion on behalf of the NEC. Conference award Mr Greg Mullineaux honorary life membership. Greg joined the prison service in 1988 and was posted to Manchester. He spent his first two years working on the land until the fateful day of the riot, where he played his part with his colleagues with trying to bring an end to that awful situation. After the riot Greg was sent on detached duty to numerous prisons, taking him away from his family. When he eventually arrived back in Manchester he made a decision to put himself forward and take a place on the local POA committee, to assist his colleagues and keep Manchester within the public sector. Greg has been on the committee for 26 years and has been part of numerous successful bids to keep Manchester in the public sector where it truly belongs. He's attended Conference for years and he has been privileged to be part of a security team for 17 years. Some of you may not recognise his name, but you will recognise him as the old bloke stood outside of the Conference Hall with a fag in his hand and a smile on his face. His experience and integrity has made him a sure bet for staff when he has come up for re-election and this has always been unchallenged due to the confidence members have in him. For the past few years Greg's been part-time but this has never stopped him being an active member of Manchester's committee. He's stood strong alongside the membership on days of protest. He is a loyal man of this Trade Union and all the members, and he deserves this award and recognition. Please support.

<Applause>

DAVE SMITH – BRANCH CHAIR, MANCHESTER: I'd like your support this motion please. First I'd like to thank the NEC for putting Greg forward for this accolade. Dave has gone through all the work and Union-related stuff about Greg, but I would like to speak about Greg Mullineaux, my friend and my colleague. I've had the pleasure of working with Greg for over 20 years and I must say it's been an honour. Even when things were difficult I could always rely on him to put things into perspective and give his advice. As most of you know Greg, you've seen him at Conference for years and he takes great pride in being part of this great Union. Conference has always been special to Greg, even when on one occasion he had a middle-of-the-night hiccup and peed in a chest of drawers which had all his room-mate's cloths in! This never deterred him and he now wears big boy night nappies to stop his late-night dribbles!

<Laughter>

Greg believes in fairness and has always adopted this in everything he did. Greg has now retired from the service and it's been a great loss to the committee, but most of a massive loss to me as I won't be getting my weekend breakfasts

anymore! Greg deserves this accolade and implore you to all vote in favour of him receiving honorary life membership of this great Union. A true friend and colleague who I miss dearly. Thank you and please support us.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, Conference, all those in favour please show. Any against? That motion is carried. Well done Greg. Motion 10, Terry Fullerton for the NEC. This has been seconded by Manchester.

MOTION 10

Conference award Mr Dave Read Honorary Life Membership.

NEC

TERRY FULLERTON – NEC: Thank you Chair, Conference. In speaking on this motion, it gives me great pleasure to try and persuade Conference to award Dave Read honorary life membership. I first came across Dave Read when I was an observer at the Special Delegates Conference oh, way back in I think it was 1995, the Special Delegates Conference on finance, when the union was in turmoil, falling apart with the state of the finances of the Union, and Pete Hancox got up and gave his delivery of his speech on his plan to save the Union from bankruptcy and how he was going to take the Union forward as the finance officer, and put out his plan to help save the Union. There was a lot of angry branches at that Special Delegates Conference when I was stood at the back of the hall as an observer. Many were baying for blood from the NEC of that time and I'm convinced that when Dave Read got up to deliver his speech, the way he delivered that speech and the content of that speech calmed the fiery waters that were in the hall that day. And that was the first time I noticed how influential Dave Read could be, when he got up and spoke. And from those years onwards he was a regular speaker at that rostrum, delivering speeches, and people listened to Dave Read. Many of you who've been around a long time will know him, and he's been an outstanding contributor over the years at Conference. Not only that, Dave was influential when Manchester were facing the horrible spectre of privatisation. Dave's knowledge around profiling was influential in the fact that Manchester were able to stave off that and were awarded a service level agreement. From that, just after that, Holme House were going through a tremendous amount of difficulty and were put on the Performance Improvement Plan prior to performance testing. That was the threat at Holme House at that time, and I remember getting the phone call from Manchester in the POA office from Dave Read, who said, 'If you want me to come across and give you some help on how to fight off this and how to deliver on your Performance Improvement Plan, I'll come across.' We welcomed him, we took up that offer and he came across in his own time to give us help at that particular time, and we successfully delivered a Performance Improvement Plan and staved off performance test at that particular time.

Dave retired some years ago. He's come to Conference year upon year since his retirement, sits at the back, listens to Conference, because he's got POA written all the way through him. And I think it's been a little bit of an oversight that he hasn't been put up for this award before now, and the NEC would like to correct that oversight and ask Conference to award Dave Read honorary life membership. Please support the motion Conference.

<Applause>

DAVE SMITH – BRANCH CHAIR, MANCHESTER: Dave Read is a true trade unionist. He spent his years in service helping our colleagues and members get justice and fair hearings when they needed his help. His experience and knowledge was invaluable when dealing with the managers on behalf of our members. Dave played an integral part as a member of the internal bid team that kept Manchester inside the public sector. Although Dave has been retired for a number of years now, he still pokes his nose into what is happening within the service, and most of all what is happening and local and national level within our Union. His experience and knowledge has been a massive asset that I personally have been able to draw upon when I've needed it. Dave has attended Conference for longer than I can remember, whether it's been as a branch official or as an observer since he retired. His enthusiasm is infectious, although we have to listen to the same jokes each year and I'd like to ask him to get some new material for next year. Also, the smell of pee and Sunday veg is getting a bit much so he needs to buy some new deodorant. He's a man of principles and integrity and I truly believe that this accolade of honorary life membership would be well deserved. It would be a great honour, not only for Dave but from his branch chair, if you'd vote in favour of him receiving honorary life membership of our great Union. Please support this, thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Dave. Straight to the vote, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. Motion 11 for the NEC, Steve Gillan, this has been seconded by Preston.

MOTION 11

Conference award Mr Tom Robson Honorary Life Membership.

NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, thank you Conference. It gives me great pleasure in moving this motion on behalf of the National Executive Committee to celebrate the outstanding contribution by Tom Robson to this Trade Union at local and national level. Tom joined HMP Preston in 1977 and moved to HMP Hindley in 1978. He was the health and safety rep at Hindley from 1979 to 1980 and branch secretary, Hindley 1980 to 1986. He moved to HMP Preston and was branch chair from 1986 until 1997. Tom was also part of the POA rules and constitution subcommittee during a turbulent period for the Trade Union. Those rules and constitution that was set in 1996-97 stood the test of time. Tom was then elected onto the NEC in 1998 until retirement in 2013, a period of 15 years serving as both an NEC member before becoming National Vice Chair in 2007. Tom championed the work of the private sector and was a leading player in the Union using Toe by Toe as an example. He gave evidence to the Bradley review on behalf of the Union and influenced some key recommendations. He played a major role in this Trade Union and that is why he is deserving of the highest award this Union could give. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

JIM STARKIE – CHAIR, HMP PRESTON: Chair, NEC, Conference. Steve, I think you've copied some of my speech! Colleagues, more than happy to second this motion and to thank Tom for his services and his endeavours over the years to this Union, both locally at Preston and nationally. Tom joined the service in '77, firstly to Hindley, Borstal. I think you've heard that bit. After ten years on the committee there he, on a promotion, Tom transferred to HMP Preston, went straight onto the committee forming a formidable partnership with the then secretary, Dave Hardiman. During their time they managed to pick up an injunction in '94 due to the threat of industrial action at Preston, this injunction was only receded in 2009. Tom joined the NEC in '98 and covered London and the Southeast. Over the years he was involved in many major high profile cases, including the Wormwood Scrubs issues that they had at the time and the Mubarek murder and all the finger-pointing that went along with that case. Tom moved back to cover the Northwest in 2005, with his advice and guidance and always willing to support, taught me about the values in remaining calm and steady and not rushing into decisions. One of Tom's adages was, 'There's only one thing you get through rushing and that's pregnant.'

<Laughter>

Tom was elected to the position of National Vice Chair in 2010, he took up on a number of roles when he became National Vice Chair, Secretary of the Private Sector Committee and Secretary of the Nursing and Healthcare Committee, which he carried out with his usual calm and organised manner. Colleagues, the Union honorary life membership is given to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution, either locally or nationally, to the association. Tom fits this criteria and deserves this award. Please give Tom Robson honorary life membership. Thank you.

<Applause>

SID SIDERY – CHAIR, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. My first time here and this is off the spur. Tom Robson was my first SO when I joined the job. We didn't still have top hats and long and tailcoats, but he was the best SO I ever worked for in Preston on D-Wing. He was a rebel then and he's a rebel now but I'd always follow him to the gate if we had to. Conference, support this motion please.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference. Tom was my first experience of dealing with the NEC, first national rep I ever had to deal with and he taught me a couple of things. One was that he set a very high bar for the rest of the guys and girls at the top because he was *always* available, never ever unavailable. And the other thing he always taught me was there was no such thing as a stupid question; the only stupid question to Tom was one that wasn't asked. He was always willing to help and never ever patronised, always there to support us and I believe Full Sutton would say the same from top to bottom, all that I've worked with on the committee there. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

IVOR DUNNE – CHAIR, NORTHERN IRELAND: Chair, NEC, Conference. Believe it or believe it not I'm up here to support Tom Robson getting this honorary life membership. A few years ago at this Conference Tom was denied his honorary life membership. It caused a little bit of a hiccup. Tom has now done his penance and I have pleasure in supporting this motion. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you speakers. All those in favour please show. Any against? That motion is carried. We're now looking at emergency motion 6.

<Applause>

Which is at 11a speaking for the NEC is Glyn Travis.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Good morning, Conference, Chair, NEC. In moving emergency motion to award Chris Donovan honorary life membership gives me great pleasure. Some of you who have worked with Chris or in the real terms and people who've known him well, you've attended the place where he goes to work, because Chris has always been a little bit laidback. Joined the job in '88, went to work, did his job, came home, was a great family man. But the one thing about Chris Donovan is he's his own man. He's someone who no matter where he works, who he works with or who he's dealing with, deals with it in his professional, laidback approach. I know that everyone on this top table wanted to move this motion, including the National Chair. I'm sure that on Wednesday Mark will make a comment or two about Chris that I wouldn't even dare to say at this Conference. Chris stood for election and lost, he was dignified, he's always recognised and accepted democracy. People will look at him and say that he's the quiet man, a bit like John Wayne really, but he's always there when you need him. When he worked at Liverpool, or as I say, when he attended at Liverpool, for all those years no matter what we as a committee or we as a branch dictated would happen, Chris was there. He would educate young staff, he would teach them the ways to be a prison officer: firm, fair and always right. Prisoners respected Chris because of the way that he was. No matter what he said or what he did, no matter where he worked or how difficult the situation was he always remained calm and laidback in his approach. Well, let me tell you, the one thing about Chris was that his voice was far more powerful than anything else.

It's been a pleasure to work with Chris on the National Executive Committee. It was a position that I never thought he would ever go to because of his loyalty to Liverpool. And the colleagues who worked with him at Liverpool and the governors who have dealt with him from the day that he joined the job always knew one thing – Chris Donovan was an honest and transparent and fair man. Chris has got a wonderful family and grandchildren and kids and he's always been loyal to them, trustworthy and respectful. And I think sometimes you can look at people and say, 'Do you know what, if I had one ounce of his character, just one ounce, I would be a better person', because Chris Donovan thinks about everybody else but himself. Chris Donovan has suffered ill health and I know that many of you know that. And during those times of those ill health he never once put himself or his family before you. So on that note, please support. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Glyn. And Liverpool have seconded this motion and are happy to speak about it.

TERRY McCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Conference, I'm a little bit biased here because I've known Chris for 20 years; I've worked with him on the landings and on the local branch committee. It's no secret that Chris has had a poor last four or five years but it's testament to the man that no matter what, and even in his darkest days he was always there at the end of a phone to offer help, guidance and advice. And I'd like to thank Chris on behalf of all the staff at Liverpool and in the Northwest that he's helped in the last four or five years despite being poorly. Thank you, Chris. Support the motion.

<Applause>

JON SWIFT – BRANCH CHAIR, HEWELL: NEC, Conference. On a personal note I'd like to thank Chris as well for supporting me through a suspension a few years back, and with his diligence, his sense of humour, always on the other end of the phone whenever you needed him, he was always a joy to work with. Taught me a few things and it was really nice to see him tie the Hearing Authority up in knots during my investigation when we had a certain little discussion about something. Always a pleasure to work with him, always a pleasure to hear from him. Good luck in your future, Chris. Support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference. Straight to the vote, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, Conference. Brave, dignified and committed, so thank you for honouring Chris Donovan.

<Applause>

But I will get my own back on Wednesday night, don't worry about that. Motion 12, Full Sutton. Do we have a seconder for Full Sutton, please? Dartmoor, thank you.

MOTION 12

That Conference instruct the NEC to demand that all members receive the protection they are entitled to under Legislation including, but not limited to, the Health and Safety at Work Act.

FULL SUTTON

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, Conference, NEC. Again, health and safety, it's a bit of a hobby of mine. I make no apology for banging the same drum again. Unfortunately, in the climate we're in at the moment with an intransigent employer and uncaring masters, we don't have a lot of weapons to fight to make our colleagues' lives better. Health and safety legislation is one at the moment, because under health and safety legislation prison officers are entitled to exactly the same protection as *any other* worker in this country. We're not special according to HSE, all rig workers are, fisherman are, borehole workers are. We are not. We are covered under the same legislation. One thing that's sure, and it may be the only thing that's sure that whatever Brexit does or doesn't happen, is that there's going to be an appetite to grab back workers' rights. What the employers see as obstacles to profit, what we see as standards of decency and hard won protections. Employers have never given us any kind of protection, we've always had to fight for it and at the moment we are having to fight to keep it.

Working in a high security prison, colleagues, I'm regularly told how lucky I am to work in a safe prison. Tell that to the two staff who were hospitalised last week. It's not safe. It's safer, yes. I bow to nobody in my admiration for those of you are working in some of the gaols we have in this country that are failing miserably, that are putting *our* lives at risk and our charges life at risk. But it's not safe, my gaol. If somebody's pointing a flame thrower at you it doesn't feel better when you're told that somewhere else has been dropped into a volcano. Now, we know what's decent, safe and secure, so as the employer they have nailed that down, they have said what is safe, decent, secure. I'm fairly sure they left no fat on the bone. So you've got your levels, if they are dropping below them then you don't do the work because it's not safe, the employer said so, it's their own words. Employees hold their feet to the fire on this one. We still have that legislation there; it may not be there forever. In years gone by our predecessors fought tooth and nail, some of them suffered terrible sanctions in order to gain the protection which today's workers enjoy, all workers, including those of us in this Union. I'll fight tooth and nail to keep those protections and to look forward to a more amenable environment for the working man and woman in this country. Until that time we have to fight, we have to defend what we have. I ask you to do the same. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson for the NEC.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to support this motion and we'll be happy to pursue the failing employer using every piece of legislation at our disposal, including the courts. The motion calls for protection. Well, protection for us means that we've got a safe workplace, and colleagues, if we don't have a safe workplace we have absolutely nothing so we'll be happy to demand that our members are protected and safe. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That motion is carried. Motion 13, Low Newton. Secunder for Low Newton please? Dartmoor again or Gartree. We'll take Gartree for that one, Terry.

MOTION 13

That Conference demands that HMPPS and other employers where POA members work commission an urgent Independent Inquiry into the short, medium and long term effects of all forms of NPS and any recommendations be acted on without delay to protect the Health and Safety of our members.

LOW NEWTON

MICK LONGSTAFF – BRANCH CHAIR, LOW NEWTON: Conference, NEC. Motion 13 which reads: That Conference demands that HMPPS and other employers where POA members work commission an urgent independent inquiry into the short, medium and long term effects of all forms of NPS and any recommendations be acted on without delay to protect the health and safety of our members. Our prisons are rife with all types of substances which prisoners use with impunity can have devastating effects on our members. It's rarely out of the news but nothing's being done about it in the respect of the short, medium and long term damage. According to the website FRANK there's not enough known about many of these drugs, about their potency, the effects on people or what happens when they are being used with other substances or alcohol. The original packaging might describe a list of ingredients but we can't be sure what's inside them. There's even different types of NPS: stimulants, which can make you feel overconfident and disinhibited; downers or sedative NPS; psychedelic or hallucinogenic or synthetic cannabinoids. The employer doesn't care or appear to care, happy in the belief that if they admit that we have an issue with this then they'll have to do something about it. You can have all the security aids you want, what concerns me is more the lack of movement from HMPPS about our health, the effects on their most

valued asset, both physical and psychological, and their future. And we all know how well managers apply the attendance policy when it is used as a way of getting staff dismissed.

To give an example of what HMPPS know and what they tell us, I found a copy of a letter on the internet sent to Public Health England dated June 2015 and it was sent to NOMS, along with the prison healthcare and substance misuse providers. And it describes prisoners crushing and smoking Buscopan. The Buscopan releases a known hallucinogenic and it gives you auditory visual and tactile hallucinations, amnesia, insomnia, palpitations, flushing, irritability and an inability to concentrate. As I said, that's our drug of choice at Low Newton. It costs £3.49 for a pack of 20 or even cheaper in the pound shop and then sold in prison for up £10 each. Side effects of taking Buscopan if you take codeine, antihistamines, some medicines for depression, some medicines for mental health, if you take heart medicine or asthmatics. So for three years HMPPS have known about this and have done nothing about it. As we've already described, we know the effects to the user but nothing has been done in respect of those who suffer the second-hand use of it, all the while those sitting in their ivory towers do nothing to protect our health and safety. This has the potential in years to come to affect our members through poor ill health and with that an increased chance of dismissal through medical inefficiency. The longer this goes on the worse it will get. We all know now the dangers of asbestos use, second-hand smoke from those who worked in mines and shipyards, where for years nothing was done about the suffering of employees whilst employers stood around and did absolutely nothing. Please ensure the safety of our members and support the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Hewell wishes to wholeheartedly support this motion. One of our branch members who works in our drug treatment wing went to his GP for feeling poorly, when given a urine sample he tested positive for NPS. This is why we need to know more and we need to push the employer to do more so we can understand exactly what the risks are and the risks involved. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter for the NEC.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking in support of this motion. I would like to thank Low Newton for bringing the motion. In order to comply with Low Newton's motion we need the facts. We'd hoped that we may have been some way to achieving the motion prior to Conference, however, the anticipated and agreed voluntary staff urine testing programme agreed to be put in place at Holme House, only went live last week. That was despite your NEC agreeing and signing off to the programme in late January. Conference, in order to understand the short, medium and long term effects of NPS and other toxins and drugs, as outlined by Low Newton, we first need to find out the nature of the toxins and the level of the toxins getting into the bodies of our members. Your NEC attended numerous meetings in order to setup the pilot scheme at Holme House, we met with independent representatives of Public Health England, we met with academics and experts in toxicology, independent experts who were as keen as us to get the same answers that Low Newton seek. We explained our concerns regarding potential damage to the long term health of our members, we sought guarantees that outcomes would be shared, unlike the closely guarded Professor Britton report into smoking that took us three years to have released. We received the assurances we needed in order to ask our members to engage with the first steps in finding out what these poisons were and what they were doing to our members. However, the process only began last week and uptake at the branch has been very low. Believe it or not I was told last night that members are now being offered half-an-hour's PP on their way into the gaol for giving a sample, and half-an-hour on the way out for giving a sample. Is that what it's come to? This is a programme that the NEC engaged with, engaged with the employer, engaged with the independent experts. We expect branches to engage with it. It is what it is, it's voluntary, it's a voluntary testing. There's also a criteria to test people who have actively been exposed to psychoactive substances, they're to be kept in a calm, quiet area for a number of hours, unless there's an urgent medical intervention required, and then provide a sample. We need to get the facts. We need to find out. We see what it does to prisoners, is it doing that to us over the long term, are we all going to be left with some sort of cognitive dysfunction, some type of amnesia? Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, Conference, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you that's carried. 14 Dartmoor, seconder for Dartmoor?

MOTION 14

Conference instruct the NEC to demand that all employers where POA members work implement a strategy to eradicate NPS from the workplace and protect our members from the harmful effects of this substance.

If the Employer has not done this by August 1st 2018, the NEC are to take whatever action they see fit.

DARTMOOR

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Seconded.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you.

JOHN MUMFORD – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, asking you to support motion 14 which reads: Conference instruct the NEC to demand that all employers where POA members work implement a strategy to eradicate PS from the workplace and protect our members from the harmful effects of this substance. If the employer has not done this by August 1st 2018, the NEC are to take whatever action they see fit.

Colleagues, it is a fact that our prisons are no longer safe for staff, along with a number of other contributing factors psychoactive substances have helped create the crisis that has engulfed our prisons. And what has the employer done to address this crisis? They haven't done nowhere near enough. What measures has the employer put in place to tackle these dangerous drugs getting into our prisons? Again, the employer hasn't put anything in place that is effective. What PPE has HMPPS introduced into our prisons to protect staff and the involuntary inhalation of these hazardous substances? Again, and shockingly colleagues, there's nothing from the employer. Colleagues, if this employer will not address this issue by urgently implementing an agreed national strategy to deal with this epidemic in our prisons, then this Union must use any means at its disposal to protect the health and safety of POA members. Conference, please support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

SHANE KENNEDY – BRANCH SECRETARY, GARTREE: Morning Conference, NEC, Chair, speaking in support of the motion. Recently at Gartree we've had members of staff that have been, what's the word, affected by NPS. This has been the past two weeks really and we've had an influx of loads and loads of NPS coming in on paper, apparently undetectable. But now we have banged on to our governor and said you need to put something in place. Literally the last week in the morning meetings it's been bandied about that the health and safety guy is actually now going to look into masks to find out that staff can wear, but I've been informed that apparently there is a gaol testing these masks at the moment. I'd like to know who that is because I've not been informed of that. And what masks do we buy; what do we buy; what do we use? Because at this stage how do we know that these masks, whether they're for the building industry, whether they're airflow or whatever, are they going to filter out the effects of NPS? And this is why we're saying we need as much knowledge and as much testing as we can get. Last week it was, I think on the Wednesday, we have actually now bought a machine, and everybody else has got one, that actually tests your mail for NPS and drugs. And within the first hour of it being switched on we found four letters, three with NPS and one with cocaine. And this is how it's getting in now, after the smoking ban it's coming in on the paper. How do we stop it? I'd ask governors and your security team to look into one of these machines and buy one. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

THOMAS NUNDY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP ELMLEY: Conference, NEC. Spice has been a big problem, I think in every single prison in the country over the past few years, and I'd just like to thank Dartmoor for bringing this motion to the table because I have been under the influence of spice, not smoking it, obviously inhaling it at work and many of my colleagues have and I'm sure that many of your colleagues have as well. Enough is enough. It is as simple as that. I've told my local MP about this and he almost couldn't believe what I was telling him, that I'd gone to work and OK, he accepts there's gonna be a level of violence in prisons, but to be sent home from work because I was just walking down the landing and I've inhaled something and ... I was carried down the landing by a prisoner that was obviously quite pro staff. And my MP has gone to parliament and has said that masks should be introduced to stop us from inhaling it. Well, do you know what would be better than giving us masks to stop us inhaling it? Stop it from coming into our prisons before that becomes an issue! Support the motion.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Again, Hewell wishes to wholeheartedly support this motion. Hewell is a Cat B local and one of the major problems we face is NPS. We have wasted the resources of air ambulances called to pick up prisoners stoned out their heads on NPS and fallen down the stairs and split their heads open. I've seen nurses fighting to save lives of people who don't care about themselves and don't care about their partners and don't care about their families and don't care about their futures. I thought the situation would change when actually one of the little darlings died. The sad answer is no, no it hasn't. It still carries on, they still don't challenge it coming in. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

ANDY HARRISON – BRANCH CHAIR, STYAL: Conference, National Chair, Styal's local policies are a bit of a wish-wash really. First of if you feel like you're under the influence of NPS check the blood pressure, get them a taxi, before you go can

you do a tea patrol? Interestingly enough we brought this up with our area health and safety rep, and I think the only way this is going to hurt the Prison Service is with the money. Now what he was saying is one prison in the northwest where any incidence of spice is being used, the staff were wearing the smoke hoods. What he said, that is costing us a fortune. I don't know which prison it was, they was actually wearing the smoke hoods, but it seemed to upset them a lot so you've got to hit them where it hits them in the pocket, the Prison Service. So please support the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC. As with the previous motion, the Executive support this motion and I'll just echo what Tom Nundy said from Elmley, the Chair and General Secretary gave Gordon Henderson, MP for Swaleside and Sheppey, a brief that he delivered in parliament and he asked for gas masks. Now it's not as we think a respirator type thing. It's something that is fit for purpose, but that's coming from MPs, colleagues. Get amongst them, tell them how it is, get them in the prisons and show them the conditions you're working under. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour, please show. Any against? That's carried. 15, Wymott. Secunder for Wymott please? Humber, thank you.

MOTION 15

Conference accepts that any member of staff who is exposed to NPS, appears to be, or is suspected to be affected by NPS, be given access to a voluntary drug test at the expense of the employer. This test must include the latest available information which is currently being used to test for NPS.

WYMOTT

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: Mr Chair, NEC, Conference, ladies and gentlemen, asking you to support motion 15 that reads, 'Conference accepts that any of member of staff that was exposed to NPS, appears to be or is suspected to be affected by NPS, be given access to a voluntary drug test at the expense of the employer. This test must include the latest available information which is currently being used to test for NPS.' Colleagues, we are all aware of the plague that's affecting establishments the length and breadth of the country. There's hardly a day goes by at our place that there's not a general alarm for a prisoner under the influence, and the effect that it's having on staff too. We have seen a safe system of work that's brought out and within that safe system at work there's still a denial of any causal link between NPS ingested by prison officers, nursing staff, OSGs, anybody in the vicinity of one of these incidents. The employer is still denying that. What we can see is not in effect happening. The prisoner may have ingested NPS and we accept that he's under the influence. However, staff who try to follow this up, there's a causal link that is being denied. Unfortunately 18 months ago two officers at our place on one of the wings entered a cell to remove a television from a prisoner that was being placed onto basic AP. Within seconds the pair of them were brought down with spice. Staff came to their assistance, they were helped down the stairs, off the freeze landing, they were sat in the staffroom where they both exhibited some truly bizarre behaviour. All gamuts of emotions were expressed from crying, laughter, manic laughter, all the way through. It was truly upsetting for everybody involved, not least of which the two officers. Fortunately we were able to gather a sample and this sample was sent away. The analysis when it came back was just a list of chemical elements, so I wondered what I could do with that, so I Googled it and it came back that it was indeed spice, and this particular batch of spice had been cooked up in Japan, in Tokyo in 2014, and it resulted in the death of ten users within a six-week period. So let's make no bones about it, we all know it can kill and it does kill, but to deny any causal link between the two is allowing our employer to duck a major issue here. Aside from the fact that it can kill, it's the lesser effects as well. If you've ingested this stuff and you get in the car and you drive home and you have an accident on the way home and kill somebody, god forbid ... what happens then? Whose fault's that? Is it the employer's for you being exposed to it, is it your fault for getting in the car and driving home? All we're asking for is that if you believe that you've been exposed to NPS that you be given access to a test that will confirm or deny this. It's a decency thing aside from anything else. It's the right to know what your body has ingested whilst you've been at work. So I'd ask you to support the motion.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HUMBER: No one saw NPS coming. That hit us right on the chin from a side shot, didn't it? It's here. Unfortunately it seems to be here to stay. My governor and the SMT at my establishment have tried just about anything, tried to implement everything we have actually asked them to do to try and stop this, but as we close the door or close an access route into the prison, they'll find another way of getting it in. I mean the scans one of our colleagues was talking about earlier, we've got three of them and they're proving their worth in gold in what they're finding. We're getting stuff coming over the walls massively on a night time. With the netting that we have the guys have got fishing

lines that they manage to get out with Velcro on. We've had some of this NPS tested. Some of the chemical elements in it: formaldehyde, dog turd, bleach, just some of the things. None of that is meant to be in any of our bodies. We see what it does to them. What the hell is it doing to us? Please support this motion?

<Applause>

GEOFF WILLETS – BRANCH CHAIR, SUDBURY: Conference, NEC, in support of this motion. Four weeks ago I was subject to NPS poisoning. I was taken to hospital and primarily diagnosed as being poisoned by NPS. The toxicology report came back that I'd been poisoned by NPS. We need the evidence so we can challenge the employer, so support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter for the NEC.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking in support of the motion. I'd like to thank Wymott for bringing this motion and the NEC fully support it. If our members feel under the influence of psychoactive substances at work, we believe they should be voluntarily tested without delay. We all know that to deliver the work of a prison officer in a safe, secure and decent manner you must be clear of mind, you must be able to make decisions and act on those decisions without the influence of mind-altering drugs. We know our members are affected by these dangerous substances. On a health and safety visit to a northeast prison we were shown alarming CCTV footage of an officer alone in a segregation unit at night. He became under the influence of a suspected psychoactive substance. We saw him in the video stagger around the unit, we saw him teetering at the top of a steep set of metal stairs. He missed a test call and collapsed in the toilet. He was blue lighted out of the establishment due to concerns of an erratic heartbeat and raging pulse. He stayed in hospital overnight. We ask you to consider this, Conference. Where would have been if that officer, alone, under the influence of a psychoactive substance, had started to unlock the doors in a 28-bed segregation unit? How safe, secure and decent would that have been? What would have been the outcome?

HMPPS put out a document in relation to psychoactive substances. It had a section called myth busting. The NEC said to the employer, 'Establish the facts before you try and bust the myths.' Please support Wymott's motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Wymott to reply?

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: I'd like to thank the NEC and the previous speakers for their support of the motion. I did forget to say, if you believe that the Health and Safety Executive is a body that will assist you in this, think again. I reported HMP Wymott and the governor there for their lack of effort in robustly going after NPS in HMP Wymott. What came back from Health and Safety Executive could have been handwritten by the governor herself. It was just the usual mealy-mouthed platitudes. HMP Wymott has a robust attitude to NPS ... it has a searching policy etc. etc. So if you think that the HSE are an avenue of help, think again. The only people who are going to solve this problem, as usual, are the members themselves. Thank you. Support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll take that to the vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? That's carried. 16, Dartmoor. Secunder for Dartmoor? Portland, thank you.

MOTION 16

All POA Branch Committees approach their local H&S Leads and demand statistics identifying the number of prison staff from 2015-2018 affected by PS. This information will then be sent to the NEC who will present these findings to the Employer, the Justice Select Committee and various Media Outlets.

DARTMOOR

JOHN MUMFORD – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, asking you to support motion 16, which reads, All POA branch committees approach their local health and safety leads and demand statistics identifying the number of prison staff from 2015-2018 affected by PS. This information will then be sent to the NEC, who will present these findings to the employer, the Justice Select Committee and various media outlets. Colleagues, how much longer will our employer neglect our health and safety by brushing under the carpet the threat that spice represents to all members of staff in every establishment in the country. This threat needs to be addressed now before PS claims the life of a member of staff. PS has been in our prisons for a number of years but due to the lack of research into this dangerous drug, the long-term negative health effects for second-hand inhalation are unknown. We have no idea what harm PS is doing to our physical

and our mental health. We need a two-phase approach in order to urgently address this matter as a union. The first phase involves shaming HMPPS leaders who are putting this information into the public domain. The second phase was covered in motion 14. Enough is enough. We must act now in order to protect ourselves and our members' health and safety by getting this information at local level and passing it on to the NEC to action. If any establishment health and safety lead does not disclose this information, then the Committee are to go in to dispute until the information is given. Conference, please support this motion before it is too late.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, fully support the motion. A couple of little bits I would add onto it is your health and safety lead, make sure they're recording correctly. For over 18 months at Full Sutton our health and safety lead was happily recording these as 'near misses' because nobody had got physically hurt according to her. Once we found that out, because it was hidden amongst the figures, we found it out, it's got right now, but let's get these figures right, let's get them to the employer and let's force them to do something, because we're right, we don't know what this stuff does. In this room probably there's a vast spectrum of experiences. I personally had massively increased blood pressure for a day or so, but didn't actually feel that bad in myself. And another member at Full Sutton is currently entering six months on sick because he's had a complete physical breakdown which has been attributed to spice inhalation. It's dangerous, we can't get rid of it, we've got to get the employer on side to fight this stuff, 'cause otherwise some of us are going to die. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Responding on behalf of the NEC is Chris honorary life member Donovan.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding for the NEC. The NEC fully supports Dartmoor in bringing this motion to Conference and one of the main reasons is we support because any action brought by branch committees in regard to health and safety by the members, of the members, should and will be brought to the employer's attention by this NEC. It happens now and it will happen this year, next year ... and all the time. If you bring a health and safety issue, it will be supported by the NEC. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Chris. All those in favour of this motion please show. Any against? That's carried. Motion 17, Sudbury, seconder for Sudbury? Guys Marsh.

MOTION 17

Conference instruct the NEC to obtain assurances from employers that POA H&S Reps are trained to at least a recognised industry level of a Diploma in all aspects of Health & Safety to secure a more realistic base level for our members.

SUDBURY

GEOFF WILLETS – BRANCH CHAIR, SUDBURY: Conference, NEC, Chair, we are asking Conference to support this motion. Conference instruct the NEC to obtain assurances from the employer that the POA health and safety representation are trained to at least a recognised level of a diploma in all aspects of health and safety to secure a more realistic base level for our members. Conference, as you're aware, health and safety protects our members on a daily basis and our safety reps play a vital part in this protection. This motion is fundamentally directed at lifting restrictions for the health and safety reps, allowing them to gain qualifications that they require to protect our members within the health and safety umbrella. Health and safety regulations and laws protect our members, so restricting their learning development of our safety reps restrains the protection we deliver to our members. In 1974 the Labour government secured training for health and safety reps which, under the Health & Safety at Work Act requires your employer to provide whatever information, instructions, training and supervision is necessary to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable. The current PSI10 of 2016 states that safety reps must be given time off to attend basic facility by the TUC, stage 1 and stage 2. This is clearly restricting safety reps that want to gain additional knowledge to protect our members. If we had a unitary environment we wouldn't need assurances to reinforce the education rights of our safety reps. This vague interpretation of the policy at a basic level by governors and SMTs makes it particularly hard for branches to progress when they use semantics that cap the learning potential of our safety reps. As we are part of an ever-changing prison service, clarity is required in securing at least a stage 3 qualification so we can support and protect our members in all aspects of health and safety. Support this motion.

<Applause>

MICK LONGSTAFF – BRANCH CHAIR, LOW NEWTON: I ask you to reject this motion purely on the grounds of the safety reps and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 which clearly says that it's up to the trade unions to make sure the training is done. I can't trust an employer who thinks that they know the rules. The law clearly says that it's up to the TUC approved

courses, that's where you come from. Thank you very much.

TERRY McCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Conference, speaking in support of the motion. It's all been highlighted by the last four or five speakers about NPS. The way forward to combat NPS is health and safety, therefore it's imperative that we have health and safety reps trained up to the highest possible standard. Support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson for the NEC.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the Executive asking Conference to support this motion and we thank Sudbury for bringing it. We'd be more than happy to seek the assurances detailed in motion 17 but as an organisation we've got more to do, and so in order to achieve that our POA health and safety team has asked Joe to design our own bespoke health and safety taster for branch official to bolt on to branch officials training and once that's completed, and that's at the design stage at the moment, that will come to the Executive and hopefully we'll be able to deliver that. Colleagues, the Health and Safety at Work Act is the most important piece of legislation in our arsenal. Health and safety is the way forward because a safe workplace is not an optional extra. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Sudbury, do you wish to come back?

GEOFF WILLETS – BRANCH CHAIR, SUDBURY: No, no it's alright.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour of this motion, please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. Motion 18, Hindley. Secunder for Hindley? Liverpool.

MOTION 18

That Conference instruct our NEC to negotiate with the MoJ and HMPPS that the uniform grade are issued stab vests to wear when on prisoner escorting duties or bedwatches.

HINDLEY

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: NEC, Conference, our motion reads: That Conference instructs our NEC to negotiate with the MoJ and HMPPS that uniform grade is issued stab vests to wear when on prisoner escort duties or bed watches. Conference, the world has changed. Society has changed. People have no respect for authority or rules. Drugs are rife across our country and poverty is clearly there to see when you walk through our city streets. Violence in our society means nothing no more to those that are committing it. But while the changes in society are drastic we in the prison service are still living in an era from the 1920s. Taking ourselves outside the establishments in taxis, cuffed to the same violent people I have just mentioned in our gleaming, stab-proof, white shirts. How embarrassing is when you arrive on a funeral escort or a hospital bed watch or some other outside duty and the police are there in their full protective regalia? How embarrassing is it that hospital security guards are dressed in stab vests, while we sit there open to being attacked in our white shirt and tie? It's a disgrace that the service is more interested in whether you have a tie on than protecting us from the unpredictable. Leaving a prison cuffed to a prisoner is the most vulnerable time you will ever be in and who knows what could happen: has that person organised someone to get them away; is someone armed with a knife or weapon ready to attack a prison officer waiting for us to arrive at the nearest hospital? Questions staff must ask themselves on a daily basis. So Conference, we need to answer those questions with protection. The issuing of a stab vest should be a compulsory part of our PPE. So Conference, please support this motion and let's protect our members and give them the correct equipment, especially when we're outside the prison on escort duties or bed watches. Please support, thank you.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Chair, NEC, slight problem with this motion is the fact is it only identifies bed watchers and when we're actually outside the establishment. I don't know about many other people's establishments but at Swaleside we have a massive issue with weapons that are being found on a daily, daily basis. A weapon is designed to do one thing and one thing only and that is to cause harm to another individual. It's also about the fact where is our heightened risk? Is it when we're actually outside in the public or is it actually whilst we're inside our walls working with our prisoner population? And I personally know the fact at this moment is we consider our greatest risk is whilst we're at work. If this motion had said let's issue stab vests to our staff to keep them safe throughout the working day, irrespective of where they are, then we would be fully supportive of this motion itself. The other danger point of this is, will the employer, if we actually pass this motion, will the employer then try to use this as we will only issue stab vests when we're outside the establishment, and not when we're at our greatest risk, whilst we're working in the establishment. Recently Swaleside had a member of staff who was stabbed by a prisoner. First one we've had for many, many years, but that person got stabbed by a prisoner inside our walls, not outside our walls. So on that basis, we have to ask you not to support this motion. We fully understand. The fact is that we need to be protected and we should be demanding and pushing for protection, but it

should be throughout the whole of our working day, inside or outside, and purely on that basis, we have to ask you to reject this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Chris Donovan?

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC. This is an on-going issue and we of course support this motion brought by Hindley for all the reasons that Hindley have put forward this morning. Anything that protects our members' health and safety whilst carrying out their duties, wherever those duties take place, will be supported. And thank you Hindley, for bringing this. Conference, please support it.

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: Just a clarification on that. I do get the reply there from Swaleside and I do understand that yeah, we should be wearing stab-proof vests throughout the day during things. What this is highlighting is that during our day the majority of staff don't wear the vests while in gaol, but at the most vulnerable time, which is when we're outside, we should be wearing it, so please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. Conference, all those in favour of this motion, please show. Against? That motion is carried. Motion 19, Cookham Wood. Secunder for Cookham Wood? Stafford, thank you.

MOTION 19

That Conference instructs the NEC to engage with employers to ensure that the Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit forms (11DB) is available with the workplace Accident Books, to provide members with immediate access to the form should they wish to register the incident and in doing so enhance the employers' Duty of Care to their staff.

COOKHAM WOOD

WAYNE HUDSON – DELEGATE, COOKHAM WOOD: Chair, NEC, Conference, our motion reads that Conference instructs the NEC to engage with the employers to ensure that industrial injuries disablement benefit forms 11DB is available with the workplace accident book. This is to provide members with immediate access to the form should they wish to register the incident, and in doing so enhance the employer's duty of care to staff. I know this isn't a very sexy motion, but in my view this is a safety net for our members, so please support. Several members at our establishment are actually claiming this benefit while still working, due to a percentage of disability that they've incurred during incidents at work, so please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter for the NEC.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, asking you to reject the motion. We concur with the sentiment in relation to Cookham Wood's motion, that sentiment being early access to any potential benefits available to our members, but we don't believe that the employer will engage on the basis that the industrial injuries disability benefits scheme is external to the employer. Indeed, it's even external to the Civil Service. It's run and administered by the Department for Works and Pensions. The application form and the notes on completion run to some 28 pages. Maintaining those at the accident book would soon lose momentum. However, the .gov industrial injuries disability benefit website offers, from one single page, guidance relating to a full overview of the scheme. It outlines what the claimant may get. It outlines claimant eligibility and it supplies the forms for people to make the claim. There's also on there, further information telephone number to gain assistance when making a claim. We believe that our members should be free to make claims for industrial injuries benefit free from any employer scrutiny. Conference, the NEC thank Cookham Wood for bringing the motion but we ask Conference to reject.

WAYNE HUDSON – DELEGATE, COOKHAM WOOD: I totally disagree with that. Prior to my ten years' service at Cookham I did twenty years in Royal Mail Group as a civil servant for Royal Mail Group. We used to provide this facility. I think we're not supporting our members if we turn this down. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Cookham Wood. Go to the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That motion is carried. Conference, I think that's an appropriate time to bring this morning's proceedings to a close. Steve Gillan's just going to make an announcement about the fringe meeting that we have on offer.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much. Chair, Conference, as the Chair identified this morning in his opening speech, there's a range of fringe meetings. The first fringe meeting is Justice for Columbia, which will take place in room 1 in the Waterfront Suite. I would encourage as many people to attend this as possible. If you think things are bad in this country, even since the peace agreement was signed in Columbia, trade unionists and community leaders are still being murdered, and it's sponsored as well. And I want to pay tribute, actually, to Steve Bostock, former National

Executive member, because it was Steve's foresight that got us involved with Justice for Columbia in the first place and it was through his drive and determination that we actually are now thoroughly involved in this and we've been involved in it since 2007, and I am now on the management committee of Justice for Columbia, and most trade unions in the TUC are affiliated to it. So let's have a healthy turnout at the fringe meeting. Thanks very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Steve. Light refreshments will be provided as well so we'll see you all back here at 1:30. Thank you.

<End of morning session>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Tuesday 15th May, Afternoon Session - Part 1

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference, if I can call you to order? Just a few things to mention before we continue, our guest speaker from the PCS, Phyll Gyimah, she won't be attending due to personal reasons. And can I remind you of Branch Secretary Circular 19 of 2018 where you should all bring that information with you to Conference to give to us, reference the membership information, OSGs and operational band IIs. That was the mapping of the workplace. So to continue I'm gonna ask Steve Gillan to adopt the Annual Report 2017.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, as usual this is a good reference document, it states a lot of the work that's gone on in the Whitley structures and indeed in Scotland and Northern Ireland and our parliamentary reports and annual accounts etc. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference we need to adopt the Annual Report, all those in favour of adopting the Annual Report, please show. Thank you, any against? That report has now been adopted. On with the motions, we've got motion 20, Wymott, that's a placement change, this will be heard after 65 as 65a, so onto 21 and Hewell. Do we have a seconder for Hewell? Lincoln, thank you.

MOTION 21

That Conference instruct the NEC to challenge HMPPS and the Government to review the awarding of and existing Prison Service related contracts in order to establish that they are providing value for tax-payers money, whilst maintaining service standards.

HEWELL

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 21 reads: That Conference instructs the NEC to challenge HMPPS and the government to review the awarding of existing Prison Service related contracts in order to establish they are providing value for taxpayers' money, whilst maintaining service standards. Right, where do I start? Maintenance – Hewell did not get the short-lived joys of Carillion, we have the long term misery of Amey. Words fail to correctly describe the incompetence and inability to achieve even the most basic of cell repairs, whilst seeing the taxpayer as a money pit for their shareholders benefit. At Hewell I have been to my local MP with the fact that the contract provided toilet seat, which is of substandard quality and breaks quite easily, costs, without fitting, £78. The fact that a local company, in his constituency, can make a better quality and longer lasting toilet seat for half the cost and still make a healthy profit, whilst providing a massive saving for the taxpayer was chosen to be ignored by our current Home Secretary. It's a shame that his father taught him the value of education and hard work and the value of money for it to be ignored in his own constituency.

Talking to a local NHS public servant who bemoaned the fact that a rubbish skip provided by Amey at the local hospital would cost his under-funded health service £500, whilst a local company would charge £200. A colleague of his, who chose to save the taxpayer vital money by doing this, faced the sack. The blatant overcharging of the taxpayer is not providing the value for money and my have the standards dropped! Hewell has fallen into disrepair, cells are out of action, damaged and our branch members have to deal with the unnecessary and avoidable frustration which our prisoners demonstrate on a daily basis.

At Hewell our establishment is attempting to install replacement windows to ones which prisoners can't open and therefore stop drones dropping off. However, the 12-18-month contract... where we have got 12 spares, with 36 to 40 cells, is now

over five months' old and we're still on the first spare. Firstly, the windows did not fit the window frame and the boarded hardhat area still remains. It would be churlish for to suggest we subcontracted out to Amey to budget in Scarper and Sons. The other joke is how many plumbers does it take to change a light bulb? It's seriously not funny. American healthcare provider, Care UK, took over the healthcare provision for Hewell and Hewell Grange around May 2016, they came presenting the ignorant attitude that previous Worcestershire NHS trust staff would be turning up the following day, but the existing staff voted with their feet and left. Don't Care UK relied on their agency bed watch monsters who would travel great distances of over 100 miles to work long shifts. Some of the new staff provided by the new provider demonstrated questionable practices which left question marks over the recruitment standards just to get them through a period created purely by their ineffective planning. The issues arise when the staff bear the brunt of their employer's incompetence in greed for contracts which they are not ready to fulfil. Believe you me, there are so many honest, kind-hearted and decent people working in our healthcare department and also so many that didn't have to leave and are a loss to Hewell and those who access our healthcare services.

Across Hewell and Hewell Grange Don't Care UK have reduced the drug support workers at a time when spice has grown to epidemic proportions. They consider this to be a good idea and effective use of resource where at Hewell Grange the drug support worker left, and as a consequence, or pure coincidence, a year's worth of expected absence at the open estate occurred in two months and MDT failures shot up. Since the reintroduction of the drug worker service, absence have ceased; again, pure coincidence. The strain also put on the staff and the local underfunded and under resourced NHS by medical escorts when previous healthcare staff would've dealt with a significant sum in-house of injuries to prisoners and not put our branch members and the public at risk on hospital escorts. Last week at Hewell Grange the healthcare department told us to send a bruised ankle straight to A&E on a Saturday night and refused to see him as they did not provide such clinics to part of the establishment as it wasn't in the contract, or so they claim. As the comedy line goes, have you got any leeches for this problem? Yes, we have Care UK and their directors.

National Careers Service – at Hewell Grange, the Cat D open prison, the service was run by a dynamic individual who was passionate and committed in finding prisoners employment on release. They provided real tangible evidence of an establishment's successful resettlement function; however, in March the contract was given to another service provider who have yet to start. So, the problem with this is that prison staff are now having to pick up more of their work on top of their own creaking workloads, and prisoners are not being given all possible opportunity to reduce the risk of reoffending. On top of this there is yet again more committed individuals who are now lost to prison service, and it's one step forward in reality taking two steps back. Again, so much work being lost to the prison service.

Amey took over Reliance Transport, from the courts and inter-prison transfers in around 2011 heralding how they were saving the taxpayer money. Well the reality is they may have saved the taxpayers money on their sheets but the cost to our establishment has been significant. We have instances of inter-prison transfer arriving last month at 8:00 in the evening from purely the case of trying to squeeze an unrealistic and unachievable workload while expecting our staff in our establishment to pick up and cover their shortcomings and unworkable expectations. The contract was given in ignorance of our establishment's current, at the time, reception profile. Regularly our reception after work over due to late arrival of court transport, which includes increased TOIL for our members and destroying goodwill from our members towards the management who don't support them, or it feels like they don't support them, and it also increases the stress-related illness amongst our branch colleagues. This has been finished in court before lunchtime and not arriving in our establishment until well after lock up is not only tantamount to inhumane treatment but is completely avoidable. Wolverhampton Crown Court is about 25 miles away from Hewell via major road links with motorways and dual carriageways, it shuts at 5pm, yet on regular occasions it's struggled to arrive before our aspirational cut-off time, but once again our members are picking up the slack.

Our CAO refers to our prisoners as 'the men' but Amey treat them like cattle.

This was a motion from the Hewell branch accepted by Conference in 2016 and this is increasingly relevant as time progresses and new service providers become less and less credible. The message from the branch membership at Hewell to government is, 'We don't like to say we told you so two years ago, but we told you so and stop ignoring the elephant in the room.' It is *our* members who have to pick up the slack and face the violent consequences of failure of privatisation. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Chair, NEC, fellow delegates. I'll address this motion in the two parts which it has been presented. Firstly, let's talk about value for taxpayers' money. Now, I would ask you a simple question, taxpayers' money is given to us to be used in a certain way, it's not to be squandered, it's not to be wasted and it is to be used for the specific purpose for which it was budgeted. There is an organisation out there which likes to oversee that and that is the people who call themselves The Taxpayers' Alliance who you may recall used their position to cancel all the facility time that we used to have. But hands up how many of you have every used them and called them into your gaol

and asked them to look at some certain expenditure which you considered to be wasteful, but which the authorities felt was quite in order. These people do carry some clout and they do have a lot of expertise and I would suggest that as another string to your bow you might want to use their services as and when required.

Let's move onto the second one which is the hub of the issue about maintaining a service standard. Now, which of us knows what the standard should be within our prisons as far as maintaining all the work that needs to be done, which was previously done by our works department, then by Carillion and then by a mass of different people? Is it the governor, is it the business hub manager, is it the admin person running the works department who doesn't know a spanner from a screw driver, or is it you the person who is the end user on the landing? The problem which we are facing which has been put forward by the main speaker is that the standard, the service that we are getting is absolutely appalling! So not only is it a waste of taxpayers' money, it is failing to give the service that we, as people on the landings *need*, to be able to do our jobs. If the job was being done properly that young lady over there wouldn't have had to make her maiden speech today, because all of the observation panels would never have been broken to the point where we have 20 or 30 are now broken and they can't be replaced because someone, they've lost the credit card or they haven't got any money to buy some more. And we've now got OSGs walking around with a sawn-off shield to put over their hatch to go and do the count so no one spits at them or throws a cup of shit and piss all over them. I didn't realise, 'cause obviously I wasn't at work on that day, that a circular had come out authorising OSGs to go round and use shields, but maybe that is now the norm because the works is not going well.

One of the reasons why Bedford had a riot, which is not in the report if ever you got to see it, is the fact that we could not maintain good order and discipline in our gaol. Now, why did that happen? Because in the months running up to the riot our seg at best had only two spaces! Because all of the others were out of commission, one for nine months 'cause they couldn't replace a sink or a toilet bowl or something equally similar. Now, whilst it's easy to stand here and castigate Carillion, is there anybody that you have seen working in that department that is of any use? Would *you* ask any member of the works department, as they may be now, to come to your house and unblock the toilet, change a light bulb or do any minor repair compared to the bloke you can pick out the Yellow Pages, believing that he would be, a) competent to do the job, and b) the price you would pay would be the right one? I do not think so. So the question here is, and the question we would want the NEC to get onto is, what actually is the standard that we want *our* works department to maintain? Where are we going to set the bar? What is an acceptable delay? Is it OK for a fire door that needs an armour-rated glass panel in to have a piece of Perspex or maybe we just change the rules? We need to set the standard. The NEC needs to go with something, I'm not saying we need the standard, tell them what the standard is: this is the British standard, prison service standard, NEC standard, whatever you want to call it, but let's have something that we agree this is what it is and then we go to them. But let's make sure that whatever it is we do is supporting the man on the landing!

Support the motion, thank you very much.

<Applause>

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, just touching on a few items that have been spoken by the other two delegates. Observation panels – some time ago we had a similar problem where they're being smashed out, been reported but there's none in store to replace. Ultimately we took it as a decency issue and a health and safety issue, so we gave the governor sufficient notice 'cause we had raised this at meetings and it was minuted and we said, 'If you can't get the obs panels fixed those cells are not decent places to put prisoners, the broken obs panel becomes a ligature point, there's the risk of tampering with the cell lock, also it's not part of PPE to do a landing count being a plastic shield. Get me the risk assessments that says that's how we do it.' Well, the risk assessments obviously never arrived; we held a branch meeting and the branch decided we would no longer take receptions that day until we saw the obs panels being replaced. We waited for perhaps something to come from a court, myself and the branch chair at the time were getting reports that vans were turning up, we kept it very local but then later on in the afternoon had a call from Scrubs, 'Why are we getting your court returns?' 'Oh, had a few problems here at Wandsworth.' So, on this particular one if those are the issues that you're facing I would say use health and safety and use it as a tool, it's there and of course, please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson for the NEC.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the Executive asking you to support this motion and we thank Hewell for bringing it. When they introduced benchmarking Tony Stocks and I benchmarked Holme House prison and as part of the process we were promised, by the great and the good, that if we could identify monies available within the prison we could reinvest it into the prison. So as you would imagine we lifted every carpet, searched every toilet and came up with a plan, and part of that plan was that we would run the DHL contract. Now, I don't know how much your contracts are worth at your gaols, colleagues, but at Holme House twelve-hundred prisoners generate approximately 12-grand a

week in profit. 12-grand a week or at new pay rates about 24 new members of staff a year, and that was the argument we used not to lose staff.

Holme House visits was once ran by the WRBS and we used to get our tea and chocolate free off them when we were in visits. In the last year of their contract they gave the governor a roundabout £42,000 with which we employed a dog handler, to make sure they weren't getting drugs in through visits. You might think that was a great idea. We did. Today, that contract has been outsourced and it actually cost the governor of Holme House, the last time I saw the figures was in excess of £30,000 to run a contract that's generating huge amounts of profit. Colleagues, the whole process is corrupt and driven by political dogma. I've been online and had a look at what our outsourcing competitors are saying about the new world and they've told MPs that the government's current position has gone too far. Well, no crap their Sherlock! And that the system needs overhauling in the wake of Carillion's collapse, and this is what they're saying and this is really interesting. Rupert Soames, and he's a proper paragon of virtue, isn't he? He complained that contracts were currently based on cost rather than the expertise that the private companies can offer. Well that's fantastic. If you have a look at the violence level in some of these gaols that private companies run they've got lots of expertise. Phil Bentley, the Chief Executive of Mitie said, well he's condemned the drive for the lowest cost, well where did that come from 'cause it was always all about cost. These contracts have always been about cost.

The arguments and the reasoning has changed and we need to acknowledge that and take account of it. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show. Any against? That's carried. Motion 22, Duncan Keys for the NEC. Do we have a seconder for this motion please?

MOTION 22

In light of the uncertainties over Brexit that the POA locally and nationally campaign to ensure that workers do not pay the price in any agreements as outlined in Conference Paper 2.

NEC

DUNCAN KEYS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, on behalf of the National Executive. You'll see in the body of the motion, colleagues, that this refers to Conference paper 2 which is in your pack, and effectively this is an enabling motion that allows for the National Executive to prepare itself just in case the scenario regarding the Brexit departure from Europe has a negative impact on workers' rights. We've all heard, I expect, politicians, particularly from the Tory ranks, telling us that once we've departed from the European Union that there will be no attempt to undermine the rights that are currently enjoyed by British workers. The Executive, you would not be surprised to hear, view that statement with somewhat a jaundiced eye as do the TUC, so as I say, this motion is effectively an enabling position for us to keep an eye, along with the TUC and other organisations, any attempt to diminish the workers' rights that are currently in the United Kingdom. And if that appears to be on the horizon then the POA will be taking a course of action along with other trade unions. I'll move the motion. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Duncan. Norwich, do you wish to speak on that? No. Straight to the vote then, all those in favour of this motion, please show. Any against? Thank you that's carried. The Verne, motion 23. Secunder for The Verne? Portland, thank you.

MOTION 23

Conference accept that when the UK has left the European Union, the POA NEC are given a mandate to do whatever is necessary to reinstate the power for Governors to remove remission from prisoners as part of any adjudication award.

THE VERNE

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, esteemed observers at the back. Motion 23 reads: Conference accept that when the UK has left the European Union, the POA NEC are given a mandate to do whatever is necessary to reinstate the power for governors to remove remission from prisoners as part of any adjudication award. Colleagues, this motion will give staff protection and give prisoners a very real sanction, which we haven't got at the moment, to deter them from breaking any prison rules and in turn providing a safer workplace with less violence. The removal of this a few years ago saw a massive downturn in control. Now, we appreciate this isn't the answer to all the problems across the service, but will make a massive positive impact for our members. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Chris Donovan.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, the NEC ask that you reject this motion from The Verne due to it needing a change in the law, something that would be impossible to do, please reject this motion that has been brought for all the right reasons by The Verne because it is unachievable.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Chris. Verne, do you wish to reply?

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Yes please. Chair, NEC, Conference, we're just asking the NEC to try and see if they can implement this, we're not asking them to implement it, so please support and let's see if we can take the fight to the employer. Cheers.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour of this motion, please show. Against? That motion is carried. Motion 24, Swaleside.

MOTION 24

That Conference recognise that the current operational Non-Effective of 20% is insufficient to meet the needs of the membership or the operational needs of the service.

Further, that Conference mandate the NEC to engage with HMPPS and other employers to implement a Rate closer to 25%.

An update and report back to be provided for the membership no later than Conference 2019.

SWALESIDE

PHIL STANBRIDGE – DELEGATE, BELMARSH: Point of order. Chair, NEC, Conference, the reason why I'm calling a point of order is why are we having this motion when it has already been answered from last year's Conference? In your report back booklet, under operations in your amended version, I'll give you time to look at it ... under operations ... it states that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with NOMS to increase the non-effective percentage beyond 20% to reflect the profiled work loss to maternity, paternity and adoption leave and back to work plans. As you can see, HMPPS have given their response and have stated their reasons why there will be no change to the 20% non-effective. I believe we will be wasting the NEC's time as they will point them to their response in relation to the 20% non-effective. I do believe in the sentiment of the motion with my colleague, Dave Cook, that we all need more than 20%, but it seems quite clear that this is a futile argument. I don't think we're going to get anywhere because it quite clearly says, 'There are currently no plans to change the 20% rate of non-effective' and they've given a reasonable response. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Phil. Well in relation to your point of order, we haven't heard from Swaleside yet about what the operational needs of the service are. It's very specific in that it's asking for a rate closer to 25%, and it's also asking for an update from us at Conference 2019. So I would have to reject that point of order and hear the motion.

PHIL STANBRIDGE – DELEGATE, BELMARSH: Can I respond?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Not unless you want to remove me you can't, no.

<Laughter>

PHIL STANBRIDGE – DELEGATE, BELMARSH: I'll take a chance! Colleagues, you've heard the Chair. I think that we should remove him from the position at the minute because I'm a great believer that it's been answered. I don't want to waste our time and my colleague will probably ... he might agree, he might not, but I believe that they've answered it. It's quite clear in that thing beyond 20%, well you put a figure, 25, 27, 22, the answer is 'no. 20% is what we're giving you. So I think can we remove the Chair while we ...'

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well we'll have a go for you Phil!

PHIL STANBRIDGE – DELEGATE, BELMARSH: Have a go. He might as well earn his money first year at Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Second year actually!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Point of order, Phil. It needs the support of 12 branches to go to the vote to remove the Chair, so do we have 12 branches to support removing the Chair. That's a big fat no. Sit back down. See you later!

<Laughter>

PHIL STANBRIDGE – DELEGATE, BELMARSH: It was worth a try!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Carry on Dave. You've got all this to come by the way!

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Do we have a seconder after all that? Thank you, Rochester. Didn't hear you first time round.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I'd just like to say at this point, when we actually put this motion in was in December/January of this year. The report back was only actually given to us as we turned up today, the amended one. We only saw that. However, at the same time I don't believe that would have changed our position on whether we brought this motion to Conference or not. Swaleside currently are actually averaging a weekly use of non-effectives of 33% over a year. 33%! That's 13% above the national average. Put that into some context –if you have 300 operational staff in your establishment, 3s to 5s, that currently works out at 39 staff on a daily basis who are not in our establishment. Now we're currently going through a profiling exercise, a re-profiling exercise following OMiC coming in and everything else, and we're arguing that the point is that we went and saw our governor on a local basis, asking him/her to raise our non-effectives to a higher level to reflect reality of what is happening in our establishment, instead of the farce that we're actually being forced to do year after year after year. But the answer that eventually came back from the DDC, Richard Vince, that no, he would not allow us to raise our non-operational level. So this now means that as an establishment we're going to profile a set of work that gets resources that is fundamentally flawed from the absolute outset, 'cause we're failing to recognise the reality of our working life. So we put a challenge in. By the way, thank you for referring to the report back. If you read that there, there are some things on it, it's quite adamant, at the end of the day there are currently no plans to change 20% rate of non-effectives. That's the HMPPS stand. That should not be good enough for this Union. It shouldn't be good enough for this Trade Union. It is wrong. It is absolutely wrong and it's making our working lives more dangerous and harder for us to do the job that we're being paid to do. The job of the Trade Unionist is not to push at a door that is open, it's to actually push at a door that is shut. So I don't care if they've shut the door to us and they're saying we're not going to increase it. That should not stop us fighting and arguing to have what is right. One of the biggest issues now is offender management is starting to real out in a really big way. Within that is mandatory training for all staff and it works out to approximately five days training per member of staff for OMiC alone. That is actually pushing up the training non-effectives way beyond where they should be. So we're currently running actually about ten times the national accepted non-effectives for our training figures. That's not so bad at the end of the day, 'cause we're training our staff, but where are those staff actually coming from? What it means is that we have less officers walking up and down our landings, maintaining safety and security because they're away getting training and our employer's refusing to recognise it.

This is quite simple. We've got HMPPS's answer. If you read the report back it actually says in here, really comes out with loads of figures about maternity leave changes, with time, and therefore you can't profile for that, 13 prisons ... 13 prisons in the last quarter, whenever they wrote this reply, recorded no staff as being on maternity leave. Therefore there is no reason for us to provide non-effectives for maternity leave. What about the other 80-plus prisons that we have maternity leave on and all that other stuff in there? 'Working hours lost to phased return plans currently account for around 0.2% of total staff hours, which is not in itself a particularly significant amount.' That's from them. At the end of the day that is from them. Well I'll tell you what – don't raise our non-effectives, get out of your big offices in Petty France and that and come and walk our landings in place of the people that we've lost through training and everything else. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, very much echoing Swaleside, but some of the things missed out in the report back are those staff who've opted to do 41 hours a week and the additional leave that goes with working 41 hours a week, and there's even a recent employment tribunal matter which is showing that staff who work additional hours should be paid for the additional leave. These are something else which wasn't available in the report back but against realistically how many prisoners really are operating at 20% and how much leave is carried over? Again not in the report back but I know most of my members are carrying over leave at the end of each year and then battling to try and get it back at a later date. And again, as Trade Unionists our members shouldn't be losing a day's leave if there isn't enough non-effective time in our profile. So please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

<Applause>

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, Dave Todd responding on behalf of the NEC. The NEC obviously support the motion from the Swaleside branch. There have been numerous motions accepted in past Conferences, we had 150 in 2000 from Styal, which wanted to remove all maternity leave from 20% non-effective. This was followed up by motions from Wymott, Pentonville, Lancaster Castle, Birmingham, Swinfen Hall, Holme House and last year Frankland. Conference, as my colleague from Swaleside's pointed out, look at the annual report back and see how the employer thinks our non-effective is in actual fact effective. They've never had to manage prisons recently, otherwise they'd know the complexities that you deal with every day are not identified here.

Sit down Cookie!

If there's enough non-effective, Conference, all you do is you contract their hours. Nothing else, that's it. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave, do you wish to reply?

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Thank you Mr Chair. Thank you NEC speaker. Just one other thing I want to say. A little while ago I attended a long-term high-security estate meeting, a couple of weeks ago, at which it was announced by Ed Cornell, who was there at the time, 'cause I raised the non-effective issue with him and the issues that we're having, and I've spoken about Swaleside's average, at which point he announced the national average is 27%. So we're still below what we should actually be fighting for. Nearer 25 is more reasonable than 20%. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, Conference. All those in favour please show. Against? Thank you. That's carried. 25, Styal. Do we have a seconder for Styal? Farms, thank you.

MOTION 25

That Conference instruct the NEC to challenge HMPPS and other employers and specifically Occupational Health Services whereby a designated Occupational Health Practitioner can discard a sick leave note prescription proffered by a POA members GP or Specialist. This to be challenged legally if necessary.

STYAL

ANDY HARRISON – BRANCH CHAIR, STYAL: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 25 reads that Conference instruct the NEC to challenge HMPPS and other employers and specifically occupational health services, whereby a designated occupational health practitioner can discard a sick-leave note, prescription proffered by a POA member's GP or specialist. This can be challenged legally if necessary. Conference, in this current climate, where it's apparent the employer has a hidden agenda whereby closed-grade staff serving any amount of time and who are on the top rate of pay as a band 3-5 officer is no longer required and seen as not value for money. It is quite clear staff are being forced from this profession through trumped-up charges of wrongdoing and exiting staff by disciplinary procedures. Staff voluntarily resigning from the service simply because they've had enough of a service which treats their long service and commitment with disdain. The increased assaults on staff daily, and the seriousness of some of these assaults, a lack of empathy or care these members are offered, now leaves these brothers and sisters of ours exasperated and basically burnt out, stressed, and a lot of the time in poor health; which leads me to the motion in hand. PSI 7 2013, occupational health, the policy aim quotes that all staff who are unable to engage in productive work as far as is reasonably practicable in an environment and culture in which their health is protected, regular attendance at work is supported, related health risks are adequately controlled and good health is promoted.

We at Styal some months ago went to an ET in Manchester with a member who had 25 plus years in service. A time where this member had received a Butler Trust Award bestowed on her, been to Buckingham Palace on at least two occasions, this member had also devoted her time off to fully supporting the prison 'Prison Me! No Way!' programme, visiting school in the northwest to promote this venture. Unfortunately this member found herself in a capability hearing and subsequently lost her job. In the tribunal it became apparent a sick note prescribed by this member's general practitioner had been sent to the occupational health services. After the member had had a telephone conversation with a doctor from this section and the discussion took place with the member, the occupational health practitioner, whoever it was, told the member that they'd totally discarded the sick note he had receipt of. This gave the hearing authority on this member's, carte blanche ability to dismiss this member as occupational health are given authority to dismiss with occupational health service's blessing. What, colleagues, society are we living in, in which a prescribed sick note is totally disregarded by a so-called occupational health service whose purpose it is, and statement states, staff health is protected. It is apparent the occupational health services are there as another tool in which to dismiss an ever diminishing prison officer population. Our members are totally mistrustful of the occupational health service and with good reason. Conference, support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Andy. Jackie Marshall in response for the NEC.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. Conference, we totally agree, specialists are specialists because they have the best knowledge and they shouldn't be undermined by anyone. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy, do you wish to reply? Happy with that? To the vote then, all those in favour of this motion please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. 26, Hewell. Secunder for Hewell? Preston, thank you.

MOTION 26

That Conference mandates the NEC to challenge HMPPS over the use of 'Halsbury's Law' balance of probability in PSI 06/2010.

HEWELL

JON SWIFT – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference, I stood here a couple of years ago reference this same PSI 06 of 2010 and it was declared then it was unfit for purpose and it still is unfit for purpose, but nothing's been done for it. When we had PSO 1300, cast your minds back, investigating themes ... sorry, read the thing! The Conference mandates NEC to challenge HMPPS over the use of 'Halsbury's Law', balance of probability in PSI 06/2010. 1300, if you cast your minds back, the investigating team used to have to find facts and evidence to support their report, they had to remain impartial, no inference to any accusing fingers pointed at any alleged misdoings by a member of staff. Under PSI 06/10 the investigating team can use Halsbury's Law and they can use it as probability. So all the investigation, everything that they do, are on probables. The investigating lead officer can also make a recommendation to the governor of what the outset of the award should be. Under PSO 1300 that wasn't allowed. It's an unfair practice. Your members of staff are being investigated and the awards are being given on presumptions and it's designed for one thing only; it's designed to get rid of staff. Please support the motion. Get rid of 06 of '10. Let's have something that's decent and supports fair practice.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Chris Donovan for the NEC.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC. The NEC asks you reject this motion 26 from Hewell. It would mean a change in the law, something that is unachievable to challenge HMPPS because they can't change the law. We understand the sentiment of it and we know that there's many of our members fall foul of the balance of probabilities, you can say that in most things, but because of the way it's worded, challenge HMPPS over the use of Halsbury's Law, they can't and haven't got the power to change it so please reject it.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell to come back?

JON SWIFT – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP HEWELL: Basically we just want it as a challenge. It's not to actually change Halsbury's Law; it's to stop it being used by the investigating team to persecute members of staff. Many times we've seen staff who, because they've said something, they've been outspoken about something, and a particular person is doing the investigation, doesn't like them, and the report is fixed. That's all it is, all the time. We see it all the time. It's going to continue to be done and it's going to maintain. Staff will be losing their jobs left, right and centre. It's only devised for that. We're not asking for a change in the law. We're asking for it to stop being used by the investigation team. They should be looking at facts and evidence. That's all they should be looking at. They shouldn't be looking at any probabilities whatsoever. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, Conference. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That's carried. Motion 27 Hindley, which is being seconded by Garth.

MOTION 27

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to protect the Band 4 Supervising Officer rank and not leave this up to Governors who have autonomy.

HINDLEY

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: NEC, Conference, our motion reads that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to protect the band 4 supervising officer rank and not leave this up to the governors with autonomy. Conference, we're here again, yes, talking about the demise of another rank. We lost works officers, we lost kitchen officers, we lost officer instructors and so on, and so on, and we have sat back and watched the service outsource these

jobs to the cheapest bidder, and what a disaster that has been. But as a Union, we are here to protect those jobs, to protect the ranks within our service, so why do we do nothing? And why are we letting this happen again and again? The band 4 rank has been smashed to pieces since F&S days, moved from pillar to post, all to save money but at the expense of lost leadership and total anarchy on our wings. So now we have OMiC, another chance to smash the band 4, another chance to finish the rank. But our band 4s are members, they have a right to protection. But what do we do as a Union? We leave it to our unscrupulous governors, those who have autonomy to negotiate with local committees. That is wrong. That is unfair and those members who pay the same contributions as we do, and other ranks, have been left in limbo. They have a right to be given some protection and that can only come from serious negotiations between the NEC and HMPPS. The band 4s should be back on the landings, supervising. It's in the name, supervisor. Some gaols still do have them, but a lot don't. Well, you try and negotiate with your governor and it comes at the cost of losing band 3s. So what do we do, Conference? We just bow down and let it happen. No, we should not, we should not be being put in that position in the first place. The band 4 supervisors lost faith because it's been sold out for more band 3s under the disguise of OMiC. If that is the case then Conference, we need to tell them or at least have a negotiated deal on the table for them to decide on. Conference, this motion is so simple. Let's instruct our NEC to negotiate with HMPPS what happens to those band 4 supervisors, not leave this up to those governors with autonomy or the local committees who have been given no direction on what happens to our band 4 colleagues. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, Garth are happy to support Hindley's motion. I spoke at this podium two years ago about how benchmarking took away our wing SOs at Garth and how unworkable and dangerous it was. After a year of putting up with what could only be called a chaotic shambles, both our SMT and committee agreed we needed the SOs back on the landings and we managed to convince our area manager to put them back on to our wing profiles at Garth. We then locally agreed that the SOs are part of the wing MSOs and since then we have never deviated from that agreement. Something I definitely recommend to other branches when they are agreeing their local RMPs. Governors do have autonomy but committees need to put up a fight during any re-profiling if the management think it is a good idea to remove SOs from the wings. And this motion, if carried and negotiated properly by the NEC, could help branches with that argument, should it occur. If ever in the future the plan was to remove SOs from the wings at Garth again, whether it be part of a national plan or locally, a new governor who wanted to use their autonomy, I'd be very clear as branch chair, we will take action, regardless of the court injunction and regardless of what consequences I might face, because there's not a chance I would go back to work in a system of only having roving SOs or even no SOs at all. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference, Hewell branch wish to congratulate Hindley branch for bringing the motion to Conference. The deconstruction of the senior officer rank and latterly the supervising officer, has coincided with the troubles on our landings. Hewell branch would like this motion to go further and restore the grade to its former glory and all the responsibilities that came with it. We managed to keep what was left of the SOs rank on our wings under benchmarking, and I shudder to think what the consequences of us not having them on there at the moment would be. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC. The NEC is supporting this motion. This will, however, need to be a localised strategy also, where you present the evidence to your management as to why they should be there. We all know why they should be there, but there seems to be a real reluctance to leave them there. We need the band 4s as well because who's nurturing the new staff? We need those new staff on the landing, we need to teach them gaol craft; who better than the band 4s? Just in closing, the Berwyn branch, as a pathfinder site and leader in the OMiC model, has put band 4s back on the landing. Please support, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show. Any against? That's carried. 28 Portland. Seconder for Portland? Thank you.

MOTION 28

That Conference instruct the NEC to enter into dialogue with employers to ensure all operational Governors/Managers wear uniform whilst on duty, to ensure they are identified as an operational member of staff.

PORTLAND

TONY WALKER – BRANCH CHAIR, PORTLAND: NEC, Conference, this motion reads Conference instruct the NEC to enter into dialogue with the employers to ensure all operational governors/managers wear uniform whilst on duty, to ensure they are identified as an operational member of staff. It's all too evident that there is an us and them attitude in the Prison Service. This will go some way to remind operational managers that we are all allegedly on the same side. It would also serve as a reminder to governors, operational governors, that they need to complete the relevant training, i.e. C&R, RPE. It's evident that the disparity between grades when uniformed operational staff are required to complete a fitness test to do C&R and managers are exempt. This is far more pertinent where the RMPs and that are being aimed at negotiators and managers may be part of your regime. We are all one service, bereft of leadership and it is no coincidence that we are the only emergency service whose management endeavour to distance themselves by being ashamed of wearing our uniform. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Chris Donovan.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC. The NEC fully support this motion brought by Portland. This is a safety measure for all our staff working on our ever increasingly violent establishments. This is already HMPPS's policy and was brought by our colleagues at Berwyn as a dispute due to their CMs being told to wear civilian clothes. This dispute was won by Berwyn but it took about eight months for the CEO to make the decision in their favour. This should be adhered to by all members of staff. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Chris. To the vote. All those in favour please show. Any against? That's carried. Just on a note, just out of interest, when me and Steve met with the Prison's Minister, Rory Stewart, he asked us why isn't everyone in uniform? And we said well, we don't know, and he was very keen to introduce it. So I said, 'Well, you'll get no opposition from the POA.' And sat at the back of hall, you're very welcome Francis, is Francis Stuart, Head of Employee Relations. And Francis piped up, 'I think you might get some opposition from the PGA.'

<Laughter>

So be it. But we're not opposed to that. Let's get everyone in uniform and be proud of what we do. We should be, anyway. 29, The Verne. Do we have a seconder for the Verne? Feltham, thank you.

MOTION 29

Conference accepts that when an allegation relating to any form of misconduct by a Band six or above is lodged and in order to restore faith in PSI 06-2010 and maintain transparency, all alleged misconduct at band six or above is investigated and actioned by an appropriate external Civil Service Manager.

THE VERNE

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, VERNE: Conference accepts that when any allegation relation to any form of misconduct by a band 6 or above is lodged, and in order to restore faith in PSI 06/2010 and to maintain transparency, all alleged misconduct at band 6 or above is investigated and actioned by an appropriate external civil service manager. Colleagues, how many times have you heard, I find myself not guilty? How can this be right? I give myself advice and guidance. It's absolutely ridiculous. Now this has been worded by the Secretary of the Standing Orders Committee to give the NEC the flexibility to negotiate who is the most suitable civil servant grade to investigate these rogue managers. I would be every establishment in the country has got at least one, at least one bully, in the same way the code of conduct is being updated for MPs, ours needs the same. Support the motion, and take the fight from the floor. This PSI, as Hewell stated earlier, is not fit for purpose. Thank you.

<Applause>

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, this is quite nerve-racking standing up here! At Feltham, I don't know if ... I think it's quite publicised that one of the governors at Feltham, a band 8, made a racist comment on a social media site. The outcome of that was advice and guidance. A member of staff, a band 3 member of staff at Feltham was seriously assaulted. She tried to get help from everyone she could. She appealed to everybody. Nobody would help her. So her footage was played on the media and lots of people saw it. She was dismissed from the service. How is that a comparison? Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, and for the verbatim report that was Laura Duggan, HM YO1 Feltham.

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, I'm sure we've all come across operational managers or governors, whatever this week's description is, that behave in such a way that would have any one of us dismissed but it sometimes seems there isn't a big enough crowbar to get them removed from their positions. I personally am sick fed up of seeing these people marking their own homework and circling the waggons whenever they're guilty of wrongdoing and some of them are. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, NOTTINGHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, I'm going to keep this short and sweet. Colleagues, before you think about voting on this one, it's simply this: at what rank is it acceptable that rules change? Answer that one. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Chair, Conference, asking you to support it. Last year I brought a motion reference a band 9 operational who brought a mobile phone in and gave it to three prisoners to use. One who ended up getting their 26-year recommendation in the middle of a trial. I was never called to the investigation, don't know what happened to it, it's crazy. We've got a gentleman coming on Thursday, I believe, who left a gate open at one gaol but hasn't been disciplined yet.

<Laughter and applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall for the NEC.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, speaking against the motion. Colleagues, if you look at the wording of this motion it isn't asking anyone to physically do anything. It's asking you, Conference, to accept the words in the motion, to accept that band 6 or above are investigated and actioned by an appropriate external civil service manager. That's not going to happen because PSI 06 of '10 contains clear policy of which grades investigate and action any wrongdoing and this motion hasn't asked for a change in the policy. If this motion is accepted, nothing will happen except we can say it's been achieved because you've accepted the wording. Whilst we understand the spirit of the motion, it's only asking for you to accept the wording. The motion needs to ask for a change to the PSI. Please reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Come back?

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, VERNE: Chair, Conference, NEC, slightly confused as the Standing Orders Committee suggested the wording for this.

<Laughter and applause>

So how it is a recommendation to reject it on the wording is beyond me. Reject the motion if you want these bullies to carry on for another year. Please support it if you want action.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Over to Conference. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That's carried. 30, Portland. Secunder for Portland?

MOTION 30

That Conference instruct the NEC to enter into consultation to ensure that a new Algorithm for the classification of prisoners is introduced to identify prisoner's behaviour as part of the categorisation process.

PORTLAND

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. The Verne.

TONY WALKER – BRANCH CHAIR, PORTLAND: Chair, NEC, motion reads that Conference instruct the NEC to enter into consultation to ensure a new algorithm for the classification of prisoners is introduced to identify prisoners' behaviour as part of their categorisation process. Mark mentioned earlier in his opening speech how destructive prisoners affect the running of establishments, and their detrimental effect to prisoners who are trying to engage in culture, but more importantly the draining of resources to staff who are continually dealing with refractory prisoners on the wing, because the CCU is full

with prisoners who can't be moved on. If a prisoner is re-categorised he's more often sent back as his poor behaviour is not part of the categorisation process. We have just past a motion, 1 from the bill, which reiterates that behaviour is a major problem within our prisons. This is why the algorithm needs to reflect this in support of motion 1. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

STEVE McKENNA – BRANCH SECRETARY, NORTHUMBERLAND: Chair, NEC, Conference, supporting this motion. I think the current ICE is floored. It's a tick-box operation where it's more about putting people in places rather than taking people's behaviour into account. It currently goes on sentence and other factors which do not include behaviour, so we are currently putting the wrong type of people in the wrong type of establishments and it needs to stop. I think behaviour needs to be taken into account. I fully support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD - BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: As was addressed by the opening speaker, this needs to be looked at in conjunction with the Liverpool motion about moving on difficult prisoners. Again I will refer you to our riot of last year. The major problem that we had was the number of disruptive prisoners that we had, a) that we could not move and b) that gaols would not accept because of the categorisation which they had been given, which is laid down as it is, but of which behaviour is not part of it. Very recently with the new HDC regulations, behaviour no longer even forms a part of that, so how does a Cat B local, which is supposed to be a reception and rehabilitation prison, rehabilitate prisoners when we award them with HDC after HDC after HDC, they're on recalls of recalls of recalls, yet their behaviour is never taken into consideration and they are yet to get an award merely to make spaces for the PMU. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the Executive, asking you to support this motion. We thank Portland for bringing it. Colleagues, there now appears to be a recognition that the world that we work in is fundamentally changed. Wonderful. And that a number of criminals are in the wrong place. Ministerial comments reference prisoners being wrongly categorised has driven the employer to yet another review and we intend to play our part in that review. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour, please show. Any against? That motion is carried. 31, Styal. Secunder for Styal? Thank you.

MOTION 31

Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to provide each POA Branch a 'Pace Recording Facility' for their use to ensure a true record of investigation hearings and appeals.

STYAL

ANDY HARRISON – BRANCH CHAIR, STYAL: Chair, NEC, Conference, the motion reads Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to provide each POA branch a PACE recording facility for their use to ensure a true record of investigation hearings and appeals. Far too often in investigations at our place and subsequent appeal hearings, there's no PACE facilities, even though we requested it on numerous occasions. They seem to go ahead with it, even though. It's a simple request really. We want fairness in the hearings. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter for the NEC.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, asking you to reject the motion. Fully understand the sentiment of the motion but in practice, would we end up with a situation where we had two PACE machines in the room, two machines on the table, the employer's and the POA's? Would we end up with two transcripts, the employer's and our Union's? The employer is already bound by policy to record investigation interviews. They're then bound by policy to provide transcripts. They're bound by policy to record investigation hearings and to provide transcripts. I'm sure that prior to an appeal you, as –

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY - WANDSWORTH: Point of order! Chair, investigation interviews are not bound to be tape recorded. PSI 06/2010, they can be hand written notes and not necessarily verbatim.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Stewart, you are correct. I have to uphold that point of order.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: I'm sure prior to any appeal you, as representatives, would email or ask the appeal authority requesting that the appeal is audio recorded. It's a mixed bag in the field. Some appeal authorities do record the appeal, some don't. Those who don't risk the wrath of any employment tribunal they may subsequently find themselves in front of, having to explain to the tribunal why they failed to record the appeal. Conference, reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Styal to come back?

ANDY HARRISON – BRANCH CHAIR, STYAL: Thanks for that. What we found when we've been to an ET recently, like I mentioned before, at no point did the ET bring into account was there any, where was the taped conversation from the original appeal hearing. All we're asking is that if the employer don't provide, we're able to bring our own, so there isn't a duplicate of whatever interview's gone on. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Styal. To the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That motion is carried.

<Applause>

Conference at this point what I'm going to do, we're going to have an earlier break and then when we reconvene I'll invite Geoff Burrows, Honorary Life Member, to address Conference in a fraternal address, so if we get back for twenty-past-three please.

<End of Afternoon Session - Part 1>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Tuesday 15th May, Afternoon Session - Part 2

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. If we take our seats.

Conference, addressing us now is Geoff Burrows, honorary life member with fraternal greetings. Geoff Burrows.

<Applause>

GEOFF BURROWS – HONORARY LIFE MEMBER: Wow, vertigo! So used to spouting my stuff from there! If I get a nose bleed halfway through then forgive me.

Conference, I'm humbled, I'm honoured, to bring fraternal greetings on behalf of the honorary life members of this proud Union, and I wholeheartedly welcome the new incumbents. The Oxford English Dictionary describes 'fraternal' as meaning of brothers, and when you look at the current list of honorary life members there is a distinct lack of sisters. I'm hoping that will change in future years and I'm sure it will. See a list more reflective of the membership. I'm glad to see the re-election of Jackie and delighted to see the election of my old buddy, Sarah. Should I say old buddy? No, she's two decades younger than me, shall we say buddy of old? Yes. Well done.

I prefer a more gender-neutral definition of fraternity, that of political fraternity. Groups of people coming together with common interests and goals. Honorary life members have a wealth of experience and knowledge. I'm looking forward to tapping into that knowledge and that wisdom and I urge colleagues to do so. On that note, let me just say a thing about my friend and mentor John Hoey. He epitomises honorary life members. Despite suffering from Parkinson's disease he's still a great supporter of this Union, a man of integrity, principles, experience and knowledge, and I'm very, very glad that he is and remains an honorary life member.

<Applause>

My own work, my own research, is based on the changing face of violence in prisons, so if Conference will just allow me I'll comment on that. For those of the older colleagues in the room, please don't panic: I'm not Trevor Brooking!

Social scientists broadly agree that all human interaction is saturated with power relations. Therefore it's not a case of if violence will occur, it's to what level and in what form it will occur. Violence is functional, a tool to be used to achieve goals. That doesn't mean that violence is inevitable. It only becomes inevitable if we allow it to be. And colleagues, the Prison Service has allowed it. It's their crisis and now it's time for us, our opportunity to put things right. Theory says that three things have to be in place for violence to occur: firstly a motivated offender, and let's face it, the vast amounts of money to be made in prisons is a huge motivator. Secondly a suitable victim. Where else to select a victim than within the confines of prisons, where our vulnerable population is growing and growing and growing. Just look at the self-harm figures. Thirdly, even if those two factors are in place, it can be stopped. Theory says that if there is a presence of a suitable social guardian then violence can be stopped. Colleagues, we are that guardian. We create regimes that create safety. Our ability to carry out that role is dramatically eroded, even to the point where we're becoming the suitable victims. Why? Because we've been strangled by three things. Number one, austerity. Not only a lack of staff, but a loss of *experienced* staff. This has been gleefully administered by a prison service eager to please a slash and burn government. Number two, an adherence to the absurd neoliberal ideologies (Glen) of individualism and managerialism that sets unrealistic targets that ignore qualitative, human factors and focus more on quantitative process over outcome.

They also dismiss the whole prison approach in favour of individual risk assessment. I think we all remember the whole prison approach.

By focussing on individual actions, we can never improve things. It's like the fairground thing where you hit something that pops up and as you hit it three more pop up, and as you hit those three more pop up. To change the game, you have to change the climate, and that involves a social approach to solving the crisis of violence in the prisons. What does that mean? Well a social approach means an adherence to social norms, and those social norms have to be where a prisoner is under the control of a prison officer who is on the ground, fully imbued with the power to decide the best action at that time, without the fear of abuse from a management that's out of touch. Only then will violence stop becoming an individual action but become an action against the environment, an environment that is agreed upon by all within the gaol and accepted; an environment that's safe. And number three, there's no doubt that everyone here, all our colleagues, are strangled by a conspicuous lack of support from our employer.

Where's the voice? What's Mr Spurr doing, what's he saying? Nothing. Do you see him on the TV, like Chief Constables of the police forces, fighting the corner of their employees? No. It's true that Phil Wheatley recently has blamed violence on government medalling, but he was very silent when he was incumbent in the post. He was involved in a lot of things that brought us ills, including the dreaded managerialism: Targets, KPTs, KPIs. Colleagues, by their silence, their refusal to condemn the actions that have brought us this far, our employers condone the violence.

A famous sociologist once said that a society can only be modern if it has control over legitimate violence within its borders. In prisons, we have lost that control, that monopoly. Our employers have created a social space in which violence flourishes. So I say to the Prison Service representatives here in this room, go back to Michael Spurr and say, tell him, 'It's your fault. For the disgraceful rise in prisoners being terrorised to become drug dependent and suffering horrific attacks, it's your fault.' For all those colleagues abused, threatened, cut, beaten, poisoned, suffering increasing mental health problems, and I can't believe in this day and age still that we don't have routine, proper, independent bought-in clinical supervision. That alone is a disgrace. For all this, I say to the employers and to Michael Spurr, 'It's your fault.' Let it resound in HQ that it is your fault so speak out, join us in the fight against this evil or be complicit within it. Colleagues, my thesis is drawing to its conclusion and I intend to shout these conclusions from the rooftops. I'll always support this Union, a Union that I love, and so it is with my fellow honorary life members.

And from all of us, have a great Conference and stay safe.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well thank you very much, Geoff. Some wise words there. I'll be interested to read your thesis when it's finally completed. I know it's hard work living in the sun, so it might take a while longer yet, but thank you very much Geoff. I'm going to hand over to Steve Gillan, General Secretary, for the few announcements and an update on the questions for Michael Spurr.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, Conference, it has been indicated that Michael Spurr will be taking questions, probably just over half a dozen questions, so if you could get your questions in and obviously the Chair will look at those questions and then call each individual up to the rostrum, the ones that are selected to ask those questions to Michael Spurr. We did ask, prior to Conference, if we could have the membership information for operational support grades and operational band 2s in relation to mapping the workplace. We've only had a couple of returns so far, so could you please, over the next couple of days, just carry out that instruction from branch secretary circular 19 of 2018? It would be very helpful. Thank you. And just to remind people as well, we've had a request that in the Victoria tonight the POA choose the, from 8 pm there's the Irish Night. There's also a fringe meeting, which I'll remind you of later on, as well,

6 o'clock: Hope not Hate, very interesting guy called Matthew Collins will be delivering that. I'll be joining the panel with him, along with Tim Lezard from *Union News*, but Matt, just to give you a little bit of background about him, Matthew Collins, when he was about 18/19, he was one of the leading lights, actually, would you believe, in the National Front and Combat 18 along with the BNP. Matt now does tremendous work in exposing the far right and the terror threat from the far right. His book is well worth a read and he'll be here obviously, he's an interesting character and he's doing some superb work for Hope not Hate. I won't tell you too much about him, but if you're interested, turn up because his book is an excellent read, which I've read. It gives you an insight into how people get sucked in from an early age, into various capacities, but I'd urge you, if this is one fringe meeting that you do attend, please come along to that one. There'll be refreshments there and again it's out there in one of the suites. Thank you very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Steve. We'll continue with the motions. We're onto motion number 32, which is Whitemoor. Leeds, you may wish to contribute to this as it's a debate. 34 will fall if 33 is carried so Leeds, if you wish to contribute, please do so. No seconder needed for a debate, Conference.

MOTION 32

Conference debate the effectiveness of our withdrawal from negotiating or providing submissions to the PSPRB.

WHITEMOOR

NIALL McINTOSH – BRANCH CHAIR, WHITEMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 32 reads Conference debate the effectiveness of our withdrawal or negotiating for providing submissions to the Prison Service Pay Review Body. Conference, there were two motions to Conference in 2015 that led to our withdrawal from the Pay Review Body and ceasing any further submissions. They were motions from Durham and Hatfield. I'm stood here today and I honestly don't know whether or not, by withdrawing and ceasing any further submissions we've been effective or not. Would the Prison Service Pay Review Body have awarded us a better pay-rise had the NEC presented submissions? That's anybody's guess but I think we all know the answer. The speakers in the earlier mentioned motions in 2015 were both for and against withdrawing from making further submissions. We've asked for this debate to determine the strength of feeling in the hall today, so Conference, please join the debate.

BILL BUPARAI – BRANCH CHAIR, BELMARSH: Chair, Conference, NEC, last year the POA was the only Trades Union to withdraw from providing submissions to the Prison Service Pay Review Body. Last year POA members were awarded the highest consolidated pay rise amongst all public sector workers. Conference, make up your own mind upon the effectiveness of our withdrawal. The Prison Service Pay Review Body gained their authority from claiming that the Trade Unions are engaging with them. We should be influencing the Trades Union Congress so that all other Trades Unions withdraw from providing submissions. That would give the Pay Review Body no validity and no authority, taking us back to the drawing board. In my personal opinion, when we're back at the drawing board we can negotiate our right to strike back.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Chair, Conference, I brought the debate in 2015 to withdraw from the Pay Review Body. Quite happy to continue withdrawing from the Pay Review Body. The first year, if you remember, the Pay Review Body gave us 6%, no they didn't, they gave us 4% and 2%. That's what the government did over 18 months. We never got 6%. After that we got as closed grade prison officers, zilch. And that went on for several years. We withdrew in 2015 and in 2016 the minister gave a bonus to closed grade prison officers, not consolidated, we didn't put any submissions in. Last year we put no submissions in and we got 1%. We don't know what we're going to get this year but continue not putting submissions in. What I would also suggest is when you get back to your prisons, get into the PGA and tell them how stupid they are for putting submissions in 'cause they are really getting stitched up because their governors on that pay scale, they just get increments. Some of them have had a pay rise. They want to withdraw and then the Pay Review Body has got nothing to do then. They're getting paid for doing nothing. That's the debate. Please don't go back there, giving submissions to the Pay Review Body.

<Applause>

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: I'm over the other side of this. Our membership's changed considerably over the past few years. We're currently running at Leeds with 63% of staff with less than 12 months' experience. They're looking at us, as a Union, and we're trying to get them encouraging them to join the Union, and they all come with the same answer; well why don't we make submissions? Well that's something that were made by previous staff and I agree with it wholeheartedly, but if we're wanting to make this Union stronger in the future, it's these new staff, we've got to actually work for them and we've got to show them that we've got an opportunity to request a decent and fair pay rise, so why are we forsaking that and just going on previously made agreements? We need to start changing and changing with the times. The service is changing. We need to change with it. We need to make submissions. If they continue to ignore us, so be it. At least we're working on behalf of the members, and that's what we're here for at the end of the day.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Why don't we just have a look at what we achieved when we did have the Pay Review Body? Did we achieve anything within that? Absolutely not. What's the point in negotiating with people who have a remit letter that comes from the government that actually says, 'This is what you're going to award.' You can put all the submissions in the world and the POA in the times that we actually did produce submissions and give it to the Pay Review Body, Pay Review Body credited this Union with some of the best submissions and best evidence that they'd ever seen in all the years that they'd been working in all Pay Review Bodies across all sectors. We were the best, we provided the best evidence. What did we achieve out of best evidence? Absolutely nothing, because the overriding factor of the whole thing was that government turned round and said, 'This is what you can give, and you can't give any more than that, and nothing else will do in the meantime.' Talking to a body that, at the end of the day has one foot in the grave with the government achieves absolutely nothing. We have to stand firm, we have to stand fast. I honestly believe that we need to stand this out. Collective bargaining has got to be the way for Trade Unionism, not negotiating with a government-born body who's supposed to be independent in every other means. Who actually employs them? Who actually employs the people that make up the Independent Pay Review Body? The government, Treasury. Look how long any of them last if they even give an indication that they're going to breach pay restraints. I'm sorry, we need to stand fast. Let's drive for collective bargaining. We shouldn't give in.

<Applause>

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Conference, NEC, remember why we went on strike in August 2007 over a 1.6% pay award, paid well below inflation. When we engaged with the Pay Review Body we got below inflation pay awards. It was used as a mechanism by the employer to keep our pay low. That's why we withdrew. So why should we reengage with this body again? They've got no integrity, we've got no faith in their ability to give us suitable pay rewards. In the meantime our standard of living as prison officers has declined significantly. That's why I said there's no point in reengaging with this Pay Review Body because they've got not integrity.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference, joining the debate. I'd like to commend the branch that brought this debate to us and it's one of the important things that we need to be discussing here this year. I've discussed this with our branch membership and it was considered that at the time it was the right thing to do, but now they consider it is time to return. It's thought that we are one less fox in the hen house when it comes to the Pay Review Body and I'm bringing my members' opinions to you, Conference, and that's the important thing about debate. Whether it's the right thing to be doing or the wrong thing to be doing, this is what my membership currently thinks, and if we need to change that mindset then we need to encourage debate like this.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Debating for the NEC, Glyn Travis.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, Conference, engaging in the debate. It's important that we understand what the debate is talking about. It's talking about how effective has the decision made by Conference to withdraw from giving evidence to the Pay Review Body been? And the reality is, Conference, it's been exceptionally effective. And I say that not because you've had better pay, or better allowances. Because what it's done is it's demonstrated to government and to HMPPS, the main employer of the majority of this Union, but not other employers and we've got to remember that, other employers have other mechanisms for pay, but talking specifically about HMPPS we have undermined the credibility of the government's puppets, the Pay Review Body. We have brought HMPPS to the table with the Executive, because they are mindful that the Pay Review Body can't change terms and conditions. The Pay Review Body pick up an envelope given to them by government, it's called a remit letter, and in there it says this is your cash envelope and you can spend this much money; how you spend that money is up to you, because you're independent. But you can't give more than 1%, but you can give as much as you want from the cash envelope. So the effectiveness of not providing evidence, and this Union has given evidence for many, many years and I've had the chore with the Executive and previous Executives of doing that evidence, and submitting that evidence, and sitting across a table listening to them, you've got Colin Moses there who's presented the evidence on behalf this Union for nine years to the Pay Review Body, and if you want to know how effective it is by not giving them, speak to Colin. Because the effectiveness of going with a presentation that they believe is fantastic and wonderful, and you walk away thinking, 'Do you know what? If anything this year OSGs are going to be looked after', what did they get? Same as you, nothing.

So what we've achieved by not giving evidence, and if you determine later on Conference that you want this Executive to give evidence, that will be your decision, but what you've achieved by not giving evidence is you have got the employer on behalf of government asking the National Chair, Mark Fairhurst, to sit down and talk about pay, to sit down and talk about allowance, to sit down and go with a form of collective bargaining. So the effectiveness of not giving evidence is that we've turned the corner. Like everything, the proof of the pudding will be in the eating, and whether it's any good or bad I don't know, but what I do know is that this year Mark has been invited to sit down with the Executive and talk to HMPPS about your pay, and that's the first time that we've had a real, strong argument. So the effectiveness of this and this debate is it's

been very, very effective by not giving that issue. Your decision will come in motions that follow. Thank you for the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you for that debate, Conference. Low Newton, motion 33. Formerly moved. Do we have a seconder? Durham, thank you. Leeds, your motion 34 will fall if 33 is carried, as will Whitemoor's at 35, so you may wish to speak on this motion. Speaking on behalf of the NEC will be Andy Baxter.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, supporting the motion. The International Labour Organisation on Freedom of Association ruled in our favour on more than one occasion. They stated that as an essential service, any government may restrict a trade union from taking industrial action including strike action, but, if they choose to do so then they should have adequate compensatory mechanisms in place that have the confidence of both parties for resolving pay and industrial disputes. Conference, the crux of the issue is do you have confidence that the Pay Review Body is an adequate compensatory measure for losing the right to strike? Do you have confidence in their mechanisms for pay? We have a Pay Review Body that has no teeth. As Glyn explained, government issue a remit letter to the Pay Review Body telling them how much is in the pot; the Pay Review Body takes that into account and then makes recommendations that go to government that are non-binding. Do you have confidence in the disputes procedure? We have a local and national disputes procedure that is non-effective. Disputes go in all directions: up the chain, down the chain, back to the branch, up the chain, down the chain, back to the branch. We want a structured disputes procedure with independent binding arbitration. Make no mistake, these two issues are joined at the hip. It embarrasses the employer that we don't engage. It embarrasses government that we don't engage. And it should embarrass them. We've never had a compensatory mechanism for losing our right to strike. People say to me, 'You have to be in it to win it.' We were in it in 2009, we gave evidence, we got a 1.8% rise, 2010 we gave evidence, F&S grades got 1%, everybody else got a consolidated award, 2011 it was simple a 250 nonconsolidated bonus. We stopped giving evidence 2014. 1% closed grades, 1% F&S. The pattern continued through '15, through '16. 2017 as Glyn stated, we got the biggest rise of all the public sectors. All at a time when we weren't giving evidence. Conference, support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Andy. To the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That is carried, so motions 34 and 35 fall. Motion 36, Leeds. Secunder for Leeds please? Thank you.

MOTION 36

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to obtain a backdated pay award for every year since 2010 for all grades of 0.5% for every year that staff did not receive a pensionable rise operational and non-operational.

LEEDS

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: Motion 36, that Conference instruct NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to obtain a backdated pay award for every year since 2010 for all grades of 0.5% for each and every year that staff did not receive a pensionable pay rise operational and non-operational. We'll never ever get a 5% pay rise like we all want; however, the option is there for the employer to back pay us like all other public sectors that got 1% throughout this time. If they give us that backdated pay they can disguise it without actually coming out and saying we're going to give you a 3, 4, 5% pay rise, it's disguised as a backdated pay award.

Other public sector workers have had substantial awards in that time, prison staff, as wages are nowhere near they should be due to inflation, I think it's a fair and equitable ask on behalf of the members that we should be rewarded, justified and given 0.5% for each and every year. Please support the motion.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Asking you to reject the motion. I fully understand where Leeds are coming from but unfortunately, it's too prescriptive asking for 0.5%. What happens if the Department say you can 0.4%, the NEC say no, we can't have that because they've been mandated to get 0.5%. The other problem I've got is that Leeds brought the motion, motion 34, they were going to the Pay Review Body, they've got motion 36, 48 and 49 on collective bargaining, so I don't know where Leeds are coming from. Please reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall for the NEC.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, guests, speaking on behalf of the NEC against the motion. Whilst the spirit of this motion is well-meant we must be honest with Conference and the members. We have no negotiation rights with HMPPS or the government. This motion does not ask for a consolidated pay rise and some of our members during this time have had a 1% pay rise, so do they have to pay money back? We deserve more than 0.5% for each year.

Therefore Conference, reject this motion and allow the NEC to engage with the employer and government to achieve a fair and decent pay award which reflects the work you all do and let's have it consolidated. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: The motion says for any staff who did not receive any pensionable pay rise, so I think it speaks for itself when we're asking for people that have suffered at the hands of not being given anything, so please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Leeds. To the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show? Against? The motion is lost. 37, Whitemoor. Secunder for this motion please? Thank you, Portland.

MOTION 37

Conference mandate the NEC to pursue an uplift in the payment of Care and Maintenance for both Search and Patrol Dog Handlers when they have 2 dogs. The current practice is a yearly payment with a percentage uplift of this payment for having a second dog, whereas, it should be a yearly payment for each dog.

WHITEMOOR

NIALL McINTOSH – BRANCH CHAIR, WHITEMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, Motion 37 reads, Conference mandate the NEC to pursue an uplift in the payment of Care and Maintenance for both Search and Patrol Dog Handlers when they have two dogs. The current practice is a yearly payment with a percentage uplift of this payment for having a second dog, whereas, it should be a yearly payment for each dog.

Conference, in 2014 Bullingdon brought a motion which was supported both by the NEC and Conference. That motion read that dog handlers were to receive a percentage increase, to be negotiated, on the care and maintenance of dog allowance for having a second dog. We are asking Conference to support our motion asking if a dog handler has two dogs then it should be a yearly payment for each dog. I'll keep this brief, but quoting Jackie Marshall when she responded to this motion on behalf of the NEC in 2014, Jackie said: The care and maintenance is paid for looking after dogs in your own time, some dogs cannot be kennelled together and cannot be walked together. What's not always realised by others is the commitment dog handlers have to give their dogs and how they restrict their lives.

Conference, is it right that there is only a percentage uplift for having a second dog? Do the dog handlers only give the second dog a percentage of their time and commitment? No, of course they don't, as they're fully committed to their jobs and the dogs. Dog handlers should be paid a yearly allowance for each dog, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Whitemoor, Jackie Marshall for the NEC.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion, and this will be short and sweet because Mac's just stolen most of my speech. The current allowance for one dog is £1,526 per annum, that's £4.18 a day. For two dogs it's £1,908, £5.23 a day, just an extra £1.05 for looking after that extra dog, and some dog handlers have got three dogs. If you're bringing a new one on whilst you've got one retiring you can be working three dogs, so it should be care and maintenance allowance per dog. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Niall, do you wish to respond?

NIALL McINTOSH – BRANCH CHAIR, WHITEMOOR: No, thanks, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: OK. All those in favour of this motion, Conference? Any against? Thank you, that's carried. 38, Hewell, secunder for Hewell please? Hewell have asked if they can withdraw this motion, do they have permission to withdraw, please show your approval for withdrawal? Thank you, that's approved, you can withdraw that motion. 39, Full Sutton. Secunder for Full Sutton? Humber, thank you.

MOTION 39

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with the appropriate authority an agreement which exempts operational staff from financial or other sanctions incurred by taking their children out of school for up to two weeks in order to facilitate a family holiday.

FULL SUTTON

BRIAN STENNETT – BRANCH CHAIR, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, Full Sutton's proposal reads that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with the appropriate authority an agreement which exempts operational staff from financial or other sanctions incurred by taking their children out of school for up to two weeks in order to facilitate a family holiday.

Colleagues, Full Sutton's Detail Manager previously raised this issue with his MP. He agreed that this was a reasonable request, an intern approached the Education Secretary at the time to request exemption of the fines for staff that could not be allocated leave during school holidays. His response was a typical political one stating that it was the decision of each individual local education authority. Colleagues, I'm sure every single person in this room is fully aware that prison staff serve this country and ultimately cannot take all leave at the same time, so to fine them just for having a family holiday cannot be right. It's our employers that cannot facilitate everybody with children to have leave during school holidays and ultimately the same employer that's quick at punishing us with a fine if and when we take our children out of school for a family holiday. Is it right that our brave, underpaid, undervalued, burnt out members are punished in the way of a fine of taking their family on a well-deserved holiday that they can barely afford in the first place? Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I wasn't sure if it was going to be mentioned; it wasn't mentioned. The fact is that we have to realise is that our annual leave is actually detailed, so therefore our ability to choose when we have our leave is actually taken away from us and the fact is that this isn't recognised outside of our service. Now the difficulties that this presents is that if your two weeks leave that you've been detailed is outside the school term, then you have two options. One is that you deny your children the rights to a holiday and a family life that human rights actually give, or you face a financial penalty because you're actually taking them away from school. And this then goes on and different authorities will fine parents different rates.

But the important thing about is we don't earn thousands, you know, huge amounts of money and everything else, a *lot* of our staff are doing Payment Plus and everything else to actually top up their wages that they need. To then have to pay a financial fine on top of the cost of a holiday to give their children the breaks that they also need and the family also need is a disgrace. The difficulty I can see with this is about which authority do you actually negotiate with? At the end of the day whilst there's a difficulty negotiating with one or more authorities, as a Trade Union I think we should support this motion. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Darken.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY, NEC: Good afternoon Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC. You know, Conference, over the 20 years I've been coming to Conference I never get more annoyed than when the NEC say we're going against a motion because it's difficult to achieve or impossible, so on this occasion we're going to go for the motion. Although it is difficult to achieve and it may be nigh on impossible because as the speaker said there's more than one authority to talk to, but I'm sure this NEC, I mean I'll be gone, but this NEC will be able to negotiate on your behalf. Please support this motion Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour of this motion, please show? How many of you have got kids! Any against? Thank you, that's carried.

Motion 40, Full Sutton. Secunder for Full Sutton?

MOTION 40

That Conference mandate the NEC to demand the Employer assume full responsibility for the payment of additional hours worked including, but not limited to Bedwatch, Payment Plus and Tornado Duty.

FULL SUTTON

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 40 reads, Conference mandate the NEC to demand the employer assume full responsibility for the payment of additional hours worked including, but not limited to Bedwatch, Payment Plus and Tornado Duty.

Colleagues, many years' ago in a previous life I was employed by British Rail Engineering as a wages clerk. Every week my sole responsibility was taking clock cards from the workshops, collecting them, entering the figures onto paper sheets. These men and women worked different grades, different hours, different shift patterns, overtime, a variety of hourly rates, they attracted various allowances, sometimes worked on different sites, and occasionally had the temerity to go sick. This work replicated by several of my colleagues to accommodate over 2,000 workers was done almost entirely manually, it was about one hour of computer entry involved. Anything worked up until Thursday, 5 o'clock would be paid the next Thursday.

Fast forward 35 years then and look at the process a prison officer has to go through in order to be paid for any extra labour

he or she agrees to provide. First, they agree to be available for additional hours, then detail, so People Hub call them in, then they work the hours. Then they find a computer, pray that SOP is operational and apply to be paid for the work they've done. The detail/People Hub then approve the application for payment, then that officer waits - and it can now be over seven weeks – is an actual acceptable level, they're saying, that's not a delay, over seven weeks to be paid. So detail call the officer in and then detail say whether they've worked or not? Surely the officer having to claim these hours is, at best, unnecessary duplication of labour, it's got to be redundant. A cynical person might suggest the employer is calculating that a percentage, however small, of hours worked will not be claimed for, for whatever reason, mainly through forgetfulness, I would suggest.

Whichever it may be, colleagues, surely a modern enterprise like the one we work for can up its game in what is a basic part of the employee/worker relationship? I can see no way that a wait time of over seven weeks can be justified in this day and age and it seems a simply way of starting to streamline the process to get this moving. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, Dave Todd responding on behalf of the NEC who support the motion following clarity from the branch. We agree that the repetition completing paperwork and why should staff, as Gerry's pointed out, have to wait up to seven weeks to be paid for work that they've already committed to do? It would be best practice for the employer to fill out the paperwork and for us merely to tick a box, like we tick the box to say we understand the finance. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Gerry, do you wish to respond?

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: No.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote then, all those in favour please show? Any against? That's carried. 41, Full Sutton, seconder for Full Sutton? Do we have a seconder? Thank you. We've got a seconder, Gerry, you're alright.

MOTION 41

Conference instruct the NEC to agree a policy with the Employer that any member who has been unable to take TOIL owing to them should, at the end of the leave year, be entitled to payment of their current balance at the current payment plus rate.

FULL SUTTON

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Have we got one? Right. Chair, NEC, Conference, number 41 reads that Conference instruct the NEC to agree a policy with the employer that any member who has been unable to take TOIL owing to them should, at the end of the leave year, be entitled to payment of their current balance at the current payment plus rate.

Colleagues, in principle TOIL is simple and should be a fairly equitable system, allowing flexibility and cooperation between employer and worker. In practice the national TOIL balance, which I believe is in favour of the employer to the tune of some £6 million, although when you get to that level the actual number is kind of immaterial, would suggest otherwise, it's being abused. It appears to me the employer is happy to carry this debt year after year, like a free overdraft, an interest-free savings for them, rather the hidden costs, which they should acknowledge, perhaps having to enter each year with a clean slate might focus some minds. The agreement between employer and employee is simple, labour is exchanged for payment. If that payment, either in money or in time, is withheld for an unreasonable time, somebody's not playing fair.

Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR, NEC: Thank you Chair. Speaking on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to reject the motion, fully understanding the sentiment behind Full Sutton bringing this motion, the problem with it is for this NEC is that the payment of TOIL is enshrined within bulletin 8 and to start changing the system would mean to go to the employer and ask for changes to bulletin 8.

Now the employer would love us to be opening the door on changes to bulletin 8 because if we go and ask them to change one little part of bulletin 8, they're obviously going to say, 'Yeah, we'll have a look at that, but we want to change X, Y and Z in bulletin 8 as well.' We've kept the wolf from the door for a long time on bulletin 8 and we want to continue to keep that

wolf from the door, so for that reason and that reason only, because we understand where Gerry's coming from, we ask Conference to reject.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Gerry do you wish to reply?

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: No.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote then, all those in favour of this motion please show? All those against? The motion is lost. Full Sutton again, seconder please? Thank you Littlehey.

MOTION 42

That Conference mandate the NEC to demand that, where a member has been unable to use their annual leave entitlement, that member should be able to take that balance at their convenience in the next leave year.

FULL SUTTON

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, last one for today, I promise. This motion reads that Conference mandate the NEC to demand that, where a member has been unable to use their annual leave entitlement, that member should be able to take that balance at their convenience in the next leave year.

Colleagues, this is similar to the previous motion but it addresses another aspect of our being abused. It addresses a failure on the employer's behalf, our annual leave is part of our pay, it's an entitlement, it's not an aspiration, when they've tried to push TOIL and bulletin 8, it's actually part of what we get paid. Last year, as an experiment, I applied for every shift I was on duty as leave, allocated six periods of leave, two of those were EDs. At the end of the year I had over 100 hours to carry over, almost three weeks of time that should be used for rest and recuperation. I don't believe I am unusual.

We all want to deliver a good service, it's why we're in the job; we all want to support our colleagues in these times of a staffing crisis. This cavalier attitude to our wellbeing, however, is leading to staff burning out, performing below par, generally suffering in their wellbeing. We need that time off, we need rest. There cannot be many jobs where time away from the coalface is so precious, yet every year the emails go out, you can only carry over X-hours or days, then we're taking the rest of you. We do get those threats. *How dare they*, colleagues? That's *our time* and they're stealing it from us.

Going back to my initial statement, performance targets, KPTs, the like, they're self-imposed by the employer, our leave is an entitlement, it's part of our contract of employment, and if regimes have to be cut to facilitate that, then that is the fault of an incompetent management who continue year-on-year to ignore the simple fact we are people and not production resources. Our leave is a cost which has to be borne by the employer, not a performance indicator which looks good on the governor's CV, an entitlement, and we need to hold management accountable for that.

Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: We're asking you to reject this motion, not on the basis that we fully understand why it's been brought here and everything else, but as a Trade Union, we should be fighting that our staff get their full entitlement of annual leave *every year*. They shouldn't be having to carry leave across or anything else. We've passed previous motions about non-effectives and everything else. If we accept this then we're also accepting that the non-effectives is... you know, we may as well have not passed that motion for the simple reason the employer can ignore it. We shouldn't allow our staff... our staff shouldn't be forced to take across annual leave you after year after year. If they are being forced to do that it's because the staffing levels in our goals are insufficient for the jobs that we're requiring them to do. And as a Trade Union we should be fighting.

And as Gerry said, annual leave is an entitlement, it's not something that can be taken away, it's an entitlement, it's part of our terms and conditions. As a Trade Union we should be fighting to maintain those terms and conditions, we should be fighting to ensure that the men and women working in this service get all the rest and all the entitlements that they're fully due. If we pass this motion we're accepting that some of that entitlement can be carried across from year to year. We need to fight. If any governor is trying to take annual leave off a member of staff because they've had to carry it across for anything, that's the issue we should be fighting. We should be taking that governor to task and actually forcing that governor to give his staff or her staff the entitlement that they're fully entitled to have.

On that basis we must ask you, reject this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson for the NEC.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, Ian Carson responding on behalf of the NEC, asking you to reject this motion and Cookie's stolen most of my thunder, but I'm going to add a few other points.

You've got an RMP, colleagues, or you're either building one or you should have one or you're working towards one. A question was asked at a workshop to a member of BDG, 'Can we adjust the RMP to provide for annual leave?' and the response, amazingly, was yes, because you're entitled, as Cooke has eloquently stated, you're entitled to your annual leave, your annual leave's an entitlement. So if you're running a green regime in your RMP and you can't get your leave in, go and see your governor and say, 'Let's move that down a notch and provide for annual leave,' which will lift your non-effective.

Conference if you've got problems with your annual leave, we had some problems when we went into talks over the new formula they decided to present to us some time ago. A guy called Dan Billingham, who is the specialist in profiling, apparently, invited us to talks and presented us with a formula that looked like the formula for a complex ion, that's not an iron, and you should have seen it because it was really, really interesting. I didn't understand a word that they were getting at, but very, very basically annual leave is given as a percentage of your target staffing figure, 14.6%, so for every 100 staff you should have 15 on leave. A thick, can work that one out, so if you've got 200, you should have about 30 staff on leave, that's not shift specific, they should be on leave. That's what we told them, I didn't think that was very complicated.

At that point we had some difficult conversations. There's another way you can work it out, colleagues, you can take the number of days divided by the number of days available, very easy, take out your rest days, it leaves you 261 days, take the leave to be taken, divide one into the other and it tells you how many people need to be on annual leave every day and *that's what we should be doing* because our annual leave is an entitlement.

Conference, please reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Gerry, to come back?

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Just to clarify the motion, Conference. It's not to agree a policy, this one, it's to demand where the management of an establishment have not facilitated that leave, then the facilitation of that leave gets taken out of their hands, it's to focus their minds in order to do as Ian says, look at what they can do to cut regimes or cut into the RMP in order to facilitate that leave *in the year* when it's entitled to be taken, that's the slight difference for it.

Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Full Sutton. Take it to the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? The motion is lost. Motion 43, Feltham, do we have a seconder for Feltham?

MOTION 43

That Conference instruct the NEC to enter talks with the employer to negotiate a payment for all operational staff that are required to pass an annual Fitness test and Restraint refresher. This allowance would cover all sporting equipment needed to ensure staff are correctly dressed for the test. This would also include an allowance towards the use of services to enable staff fitness and wellbeing.

FELTHAM

WANDSWORTH DELEGATE: Seconded Wandsworth.

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, I wasn't expecting to be standing here again today, it seems to be flying. Motion 43: That Conference instruct the NEC to enter talks with the employer to negotiate a payment for all operational staff that are required to pass an annual Fitness test and Restraint refresher. This allowance would cover all sporting equipment needed to ensure that staff are correctly dressed for the test. This would also include an allowance towards the use of services to enable staff fitness and wellbeing.

Over the past eight years closed grade staff have suffered a take home pay decrease, resulting in cuts to non-essential living expenses. Some families have had to cut their recreational, sporting interests due to these cuts. By stopping these sporting activities morale has been affected and in some cases has led to a disinterest in keeping active, due to being unable to enjoy the sport that they once loved. As a service we should be provided with an allowance to ensure that we keep fit and healthy, not just physically but mentally too. The levels of stress related to working in the prison service has risen greatly in recent years with an increase in violence. They heavy belts that we don every day must surely have an impact on our backs, the footwear that we are expected to wear, I know, has an impact on my ability to walk, jog for an

extended period of time without causing severe pain. The wellbeing of staff has been forgotten and replaced by the employer with a desire to dismiss older, less fit staff, rather than supporting them through to retirement age.

An allowance would enable staff to seek help with relaxation and emotional wellbeing, an allowance would ensure staff to be able to attend sporting activities they enjoy and would help towards the cost of training equipment and clothing needed, an allowance would be a step in the right direction for the employer to ensure that they are working in line with PSO 8625 and providing a duty of care to their staff.

Prison assaults have increased leaving many of us in increasing NHS waiting lists. Staff are then being forced to attend fitness tests with the threat of dismissal always in the back of their mind. We should be provided with private health care or at the very least an allowance towards this. Keeping active does not have to cost a fortune and you can go for a long walk, free of charge. However, you will need the correct footwear and clothing. Again, this costs money. The health authority guidelines state that a 65+ year-old should take part in 150 minutes moderate activity or 75 minutes vigorous activity. The time to facilitate this should be included as an allowance in our working week, due to our fitness level being a contractual obligation.

The prison service has an expectation that staff will attend fitness and C&R refreshers, dressed in sports clothing that you provide yourself. Sports and games officers and PIs are provided with a payment for training shoes, due to working with offenders. However, we are expected to turn up dressed for a session in the gym and are not provided with the funds to clothe ourselves correctly. If HMPPS expect staff to pass their fitness test and C&R refresher, then HMPPS must provide staff with the resources and equipment to pass the fitness test.

Conference, please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference, unfortunately I'm going to ask you to reject this motion on various points. And the first one is the fact is it creates... Over the years coming to Conference we've had motion after motion of a similar nature about how the employer should pay for our fitness test and also give us the time within work time to actually keep ourselves fit, etc. Some have gone and some have passed, we've lost some, we've won some. However, it's the mandate of this Union to get rid of the fitness test, so therefore we can't really support this motion because it is still the mandate of this union to get rid of it. We need to eradicate a tool that is being used and is going to be used in the future to dismiss our members as soon as they become too old or too large to actually do their fitness test.

The fact is that... Another issue is if they start paying me to go and buy my spandex and everything else and then go running in the gym and all this sort of stuff, how much is that worth to me when I get too old to actually continue the fitness test and they then see that as a route to get rid of me out of this service, how much is that actually worth to me at that point? Because they will easily be able to turn round and say to the reps and everything else, 'Do you know what, we've given Dave Cook every opportunity to do his fitness test and that and we've even given him money to go and buy his trainers and everything else that he needs,' this sort of stuff, 'And he's failed to do it and therefore he needs to go.'

The fitness test has never saved any person's life as far as we know. Scotland did have the fitness test and they were fantastic and they managed to get rid of it and they brought in a wellbeing test, where they have health checks and everything else, that's saved more Scottish prison officers' lives than any fitness test has done in the past. You need to look at professional sportsmen all over the country and everything else... I've just had a thing flash up on my phone just now, another rugby player has died, English rugby player has died on a rugby field. A fitness test doesn't keep people alive, health care checks do. But more importantly the fact is this... It's the mandate of this Union to get rid of it, that's what we need to fight for, get rid of a system that is going to lose our members, their employment, later in their life when they need it. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HUMBER: Chair, NEC, Conference, the Marconi bleep test, biggest bag of nails on the planet. The Marconi bleep test was devised some years ago, mainly for the military-ish, for doing some form of fitness in forward fort locations, such as Fort Whiterock, North Howard Street Mill, on a boat in the ocean, where they didn't have sports fields. It wasn't devised so somebody's job would hang off it. If they want a fair fitness test because the Marconi bleep test is not a fair fitness test; it doesn't increase or decrease with age. If we are adamant that we've got to have a fitness test, let's use the army BFT. It's a mile-and-a-half run, squadded, a mile-and-a-half run individual. It increases with your age.

Female members of staff, fit as robbers' dogs, at some point they get married and they have children, their bodily makeup changes slightly. We've got two female staff at my establishment that... well, one of them certainly, she ended up having to

have a hysterectomy early on last year and she's struggling with her fitness at this moment in time. She's going to be shortly coming up for capability hearing. Why is that fair? She just had a major operation which changes the makeup of her body. That's not fair in any stretch of the imagination. Plus at my establishment we merged with the Wolds some three, four years' back now, and because somebody in shared services messed up the TUPE agreement, there's a lot of controversy over the fitness test.

If we're going to have a fitness test, let's have a fair fitness test. If they limit the fitness test to those of us that need to do it for Tornado stuff or for gym staff, let it be fair, that's all we ask, is it to be fair across the board. Support this motion.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR, NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to reject this motion. Dave Cook's probably covered quite a bit of what I was going to say in my answer to the motion, if we go down the lines of asking the employer to provide allowances to buy equipment, we're giving credence to a fitness test that we want rid of. We don't want to give any credence to a fitness test that we want rid of. What we want in place of a discredited fitness test is occupational health screening for our members, that's what we've been chasing for quite some time, that's what we will continue to chase until we get it, but we don't want to give any credence to a discredited fitness test. So we're asking Conference to reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Feltham to respond?

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, I really would like everyone to support this motion. This is not just about a bleep test, this is about our emotional wellbeing as well, if you read the PSO it tells you that our employer has a duty of care to us. Now I sat here at Conference last year and there was motions about the fitness test, we're here a year later and we've still got motions about the fitness test, it hasn't gone anywhere, it's still there. Why would we not in the mean... I'm not saying not to go looking to get rid of the complete fitness test, I'm saying in the meantime let's negotiate with that employer to make sure that our staff have got an allowance while we're being made to do it, until such time that that motion is passed and the fitness test is removed.

Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. To the vote, Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show? Against? The motion is lost.

Conference, I'm now going to invite to the stage to address Conference, Simon Rosario who is an advisor on the new GDPR regulations, so that's General Data Protection Regulations, which replaces the Data Protection Act, which affects us all and which we can use against the employer specifically when they divulge personal information that they shouldn't really do. Over to you, Simon!

GUEST SPEAKER - SIMON ROSARIO - GDPR CONSULTANT

SIMON ROSARIO – GUEST SPEAKER: OK, thank you. So my name's Simon Rosario and I work with Assert Associates and I've been asked to give a quick, brief overview about GDPR and why it's important and what role you guys play within GDPR. So as you know GDPR is quite a... it's a new regulation that's coming into force on 25th May and hopefully the subjects I'll cover, it's not going to be too new, but hopefully it will help us to protect ourselves and be more compliant within GDPR.

So the key objectives, I've got three objectives from here, is 1) to give you an overview what is GDPR, so by now I'm sure everybody knows what GDPR is. The next one is to look at why is it important, so this is quite important to understand, unless we understand what GDPR is, we need to know why it's important and what we need to do to protect us and what role we play in this GDPR.

So the first thing we'll look at, what is GDPR? And like the Chair said GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulations that comes into force on the 25th of May, of this month, so it's important that we are fully compliant by that time. What the difference is between this and the Data Protection is that the Data Protection has got certain laws that GDPR now complies with. So, for example, under the Data Subject Access the data subject has more control of the data. I'm sure by now you've all had a lot of emails in your email box asking you to consent to things and what I think is you need to look at that and what you're actually consenting and also your rights within GDPR. Like I said GDPR is all about protecting the personal information and the other element to this is the rights of the data subjects.

So if we look at what is personal data, personal data is identifying someone, it has to be a living person and it can be directly or indirectly of the person. What I mean by that is, for example, your membership number, that could be indirectly identifiable

to that person, whereas your name and address is a direct contact. So we need to be able to protect that personal data and anybody who's handling that person's data is responsible for it.

So with GDPR it's also about the data subject's rights, the individual's rights and this is where under the Data Protection, the individual's rights wasn't very clear and GDPR sets out a few of these rights. The first one is the right of the information. So, for example, if you get a call from somebody and then straightaway you would say to them, 'Where did you get this telephone number?' you have that right to ask that question and they should be able to provide that information to you. You have a right of access, so if you want that information you can say to them, 'Can you provide what information you have?' And there are a number of other rights that are coming on board. So these are all the individual rights, rights for portability, right of access, right to be able... erasure.

Why is this important? And the biggest headline out there at the moment is the one that people use to scare people, and in fact I think it's quite right. The maximum fine by not complying to these regulations is either 4% of the annual global turnover or £20 million. Now the current Data Protection fines is about half a million, so if you take the case of Talk Talk, who a few months' ago had a massive breach, they were only fined 400,000 and to them that was probably loose change, whereas the 4% annual turnover, global annual turnover, would be massive and it would be well into the millions of the fine. So within each organisation... it's quite fair, whether you are a small organisation or a large, so if you're a small organisation your turnover could be very small, but the €20 million would be quite massive.

Here are some of the things that we would like you guys to help to comply with under GDPR, for example, even keeping your password secure, making sure you're not sharing the password or making sure if your password is being compromised, you change it; using strong passwords.

So this is another area which is quite important, sharing of information, so before you share the information make sure you check, are you allowed to share the information? The type of information you're sharing, if it's a lot of information, that's personal information, make sure we send it across securely. We also have to be very careful with paper documents, so if you're handling personal information make sure we don't leave them lying around, in meeting rooms or just putting them in the bins, make sure you shred them or dispose of them securely.

I appropriate that these are all basic common sense but in my experience the number of places I've been to, where people have been very close to personal information, what they've done is normally just take that for granted and leave it in meeting rooms or put them in bins and there are people outside that will literally go... and they call them dumpster diving, they will go into bins to see if they can find personal information or any other information to compromise. Bearing in mind what I've just said, the fines now could be huge to an organisation. So although these are very basic steps, it's just making sure that we have proper procedures in place.

Finally, I think there's two areas that we need to look at. One is the data subject requests and data breaches. So if we look at the subject access request, make sure that you notify your HQ so that they can put the proper processes in place and make sure that that process is handled correctly. The reason I'm mentioning that is again under GDPR you've only got one month to respond to a subject access request, if you fail to do that then the data subject could complain to the Information Commission Office and they will then investigate why it's taking too long.

The other area is to look at data breaches, so breaches, again thinking about the potential fine that that could impose on us we need to then make sure that that is handled very quickly and under GDPR you've got 72 hours to report that to the ICO, to take appropriate actions.

If there are any further questions you can email it... there's a distribution box on there... I've just put this caption in there, so by now I think everybody knows about it, even, I think the aliens have cottoned onto this and basically the caption is saying, 'Do you know anybody who knows about GDPR?' And one says, 'Yes,' and then says, 'Can I have the details?' and then says, 'No, you can't!' <laughs> because you've got to have the consent before you can share information like that.

OK, thank you, I hope I haven't taken too much of your time, but if there are any questions?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: It doesn't appear so, Simon. I think you've got away with the questions. On behalf of the NEC, thank you for that presentation.

<Applause>

SIMON ROSARIO: Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And before you go, Simon, as a token of our appreciation please accept this gift, all the way from Home & Bargains on Lower Street!

<Laughter and applause>

We'll continue with a few more motions, Conference, and then we'll just remind you about the fringe meetings that we've got on later this evening. Continue with motion 44 from Cardiff. Secorder for Cardiff, please? Thank you, Preston.

MOTION 44

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate an 'After Care Service' funded by the employer which is available to all HMPPS employees in regards to any health issue/s which has resulted in their dismissal on medical inefficiency and which on-going therapy is required.

CARDIFF

PHIL TUCK – BRANCH CHAIR, CARDIFF: Good afternoon, I'm not quite sure if I could pass the test on that one at all, I'm not quite at all.

NEC, Conference, stress and stress-related illnesses are on the increase throughout our industry. How do I know this? Probably because I have personally seen the effects amongst my own work colleagues and friends at my own establishment. And yet not unsurprisingly information regarding anything about the link between prison officers and working environment and stress-related illnesses is extremely rare. The majority of studies made in the UK tend to focus on military veterans which is rightly so and a number of them are actually our members. There is, however, an increasing number found in other groups who are now seen as susceptible, the police, health care workers and fire fighters to name but three. Many of you will personally know of or at least be aware of friends and work colleagues who are or have been off sick with severe stress or some form of stress-related illness within your own establishments. It's because of this I brought this motion to Conference. The reasons why people succumb to stress are far too numerous and indeed, at times, far too personal to go into any great length but what is normally forgotten is that it not only affects them but their families as well and if their families keep on suffering long after their condition has been diagnosed and long after the individual has probably been dismissed from the service on medical inefficiency.

The one example I'd like to share with you was a member of staff in my own establishment whose problems only came to light when in 2017 he started taking longer and longer periods of sick leave, bringing him into conflict with the Attendance Management Policy. This individual had over 20 years' service as a prison officer under his belt and prior to joining the service was a constable in the Met. This man was the type who could be relied upon in any situation, the type who could find light and humour in those difficult moments we sometimes find ourselves in, the type whose name becomes legendary within the workplace and the type you find it's a pleasure to work with when you find yourself working alongside him. Behind the jokes, behind the banter it transpired that this individual, unbeknown to all of those who knew him, was deliberately self-harming whilst in work and to get round the obvious tell-tale signs would wear his fleece jacket to cover up the marks on his arms.

We found out that his self-harming actually started in 2014, three years earlier to the point when he started taking sick leave. But typical of him and others who have done a bit of time he never raised any problems or issues with anyone, whether at work or indeed at home. He suffered alone, struggling to make sense of his condition, hiding it from his family and avoiding the questions which may have alerted someone, anyone, to the stress he was under, until that one day when enough was enough and the final straw was added to his load. This individual was eventually diagnosed with a form of PTSD and has since received therapy which could help his condition. CBT or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy wasn't sufficient, but I'm pleased to say that even after his dismissal, he is now showing improvement after receiving a course of EMDR, Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing, which has been used extensively by the Armed Forces to help those suffering from severe PTSD or trauma.

Our caring employer, of course, only pays for six sessions of this form of therapy, which means that even if the individual would benefit and improve from more, he would have to make the choice of paying for it themselves, or waiting for a place within the overstretched NHS. Our employer cannot and will not wait forever and inevitably, as in this case, a decision meeting eventually took place with the individual being given the chance of explaining why they couldn't, at that particular time, return to full duties. In the course of the meeting our employer will offer alternatives, but the day, as we all know on these things, is a forgone conclusion and a dismissal on medical inefficiency is his sad, but only course of action. Of course, on the day of dismissal any duty of care as far the service is concerned is finished with, the individual and their family, however, may still have a long road to travel before they can find any form of closure or see any return to the person they once knew.

Conference, I believe that if the job's made someone ill, then it's only appropriate and justifiable that the employer takes some form of responsibility and if staff can no longer offer 100%, all efforts should be made in supporting them after their

service ends because a monetary handout and a warm handshake doesn't make the problems disappear. So Conference please join with me and instruct our NEC to negotiate with our employer to set up an after-care service funded by the employer which is available to all HMPPS employees in regards to any health issue which has resulted in dismissal on medical inefficiency and which ongoing therapy is required. Conference, if we do something right today, it will only benefit those who need the help tomorrow, please support.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, Conference, NEC, commending Cardiff for this motion. One of the most difficult experiences I've ever had as a branch official is going through a similar sort of experience with a branch member as discussed earlier. This individual was given three years to get better, of which the prison service gave him six months. It still rankles with me that that is the right thing for our employer to do, throw him to the NHS and just leave it as that. The governor at the time said, 'I'm really worried for this individual, I feel he's going to end up on the streets,' and then just washed his hands of it. The employer should be doing a lot more and should be doing the right thing when it comes to this kind of stuff. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Also speaking in support of the motion. We had a bit of an issue with this one because it actually doesn't identify work-related stress or accident at work and I'm not sure if the NEC speaker may bring this up, but the fact is any health issues which have resulted in the dismissal on medical inefficiency, that could also include any life diseases, that will cause somebody who can't continue to work and everything else. Now the question would be how long we would expect the employer to support somebody who has a disease or something like that, that may actually cause them not to be there. But on the base of listening to Phil move the motion, it's clear to us it's about work-related stress, it's about assault, accidents at work, PSD and stuff like this, and on that basis I think we should support it.

Just like everybody else we've had members who have been assaulted, who suffer PTSD, who have work-related stress, who can't continue to work or have been unable to return to work and been given *limited* support by the employer. And as Phil said when he moved the motion, the minute they tick the dismissal box and they get their letter, that's the end of the employer's responsibility. Well, that's not good enough and it can't be good enough for us and it can't be good enough for this Union to support that for our members. There is a military covenant, alright, that the government has and the nation has with our military, we send them into places where they will suffer serious stuff, they will see stuff and they will do things that no human should actually be asked to do, so we have a military covenant and you can see it splattered all over the place and Help for Heroes, all these charities that are put in place to help our armed forces when they are no longer armed forces and they leave and they need the further support from the nation. But also at the same point, many of our armed forces also have to resort to drink or drugs to help them get through their daily lives. As a result of that their life spirals down, they're either sleeping on our streets or they're now being locked up in our cells and it's not going to be long before we start locking up our own colleagues because of the same issues. Our employer has a responsibility to us, they put us in a dangerous workplace, we face things that not many other civilian staff or civilian workers actually face on a daily basis. Fire service as Phil mentioned, fire service, the police and the NHS have stuff in place to support their workers. This is what we're asking for, we're asking for our NEC to start putting this across and start putting support networks into place for those who can no longer work in this job. It's a disgrace, it's an *absolute* disgrace when an ex-colleague actually takes their lives because they could no longer continue.

However, on a cautionary word about this as well, it's also *our* responsibility, our responsibility as branch representatives, to get in, get in to our MPS and start bringing this to the MPs' notice as well. Start fighting this through the MPs and we'll have a good success at doing this. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Duncan Keys responding for the NEC.

DUNCAN KEYS – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, thank you Cardiff for bringing this motion. The NEC fully support the move towards such an after-care service, what we're not going to say to you though and you've heard this before, not only at this Conference but at previous Conferences, is that it's not going to be the easiest thing in the world to achieve. But what a thing it would be to achieve and this is the work that quite properly the Executive see themselves as progressing on behalf of the membership, so once again, thank you very much Cardiff for bringing this motion and the NEC ask you to support. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Phil for bringing that motion to Conference, very important motion, we'll take it to the vote. All those in favour please show? Any against? Thank you, Conference, that is carried. 45 Stoke

Heath, seconder for Stoke Heath please? Don't all shout at once!

MOTION 45

That Conference instruct the Executive to give F&S Band 4's the same option to progress to Band 5 without the need to complete new accreditation, after already completing a diploma in team leadership.

STOKE HEATH

UNKNOWN SPEAKER:Seconded

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you.

ANDY MURDOCH – BRANCH SECRETARY, STOKE HEATH: Motion 45 reads that Conference instruct the Executive to give F&S Band 4's the same option to progress to Band 5 without the need to complete new accreditation, after already completing a Diploma in Team Leadership.

When this was first brought to me, it was brought to me by one of my branch members and my first response, was, 'Yeah, do one, you can get on with it like the rest of us,' but when I looked at it a little bit more, I understand where the guy was coming from. Now what he's stating is that when Fair & Sustainable first kicked in the Band 4s no longer needed to do their accreditation anymore and they started that devaluing process of our Band 4s. And then in its place they put in this Team Leader Diplomaship which over 12 months they were expecting these candidates to complete. Now, it was a nationally recognised qualification which even gives them a certificate and we all like certificates, which states that they are fully competent in being leaders of a team. Now shortly after that, I don't know what they're doing in the rest of the branches, but I know in ours they've stopped it and nobody's doing that programme anymore.

But what we're asking now is that people that have these diplomas have gone through this process, gone through this training, have received this nationally recognised diploma to say that they no longer need the one day accreditation that they're expected to go on to progress to Band 4s. Now don't forget they're already looking at disseminating our Band 4 groups, we've already put a motion in to try and protect them and this is just another one to try and protect them as best we can. So I'd ask you all guys, support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, guests, speaking on behalf of the NEC against the motion. Whilst we understand the sentiments of the motion it says that Conference instruct the Executive to give F&S Band 4s the same option to progress to Band 5s without the need to complete new accreditation. Conference, the Executive haven't got the power to do that. The sentiment is asking for the Diploma in Team Leadership to be treated the same as the old Senior Officer JSAC. Conference, these two qualifications are not the same. Those of you who've done the JSAC will know you worked under pressure in an exam and in an operational assessment. The diploma was completed over time with no pressure. The Senior Officer JSAC has always been a life-time accreditation and we've successfully challenged HMPPS to keep it as a lift-time accreditation. And let me remind you of the time when the DPSM programme was introduced, the Closed Grade Senior Officers, those with the JSAC, took over the Orderly Officer role and took over running the prisons. F&S has been decisive, the Senior Officer rank closed, stripped of their managerial responsibilities saw Officers promoted to their grade with no qualifications and saw Officers promoted above them. The diploma and the JSAC are completely different.

So Conference, two reasons to reject the motion, the wording of the motion and the accreditations are completely different. Please reject the motion, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Stoke Heath to reply.

ANDY MURDOCH – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP STOKE HEATH: I think this was brought up earlier, I think the original form when we put the motion in, again it went through their Standing Orders Committee and they gave us the words for it, so I'll go with that one. Qualifications versus accreditation, National Diploma, is that not good enough? I think it is, anybody else think that's not good enough? That's a shocking reason. Also they're on about the life-time accreditation, well the NEC have managed to get that for the Band 4s, I don't think we're asking too much here, so please guys, support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Take it to the vote, Conference, all those in favour please show? Any against? Thank you Conference, that is lost. 46 Swaleside, seconder for Swaleside? Thank you.

MOTION 46

That Conference recognise the operational JSAC process used by HMPPS as a route for promotion as not being fit for purpose.

Further, that conference mandate the NEC to engage with HMPPS in reviewing and implementing a better, fairer, ability-based promotion scheme that is not only designed to improve the ability and competencies of all grades, but that is also fit for purpose and maintains the health and safety of the membership.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Chair, Conference, we've brought this to the board because of the disgrace of the JSAC process. For some reason a people organisation like HMPPS seem to think that it's quite good to actually give you the car and the licence before they actually teach you to drive it, because that is what we're actually doing. JSAC process was put into place and they brought psychologists into place and everything else to come up with a system to try and better the service and more professionalise this service in itself. In all honesty it's had an absolutely massive detrimental effect on that one. But within this the fact is that we have to recognise that up and down this country there are huge numbers of our members who are acting up into higher grades than their substantive grade as it is. Now when we act them up into these grades they don't go to the JSAC first or anything else, we don't get any additional training or any of that sort of stuff, if their face fits or anything else on that basis, then they're suddenly temporarily promoted to a higher grade.

Some of these staff have been acting up for *years*, literally years. Now the PSI is quite clear, no person, when they brought F&S in, no person should be temporarily promoted for more than 12 months. In exceptional circumstances for two years but certainly not beyond the two-year point. We still have staff, and we have them in Swaleside as well, staff who have taken temporary promotion to higher grades for four, five, up to eight years. The one thing about it is within that time or anything else they've not actually passed the JSAC. However, year after year they've received an SPDR and they're being marked at the grade and the role that they're actually acting up into, so these staff are getting a grade that actually says acceptable and as soon as they get an acceptable on it, the fact is it means that they are doing the competencies and demonstrating the competencies of the grade that they're acting up into that are required. But is that good enough for this service? No, it's not. That person cannot become substantively promoted until such time as he's gone through a three-hour JSAC process up at Birmingham.

Now if you want to know about stress put yourself through that process, because it's a disgrace. Irrespective of what grade you're going for that process is an absolute disgrace. I turned up one year and I met some people, candidates again, who were going through the JSAC process with me, and I met them in the hotel that I stayed in. One bloke, one woman and they were quite senior in their experience in the service and they were tearing themselves to pieces, their nerves were absolutely disgraceful. The guy actually threw up five times before he walked in to do his JSAC, *five times* he was sick, and it wasn't because he drank too much, it was because the nerves were getting to him. Unfortunately the female within an hour of the JSAC process starting actually walked out in absolute pieces.

No other people service has a JSAC process, the idea is that what they do is they develop their staff, they bring development programmes into place that actually give the staff the competencies and the skills and the knowledge that are required to do the job of the next grade *before they get there* and that is what is missing in this. Within this, at the same time, it's not just being about fair to those people, it's also being about safe to our members 'cause if you've got somebody who hasn't got the proven competencies who are making managerial decisions, they can be dangerous in our establishments. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

ROB SMALLWOOD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HOLLESLEY BAY: I wholeheartedly support this motion. Last year we brought a motion to Conference seeking avenues of progression, training and accreditation. At Hollesley Bay out of four Band 7 governors, three are acting up as Dave said, these aren't acting up for three months, these are acting up for years, 18 months, two years. When they go for the actual accreditation process they fail that, yet as Dave said before, they're quite happy on the SPDRs at a high performing prison, running departments and running at high level, yet they can't pass the accreditation. Why can't they be assessed in post doing the actual job what they're doing, they're getting paid for month after month, year after year?

Please support the motion, thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, Ian Carson responding on behalf of the NEC, asking you to reject this motion.

Whilst the Swaleside motion has merit are we really going to be safe to the Band 4s we discussed earlier in motion 27 that their accreditation isn't fit for purpose, because that's what this motion says? We all know how the old style SOs feel that they've been treated since the introduction of benchmarking, they're devastated, and if there's any of you out there I get that. And whilst it's not perfect it has, for many years, provided the yardstick for promotion and many of the best SOs I've ever known, and I've known some stars, were JSAC accredited. We mustn't allow the employer to undermine what is in effect a life-time accreditation, that's the agreement, it's a life-time accreditation that belongs to those that have it.

Jackie covered the issue of the DPSM course. This motion calls for a fairer ability-based scheme, when has access to promotion in this job ever been ability-based and fair, when? We've all seen the dodgy deals and the plagiarism and nepotism that takes place. During the initial discussions over the new staff appraisal scheme, I think it was 2014-15, we put forward a number of suggestions that we felt may improve the promotion process and one of them was, and you might be astounded at this, that the SPDR should play a pivotal role and we suggested that Senior Managers must have an academic qualification. Well, that was a non-starter, wasn't it, because we wouldn't have many Senior Managers, would we?

How will the JSAC accredited SOs take the Conference agreeing that their accreditation isn't fit for purpose? Please reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Swaleside to respond?

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Absolutely, Mr Chair! This motion's asking two things, it's to recognise that it is not fit for purpose and that's not decrying the people who've already got the accreditations prior to this moment, we're just saying in today's modern society, modern prison service, it's no longer good enough and it needs to be something else.

Secondly is that we're asking you to engage with HMPPS to review and promote a better, fairer, ability-based promotion scheme so that it maintains the health and safety of the membership and improves the ability and competencies of all grades, that is what we're asking you to do. I know if I was sitting in a plane, going off to Benidorm or something like this, I would not be happy in knowing that the pilot who's sitting in the front seat has only don't the flight simulator compared to a pilot whose been flying planes for five years and hasn't sat in the flight simulator seat. I know which plane I would want to go into and that's the same sort of thing with this. We have staff who for year after year been providing the competencies that have been required, they've proven competencies, they're working in our establishments and we need a system that recognises that ability. The JSAC *cannot be* the *only* answer for this service, there has to be another way through this. That's what this motion is about, please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: OK, we'll take that to the vote. All those in favour please show? Against? I would say that's carried.

Conference we're going to bring today's events to a conclusion and we convene at nine, but before we do I'm handing over to Steve Gillan who's got a few announcements to make.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY, NEC: Thank you very much Chair. As usual we're amending things, so with Conference finishing, the Hope Not Hate fringe meeting out there will now take place obviously as soon as Conference finishes. A message for the Scottish delegates and the Scottish National Committee, Thomson Scotland will be doing a welcome meeting in the Hesketh Suite at 18:15 in the Ramada Hotel, obviously it's not compulsory but they're putting it on, so it would be nice if you did attend that at 18:15 on the second floor of the Ramada Hotel. Thank you.

And Conference tomorrow is nine o'clock sharp for the commencement of Conference, thank you.

<End of Afternoon Session - Part 2>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Wednesday 16th May, Morning Session - Part 1

SECURE HEALTH CARE SERVICES - AGM

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, can you come to order please? Conference, I'm very pleased to Chair this part, although it will be very brief, the Secure Health Care Services and your General Meeting. I'll be asking Duncan Keys to give an overview of the work that has been done over the last year. Firstly, though, I'd like to pay tribute to our members in the special hospitals and The State Hospital of Carstairs in Scotland. The work there that they do is immense, so I'd like everyone please to give your support to them, at Ashworth, Broadmoor, Carstairs and Rampton and I'm very proud to be the Chair of the National Committee for Secure Health Care Services. So, Duncan, thank you.

DUNCAN KEYS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference. Good morning, Conference. I've been asked by the General Secretary to give Conference a brief overview on the recently announced proposals for amendments to agenda for change within the NHS in England.

The proposed alterations, if accepted by the workforce in England, are very likely to be mirrored by the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The history of the proposals is set in a relatively short timeframe. In mid-2017, the NHS staff Side Council, which consists of the NHS Trade Unions, submitted a pay claim directly to the employers. And although currently, the POA has observer status only within the staff Side Council, Sean Farrell, the Branch Chair of Rampton and myself attended the many meetings held to establish a unified approach to the negotiation. POA certainly had an input at these meetings and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sean for his help and support during the discussions, which was greatly appreciated. Surprisingly, NHS England and the employers were content to discuss a potential multi-year pay deal with the Staff Side Council and were happy to meet both informally and formally outside of the usual NHS Pay Review Body discussions. The result of the eventual negotiations which followed was a framework agreement, which is currently being balloted upon by the members of the NHS Trade Unions, including the POA. The proposals include a three-year pay deal and changes to the pay structure to make it better and fairer. And, crucially, the Government has committed new money, some £4.2 billion to fund the new deal over the three years and this is money that has not been taken from patient care.

The main elements are: major pay increases for staff below the top of their band, through simplifying bands so most staff reach the full rate for the job faster, and this is worth between 9% and 29% over three years. Meaningful increases for top-of-band staff, who already benefit from the full rate for the job. For most, this would be worth 6.5% over three years, plus a 1.1% lump sum in year 2. Removal of band overlaps to ensure that promotion comes with a proper pay rise and to lessen the risk of equal pay challenges. Ending the poverty pay through an immediate move to a new above-living wage minimum rate, with further increases for the lowest-paid staff by the end of the deal. And big improvements to starting salaries to help the NHS attract and retain new staff.

A key aim of this proposed agreement is to make the whole pay system fairer and better for current and future NHS staff. All the changes relate to pay band design. The process for allocating roles to bands will continue to be done by the current NHS Job Evaluation Scheme. The changes within this proposed agreement cannot be made in one hit. They need to be spread out over a full three-year period. Some people do better than others in individual years, but everyone gains overall. The most important figure for staff to look at before they cast their vote is going to be their own personal gain at the end of the three years. The NHS Staff Council have provided a website, where every member of the NHS Trade Unions can log in and see how the deal would personally impact upon themselves. All staff would receive a meaningful pay rise, in every case, more than they could expect under the current system of incremental progression and annual awards capped at 1%. The negotiated proposals would provide a mixture of annual pay awards, a top-of-band lump sum, incremental progression and improvements to the pay structure.

So, what does this actually mean? Well, for staff currently in Band 1, the lowest level, this would mean that effective from the 1st of April 2018, the minimum basic rate in the NHS in England, would be £17,460 and this is equivalent to £8.92 per hour and this exceeds the living wage. For all staff currently in Band 1, this would be an immediate increase of approximately 10%. However, the deal would go further, so that by March 2021, all jobs in Band 1 would be altered to become Band 2 roles. Staff would get the training and support to take on any necessary changes. They would therefore benefit from a further increase by the end of the deal. For staff in Bands 2 to 9 who are below top-of-band, improvements to salaries in each pay band by removing the overlaps between bands. This would start in year 1 and be completed in year 2. Deleting

the spine points in the mid-range of each band would take place in year 2 and year 3 of the deal. In each year of the deal, staff who are due to move up to a point that will be deleted would automatically go to the point above. The combination of these changes would mean that increases between 9% and 29% over the three years would be available and more people would reach the top rate for the job more quickly. For staff at the top of the Bands 2 to 8C, it would mean 3% in '18-'19, 1.7% in '19-'20 plus a lump sum worth 1.1% paid in April 2019 and a further 1.7% in 2021. This would amount to a total increase on basic pay of 6.5% over three years, plus the extra 1.1% lump sum in April 2019. For staff at the top of Bands 8D and 9, the deal would result in an increase of 5.4% at the top of Band 8D and 4.5% for the top of Band 9 over the three years. These staff would also receive the lump sum, worth around £800 in April '19.

There have also been negotiations regarding other changes. The employer made many demands regarding reducing annual leave allowance. The Trade Unions rejected any such proposals and ultimately, they were withdrawn. Some changes to unsocial hours payments have become part of the proposal, however no-one will lose out overall. Pay progression: around half of all current staff are already at the top of their band. Most others will have reached it by the end of the proposed three-year agreement, through the effects of the pay increases I mentioned before. For the small proportion who haven't and for new starters and promoted staff in the future, incremental progression would work quite differently. Most would progress to the top of their band more quickly than is possible now. Increments would no longer be annual. They would be further apart, but in a year where staff get them, they would be worth more. A new progression framework would be developed, ready to use from the 1st of May 2019 onwards for new starters. Many NHS employers already link incremental progression to appraisals. In the new progression system, all NHS employers would need to apply a process linked to appraisals before allowing staff to progress to the next pay point. The proposed system would be designed on the principle that staff should receive the support, training and line manager input they need to progress as soon as they are eligible. Colleagues, the ballot is currently underway, with the result being announced by all Trade Unions simultaneously on the 8th of June. And that, Chair, is my report.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much for that, Duncan. Just in relation to the ballot, we have been fighting for a full seat, as Duncan says, on the NHS staff Side for some time and will continue to do that through the TUC and the General Council, but the reality is, as well, we made the decision. Whilst a lot of the other Trade Unions said that they would recommend endorsement of the deal, we have remained neutral because we don't have that full seat on the staff Side Council. By the same token, Duncan and Sean represent our views very clearly on there, but we thought it appropriate to let our members decide without us recommending one way or the other because it affects each individual, as Duncan has clearly outlined there. So, we look forward to the outcome of that ballot to make sure that our members are treated fairly and appropriately.

In relation to Scotland, Duncan's been quite clear about that as well. Carstairs comes under the devolved responsibility of NHS Scotland, so they won't be included in this ballot. And, of course, Andy Hogg and others in Carstairs will keep us up-to-speed with developments in Scotland in relation to any pay rises that take place there. So, once again, I would like to thank the NHS staff Side for endorsing us and having a seat. Albeit it's an observatory seat at this moment in time, we will continue because in the bigger scheme of things, we are only a small Trade Union within the NHS. The reality is, we will keep fighting though, because I believe that the TUC should be inclusive and not exclusive and I make my voice heard around. It was getting people like UNISON and Unite on side that actually got us a seat at the table, but we're a little bit greedy, we want a full seat, sitting alongside everybody else with full voting rights as well.

Interestingly, I just saw this morning, the BBC, where the RCN must have been reading our debate in relation to NPS and Spice yesterday, because they've come out now and said that over the course of the last year, some 50 of their nurses have fallen ill up and down in establishments across the country in prisons. So, I think we can do some good work with the RCN as well because I think it was the Elmley delegate yesterday that said, 'They can have all the preventative measures they want, but the reality is, we've got to stop NPS coming into our jails in the first place'. The usual standard stuff from the MOJ said that they've now trained up an additional 300 sniffer dogs and so forth and were doing everything to eradicate NPS.

Well, to the MOJ, you've failed miserably and we can tell Michael Spurr that tomorrow, and we want to see real issues in relation to this. As Mark alluded to in his opening address, we will be taking that forward with the Secretary of State and, if necessary, through potential legal challenges as well because we need now to get serious about this issue because they are the ones that have created it, with the austerity measures, with the cuts to staff. We need to get back to basics and we will work with any Trade Union that works with us in relation to this. So, we look forward to working with the RCN and we'll be contacting them to see what work we can do jointly in the eradication of NPS.

So, that now concludes the Secure Health Care Services Annual General Meeting and I'd like to call Pete Hancox of the Retired Members Committee to address Conference for a couple of minutes. Thank you.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER -

PETE HANCOX – HONORARY LIFE MEMBER AND CHAIR OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE

PETE HANCOX – HONORARY LIFE MEMBER AND CHAIR OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS COMMITTEE: Chair, NEC, Conference. Colleagues, in June 2016, the General Secretary asked me to chair a Retired Members Committee, as outlined in the Rules & Constitution. The aims and objectives were two-fold: one, to provide improved benefits for retired members, present and in the future; and two, to increase the retired members numbers, which currently stand at 3,500. The Retired Members Committee was formed and work was commenced and two years later, we are still in the process of negotiating a final document to be presented to the full NEC by December this year. This is to enable a Conference paper to be presented to this Conference in 2019 by the National Executive Committee to be discussed and hopefully accepted by you to become policy. Currently, the only benefits received by a retired member are: the Gatelodge, the Association's diary and any commercial benefits that are available to full-time members. The RMC have discussed and examined within the Rules & Constitution, which under rule 52C, which states that retired members' death benefit to an amount fixed from time to time by Conference. As you are aware, currently there is no death benefit for retired members. This would require a reduced death benefit, if accepted, or a donation towards the funeral costs. This would be, obviously, for a reduced monthly subscription, subject of course to the approval of the National Executive Committee and you, Conference.

The Retired Members Committee have also identified that members within one month of retirement may continue to remain a member of the Welfare Fund by paying an annual premium of £12 in advance. The Welfare Fund, in its objective and activities, states quite clearly that in Objective 1, to receive in cases of need or distress, past or present members of the POA by making grants of money for providing or paying for items, services or facilities for the relief of such persons. Can I ask you, delegates, how many of you knew that that was available? Could you please give me a show of hands? The Retired Members Committee will recommend to the NEC in its paper that a three-month period of an amnesty to be applied for current retired members to join the Welfare Fund. The Retired Members Committee have also discussed that retired members may have access to free initial legal advice, provided by our national solicitors, subject to an agreement with our national solicitors. The National Executive Committee have indicated that any benefits for a retired member must be at nil cost to the Association. Conference, to achieve improved benefits that would encourage current retired members to join the retired members branch or section as identified, there may be a minimal cost to the Association. For example, a death donation or benefit, £1,000, a minimum of 1000 members. That would cost a subscription of £7, provided by an insurance company. Nil cost to the Association. The Welfare Fund, £1 per month, each case treated as an individual with no specific set payments. As those of you who have been here for some time will remember, I was the Finance Officer who brought in the Welfare Fund for our members. I am fully aware of the rules regarding payments. Each case, irrespective of whether you be a retired a member or not, would be actually looked at, examined and a payment would be made in accordance with the request and the funds available. Colleagues, as you are aware, this week, we have been informed that the Welfare Fund stands £636,000 in credit. That is a tremendous achievement by the people who run the Welfare Fund. Adding retired members who would be paying a subscription, we feel would not in any way reduce any of that money that would create a disaster for the Welfare Fund. What it would do is recognise the people who have retired who have paid into that Welfare Fund, would continue when they've retired to be able to access in their needs.

Colleagues, every one of you sat in this hall today and members of the Executive will retire. When you've retired and you want to keep the safety of the POA around you, you have got the situation in your hands. The NEC have it in their hands; that when the Retired Members Committee present to them, by December of this year, proposals to safeguard you when you've retired and also to involve those who've already retired to bring them into the safety and the protection of the POA that they had for in excess of 20 years been a full member. Every one of us that I'm sure is sat in this hall when you retire, you will have POA stamped on your spine. Honorary life members have just got that. Branch officials, you've got that. National Executive Committee and National Chairs, past and present, have that. You have lived for the POA, you have lived for your members.

The Retired Members Committee have also considered, subject to the NEC approval, that we will provide what we consider clear advertising for people who are due to retire. How many of you, as branch delegates – and me included when I was a branch delegate, I was the same – how many went and sought out people who were due to retire and say, 'Join the retired members branch'? I didn't, I'm the first to hold my hand up. I'm the first to hold my hand up, when I was Finance Officer, the retired members branch and the Retired Members Committee under the Rules & Constitution was never a major issue for me. We were too busy representing our members at national level. But retirement will come to us all – let us protect.

We're also going to suggest to the NEC that members of the present Retired Members Committee and future members of the Retired Members Committee have the option to attend branch official training, to promote, yet again, our retired members and people coming up for retirement. We are committed – some say we should be – but we are committed to promote the retired members of our wonderful Union. They have never had this representation in the past, they certainly have it now and with the Executive's approval and your approval in 2019, they will then get it and be assured.

Conference, finally as Chair, I would like to thank the Committee that have been working so hard, a lot of work in their own

time, a lot of work and most work where they have dealt with situations with immediate effect. I would like to thank George Freeman, John Dauncey, Peter Jackson and Tony Jackson for their commitment on your behalf. Chair, thank you for giving me the opportunity to address Conference and to promote the retired members of our great Union. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Pete, for that address and your work is really appreciated. I look forward to those proposals later in the year.

Conference, we will move on with business. We're onto motion 47 and Hindley. Do we have a seconder for Hindley? Thank you. Point of order.

BILL BUPARAI – BRANCH CHAIR, BELMARSH: Chair, Conference, NEC. There's a problem with the wording on this motion. I understand what Hindley branch are intending to say but it relates to red hours and unsociable hours and there being an allowance. Just for the purposes of clarity, there is no allowance for red hours. Red hours falls under the employer's work-life balance policy, where there's a 65 and 35% breakdown in hours worked outside 7.30 in the morning and 5.30 in the evening. Unsocial hours are worked before seven in the morning and seven in the evening. There is an allowance for those hours. The motion, I would suggest, needs to be amended to 'unsocial hours' before the motion's heard. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Reference your point of order, Bill, I understand what you're saying but it's been accepted by the Standing Orders Committee and has been adopted by Conference. So, I'm happy for this to go ahead.

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: Yes, thanks for that. NEC, Conference. I've got up here to actually ask for permission to withdraw this motion.

<Laughter>

I did tell him. Yes, Conference, due to the fall of motion 35 yesterday and some of the wording in this, I think it would be a pointless exercise to instruct our NEC to do a study because, actually, who would they give the result to? Because we don't give any information to the Pay Review Body. So, Conference, Hindley seeks permission to withdraw this motion until such time we are given collective bargaining and we can use this information, better-worded, against our employer. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have permission to withdraw?

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference, that's withdrawn. 47(a) is Appeal 1 from Hewell. Secunder for Hewell? Do we have a seconder?

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Good morning Conference, Chair, NEC. Motion 47(a) reads, 'That Conference mandates the NEC to seek an amendment to PSI 06/2010, where there is a fatal consequence to the disciplinary process in the event of mandatory instructions and guidelines not being complied with'. This motion has been prompted by the blatant disregard to the Conduct and Discipline Procedure under PSI 06/2010 which, in experience of branch members at HMP Hewell, is consistently and persistently demonstrated by successive senior managers, for which there is and has been no direct consequence. Expectation from our branch membership is that this is challenged appropriately, and especially considering this has been previously raised with motions successfully passed and also endorsed at Conference by the NEC, however have not provided any satisfactory outcomes. The word of the motion instructs the desired and specific outcome, whilst previous disposed motions have not had any structure and have immediately proven themselves to have highlighted a problem, which continues to be ignored. There is no consequence under PSI 06/2010 of mandatory actions not being complied with. And when these breaches of mandatory actions have been raised in hearings, successive hearing authorities and appeal authorities have chosen to just merely take into consideration but go ahead with the original agenda which they set out to achieve in the first place.

The definition of the word 'mandatory' is compulsory or required by law. So, for there to be no stated consequence of failure to comply with an agreed mandatory policy renders the word 'mandatory', in the context of the PSI 06/2010, to be completely meaningless. Whilst there may just be an internal/external appeals process to go through, Hewell branch members are currently two years down the line with regards to seeking justice or closure without resolution for numerous clear breaches of mandatory instructions and non-compliance. For these particular individuals, the stress of the process is about to finish them off, physically and mentally. So, for it to be considered there's a credible appeals process is not the experience of the branch members who I have been representing. Even though the subsequent processes have highlighted fatal flaws in those particular cases, there has been no change in outcome or consequence of there being a fatal flaw.

If the establishment chooses to disregard and ignore a timebound process, then there should be clear and precise and consequence. Rules on natural justice are also quite clear, so to go and choose to ignore pure basics is to the detriment of our members, whom we have to defend. If we were dealing with a prisoner's adjudication process, the Governor would throw it out, regardless of any consequence to the victim or the establishment. The whole process, as it is currently being implemented, is tantamount to institutionalised bullying and corruption. If they can't be bothered to comply with their own process, whilst a colleague whose career hangs in the balance and is holding their life around and, in addition, to playing their future off this process being concluded, is tantamount to mental cruelty and torture. I've seen and shared in the utter frustration of how the process is not followed as per PSI 06/2010. The consequence of this has been the outpoint of anger and frustration, which then justifies the Governor's decision regarding breakdown of trust between employer and employee. Well, Conference, the Hewell branch has no trust or faith in the employer with regards to this particular process. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Mr Chair, the NEC, Conference. I want to just pick up on two words which are in the presentation from our colleague at Hewell, which I feel are exceedingly poignant. When he says there is the 'blatant disregard' to the Conduct and Discipline Procedure. I'm very confident if our esteemed colleague, the honorary life member Andy Darken wasn't constrained by sitting at the top, he would be standing here now, telling you all about 06/2010 and how its procedures should work and aren't working. As a document, actually, it's not bad because everything is pretty well laid out, but as has already been presented and as every single one of you here knows, it is not being followed. As a Committee member, recently appointed to the POA, I had the misfortune of attending a capability hearing where a member got sacked, then went to the appeal with the esteemed Andrew Cross DDC, no longer with us. When the member presented what he felt were the points of his appeal, he started off by saying, 'This was out of time, that was not done, that was not followed'. The DDC just held his hand up and he said, 'Let me stop you there'. He said, 'We can talk all day about these things but they will not make an iota of difference. What I want are some real facts as to why I should overturn this appeal'.

Now, in his response to Hewell, Glyn Travis, our legal representative, has indicated that due process is there for us to follow, in terms of these appeals to a higher authority, depending on what the case might be – that is internally. We could go external, to the Employment Tribunal where, inevitably, every case would be won as soon as it hits the desk. But should our Union waste its valuable resources in funding a case going to Employment Tribunal for someone who has got a warning, which would be overturned but in the bigger picture of things, should've been swept aside straight at the beginning and never even been proceeded with? This is the problem.

The other word in there is the 'blatant' disregard. Governors blatantly disregard the procedures in 06/10 because they know they will be supported by their superiors, who in turn blatantly disregard cases which are brought in front of them. They will always look to each other for support, you will never be granted natural justice. The disappointing thing for me on this is not that we... Mr Chair, I'm finishing up now. That this has had to be brought as a motion. The NEC should already have been aware of this problem and should have been dealing with it through the Whitley Council. I'm not even going to ask you to support the motion or disregard it or disregard the long grass where Glyn Travis wants to kick this motion. I'm merely asking the NEC to please take this issue, which is a very serious one which affects every branch in the country, and do something about this problem. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Glynn Travis, responding for the NEC.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Yes, good morning Conference, Chair, NEC, speaking on behalf of the Executive seeking rejection of the motion, not because of anything other than what is it asking us to do? 'That Conference mandate the NEC to seek an amendment to PSI 06/2010, where there is a fatal consequence to the disciplinary process in the event that mandatory instructions and guidance aren't complied with.' Well, is that about changing the timescale for an appeal, the timescale for the employer to notify the individual that they're going to face a disciplinary hearing? Is it about the timescale and the extensions to everything that we have within that documentation that is badly applied, horrendously applied by management who don't care? We recognise that, but it's the Prison Service's disciplinary policy and every employer has a right to a disciplinary policy. The Government abolished the Civil Service Appeal Board because the Civil Service Appeal Board was the *only* area where you would win hands down on procedural flaws, and they abolished it for the very reason that the Civil Service Appeal Board reheard the case. And where you identified the flaws which Les has pointed out, that I point out on any individual case that I have done... and there are people in this room that I have represented who will know how meticulous I deal with the issues. I mean, there are branches here who will know how we deliver training in relation to PSI 06/2010, but this is asking for us to do what? If this motion had come in and said, 'That Conference reject PSI 06/2010 in its entirety and we renegotiate a new policy', happy days, fantastic, we'll see what we get.

Now, if you think that 06/2010 is bad, and it is, let me tell you this. Everybody who works in the private sector would love to have 06/2010 because at least you've got some structure, rather than being called in in the morning, seen, investigated, called back the day after, seen and sacked. And told you'll get an appeal when they decide that they'll do it because they don't pay you during that process. So, the motion is full of good intent, but what it's asking us to do, we don't know. Now, if you are happy, as a delegation and for your members, that this is telling us to renegotiate 06/2010 because of the fatal flaws in it, then that's what it is. But what we currently don't understand... and the Standing Orders Committee under the motion from Parkhurst couldn't rewrite it because we would've changed the motion in its entirety and we're not allowed to do that and that's the problem of that.

So, for those reasons and those reasons only, we ask you to reject it. If you accept it, you will have to accept that we're going to try and interpret what Les has said, what Martin has said and what I have said and we shouldn't be interpreting what a Conference motion says. We should be acting on what the motion actually does say, and that is that the NEC change some fatal consequences, but we don't know what they are. Please reject. Thank you.

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: The motion's quite clear from where our branch stand. If it's a mandatory instruction and it's not complied with, then there's a fatal consequence to the whole process. That means done, dusted, finished.

I took an appeal to the DDC and then we went above the Area Manager and this whole process came out with the DDC writing to the appeal authority we'd gone to, 'We need to support the Governor because he's under pressure'. So, there is no consequence. There's no clear decision-making, so we need to start heading this off at the pass. If you can't deal with mandatory timelines and you don't put extension letters in, then you need to just bin the whole thing. PSI 06/2010 is not worth the paper it is written on. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Les. Take it to the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show. All those against. OK, we're going to have another look at that before we can decide if it's a card vote or not. All those in favour, please show. And all those against. I would say that was lost, so we're going to a card vote. So, we've had a suggestion for a card vote. Do we have support for a card vote? Yes, yes we do, OK. Scrutineers and tellers, you've got a job to do this morning as well. Any more slips for the scrutineers and tellers?

Thank you, Conference. As soon as that count is in, we shall inform you. We will continue with motion 48, which is Leeds. Do we have a seconder for Leeds? Thank you.

MOTION 48

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to make Payment Plus pensionable for all grades owing to the fact that the current Alpha pension scheme is a career average scheme.

LEEDS

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: Good morning Chair, NEC and Conference. Motion 48. 'That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with HMPPS to make Payment Plus pensionable for all grades owing to the fact that the current Alpha pension scheme is a career average scheme.' We're all of the same ilk, we want enough staff that we don't have to have PP but unfortunately, it's been here and some guise or other with additional hours payments. We've now got an Alpha pension scheme that runs from age of 18, where a member of staff can start, to 68, so that's a 50-year service. To average a member of staff out and to pay their pension based on a career average is going to give them a limited pension at the end. Also, for people that are on Classic scheme or Premium scheme, if they decide to work extra hours prior to retirement, you can boost your own pension when you get there. We know it's going to be here, we know we're going to be working hours, so why should it not be reflected in your pay? Well, in your pension. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

TONY WALKER – BRANCH CHAIR, PORTLAND: Conference, NEC, seeking to reject this motion. Do I seriously want to compete with all the Payment Plus bandits that are going to be, all of a sudden, 'I can now get my pension up to a jolly old... I'll retire a bit earlier because I managed to stack it all up'? Absolutely, you need to reject this motion. All you'll have is people undermine the job. We should be striving to get people in them places so that we haven't got Payment Plus in our establishments, not rewarding the people that are working themselves to death. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the National Executive. Conference, this would be a very hard motion to achieve because at present, we don't have collective bargaining with the employer. This would have to be done through the Pay Review Body and you have instructed us, yet again, not to give evidence to the Pay Review Body. However, Payment Plus has always been a divisive system in this Trade Union, but reality is there's a lot of our members work Payment Plus. Yes, we do have bandits, but we also have some of the most low-paid workers within our Union as well. New starters who, in order to survive, need Payment Plus and this National Executive has always had the same stance. Whatever you earn, doesn't matter what it is, should be pensionable, ready for you when you retire later on in life so you can have a better standard of living.

Like I said, it's not going to be easy. At present, Payment Plus stands at £22, but that's only a temporary fix. That was only brought in by the Prison Service but not agreed with the Pay Review Body. Payment Plus at the moment, under the Pay Review Body stance, is £17 an hour. Now, if we go for this, yes, Leeds are quite right, it would benefit our members in Alpha because, with it being a career average, whatever they earn in that year is put into, want for a better word, their pension pot. Premium, they would have to do it for three years because it's the best three-year wage in 13 years, and Classic, it's the best wage in the last three years, so they would have to hammer it. So, this is going to benefit our members in Alpha, not so much in others. So, that is why the NEC would like you to accept this motion, for us to go and try and get Payment Plus made pensionable because then, that would pave the way for every payment that you receive from the employer to be made pensionable. Conference, please support.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave, do you wish to reply?

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: No.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, then. All those in favour, please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. Motion 49, Leeds. Secunder for Leeds, please?

LIVERPOOL DELEGATES: Liverpool.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you.

DAVE PURSGLOVE – BRANCH CHAIR, LEEDS: Chair, NEC, Conference. I would like to withdraw that motion, based on the wording and we'll put it in again next year with a review.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Permission to withdraw, Conference? Thank you, that's withdrawn. Motion 50, Edinburgh.

JONNY MCILWAINE – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRISON SERVICE COLLEGE, NORTHERN IRELAND: Point of order Mr Chair. Mr Chair, NEC, colleagues. This point of order isn't to do with the next motion, so apologies if there's any confusion for that. This point of order is for the Northern Ireland Committee to raise our objection to the selection of Mr John McDonnell as guest speaker at this Conference. Mr McDonnell has been a supporter of the Provisional IRA in the past and that's an organisation that killed many of our colleagues in Northern Ireland. Some of those were killed because they were members of the Prison Officers' Association. I'm thinking of Dezzy Irvine, Branch Secretary of the Maze, who was shot whenever he was leaving a POA meeting, and I'm thinking about Brian Armour, who was the Vice Chair in Northern Ireland, murdered in a car bomb by the IRA. Mr McDonnell said that it's about time we honoured the people who took part in the armed struggle, for it was their bombs and bullets and the sacrifice of Bobby Sands that brought the British to the negotiating table. Well, Conference, it was those bombs and those bullets that Mr McDonnell thinks are so honourable that murdered our friends and colleagues in Northern Ireland. So, we're asking the Chair and the NEC to reconsider the invitation to Mr McDonnell to address this Conference because we think he's not appropriate. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you for raising that. Total respect with everything you've said, but he is an honorary life member, he is an invited guest and unless anybody's got evidence to prove that he supported the IRA in the past, you leave me nowhere to go. So, as an invited guest and a guest speaker, I'm going to say if you don't want to listen to him, then don't listen to him.

JONNY MCILWAINE – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRISON SERVICE COLLEGE, NORTHERN IRELAND: Thank you, Mr Chair. No, we will not be listening to Mr McDonnell and I would encourage anybody else who feels the same and objects to the IRA not to listen to him either. So, thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Once again, total respect for everything you've said and if anybody doesn't want to listen to John McDonnell then that's your choice, don't listen to him.

We shall continue with motion 50, Edinburgh. Do we have a seconder for Edinburgh? Scrubs.

MOTION 50

That Conference accept that when a Section 11 application is made HR should not be required to submit a report stating whether they support the request and instruct the Executive to negotiate a change in policy.

EDINBURGH

MARK MEIKLE – BRANCH CHAIR, EDINBURGH: Morning Conference. Apologies for such a mundane motion after the last speaker, thanks for that. The motion reads, 'That Conference accept that when a Section 11 application is made HR should not be required to submit a report stating whether they support the request and instruct the Executive to negotiate a change in policy'. Colleagues, this motion refers to our Injury Benefit award under Section 11 of the Civil Service Code, i.e. an injury mainly attributable to work. When an application is submitted, normally to avoid half pay or to have the period excused from the absence policy, the local HR team are required to submit a report of the incident. I have no problem with that because we need to know what the incident is about. However, they are asked to submit whether they support the application or not. This shouldn't be for our HR departments to decide whether they support it. This should be a medical decision and it should be the medical advisors that we have that decide whether it's attributable to an injury at work. It must and it would influence anybody looking at whether your HR are supporting it or not, it should purely be a medical opinion. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter.

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC against the motion. Section 11 award became the Civil Service Injury Benefit award, as Mark from Edinburgh explained. The current procedure asks for an input from HR advisors. When it goes to permanent injury benefit award, the person applying for the award is also asked to give a personal statement. The HR advisor at present, on Part 2 of the IBIS1, is asked for a number of things. They're asked for a statement accepting or disputing the applicant's personal statement. The HR advisor is asked to explain the reasons for disputing any element of the personal statement. Also, any details of any grievance procedures and the outcome. The HR advisor is also asked to provide the member's job description, their sickness absence details, clearly identifying the date that the relevant absence relating to the injury started. They're also asked the annual rate of basic pay, the date of injury, including any regular pensionable allowances. The HR BP is not asked to give any medical opinion. In order to complete the CSIBS1 Part 2, somebody from the establishment has to give that information.

We understand where Edinburgh are coming from on the HR advisor being asked to comment on the personal statement. When the award eventually goes to becoming a permanent award, there are two criteria. Is the injury permanent? Obviously, that decision lies with the Scheme Medical Adviser. Did the injury occur whilst carrying out the official duties of a civil servant or was the injury sustained as a consequence of being a civil service? The percentage of the award depends on the level of impairment caused by the injury and the length of the member's service. Now, again, a lot of those details have to be given from someone within the establishment. The Civil Service Injury Benefit process is a civil service-wide process with a standardised set of civil service forms. We believe that it would be too difficult for the NEC to achieve a change on those forms and we ask you to reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Edinburgh to reply.

MARK MEIKLE – BRANCH CHAIR, EDINBURGH: Conference. I accept very much what our NEC member is saying, however I thought I was very clear. Of course HR have to submit what your sickness record is and all the other details that were laid out. The bit that we have a problem with, and it's quite clear in the motion, they state whether they support it or not, which makes them give an opinion whether they think you're at it or not, basically. It's a medical decision, it goes to an independent person to decide, if your HR manager says do they support it or not. All the rest of the information's fine. You need the information, you need the background, you need your sick record but there shouldn't be an HR manager's... who I work with very closely, and I spoke to her and she's confused why she's asked whether she supports it or not. That's the one part of it that we can get rid of and try and achieve. Please go for success, Mr Chair.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Oh, I will.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Believe you me. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against. Success, carried.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: 51, Wymott. Seconded by Garth, thank you. Conference, this is an explanation so there's no need for a vote.

MOTION 51

That the NEC to explain to Conference as to why, in many instances, it takes twelve months to receive an update on motions which have been passed at Conference and advise if this process can be streamlined or improved with an interim report or a verbal update to the membership.

WYMOTT

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: Mr Chair, NEC, Conference, ladies and gentlemen. Motion 51 reads, 'That the NEC explain to Conference as to why, in many instances, it takes twelve months to receive an update on motions which have been passed at Conference and advise if this process can be streamlined or improved with an interim report or a verbal update to the membership'.

First of all, congratulations to the recent victors in the NEC elections but carrying that point just a little further, we actually have less than 9% buy-in by our members in those elections. Isn't it in our interest to ensure that we update members as soon as reasonably possible as to what exactly we are doing? Wouldn't this go some way towards improving that buy-in, drawing our members ever closer together and re-garnering their interest?

Last year, on this podium, in the in-camera session, I spoke about my concerns for the future of the POA, saying that in my opinion, in many cases, we were losing relevance with an awful lot of our members and to turn that around, we needed some victories. Didn't have to be earth-shattering ones, what we needed to do is we needed to prove our relevance to our members. Yesterday morning, in an excellent speech by the National Chair, he listed quite a considerable amount of successes. Isn't it in our own interests to make sure that our members hear about these successes as soon as possible and make sure that that reaches every single member as soon as possible? Over to the NEC.

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. Garth are happy to second this motion because over the years, I've constantly pushed for improvement in how our NEC communicates with branch officials and this is one element I'd like to see improved. When a branch takes a motion to Conference, it's usually because an issue is relevant and ongoing at that establishment and important to the members there. I know we sometimes joke about how hard it is to get motions passed at Conference and when they are passed, it is a relief to that branch. However, that is not the end of it. More often than not, a branch doesn't hear anything about that motion again or how it is progressing or any outcomes or feedback that they can pass on to their members. This has to improve. The yearly report back for Conference appears to the average branch official like it's been written up the month before Conference with a standard copy and paste answer. Again, that has to improve. Branches need proper feedback in the months after Conference, as to what, where and how their motion has been put to the employer and how negotiations have progressed or even failed. We need a more detailed feedback than we currently get at the moment. This motion asks if the process can be streamlined or improved and I am happy to volunteer to work with any NEC members in order to come up with an improved system of communication regarding feedback on passed Conference motions. I hope our NEC support what me and Glen have brought today.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Explaining for the NEC, Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, giving an explanation as to why, in many instances, it takes twelve months to receive an update on motions. Colleagues, firstly I'll point out that when a motion is passed at Conference, that motion doesn't belong to that branch, it becomes Conference policy. So, when the motion's been passed, they are then given to the relevant Whitley Chairs of the Executive for us to take to HMPPS. Whitley meetings for each committee generally take place once a quarter, so by the time the motions are given to HMPPS, they are dealt with by HMPPS and finally come back to us, it's near on twelve months and we are preparing for Conference again. That's why, Conference, the report-backs come back at the following Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Glen, would you like to reply?

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: No.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Happy with that explanation? Thank you. Move on to 52, Hewell. Seconder for Hewell? Thank you. That's Wymott.

MOTION 52

That Conference instruct that the NEC update the membership with quarterly updates on the progress of outstanding Conference Motions.

HEWELL

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 52 reads, ‘the NEC update the membership with quarterly updates on the progress of outstanding Conference Motions’. Hewell branch have brought this motion to Conference in order to give the membership some hope and understanding of ongoing progress with motions passed by Conference. This also includes motions unachieved after twelve months.

Last Conference, Hewell brought a motion regarding the abolition of the current fitness test, which meant different things to a lot of people at Hewell. However, the first we as branch representatives understood of the progress made by the NEC was the report-backs provided a few weeks ago, prior to this Conference, which was ‘motion unachieved’. To our membership at Hewell, this has been a deflating experience for some, as another motion becomes effectively consigned to the archives in history. Last year was similar in many ways from my previous Conference experiences, as the Hewell delegates made a triumphant return from Conference having put up a positive argument for an issue experienced or an idea for improvement suggested by our branch members, which were argued for and accepted by you, Conference. However, the triumphant return has been akin to the return from Munich in 1938, proclaiming, ‘Peace in our time’. But, as time progresses, we’re feeling a bit of a fraud for having potentially given false hope, however genuinely meant and intended. Being informed and in a position to potentially further support the NEC in achieving motions would support us as branch representatives, giving relevance to Conference business to our own branch members. Please support the motion.

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: Mr Chair, NEC, Conference, ladies and gentlemen, speaking in support of Hewell’s motion. Just looking through the report-back booklet, we’ve had a report-back on a motion that we brought last year – I can’t remember the exact wording or the number of it, I’ve not had a chance to have a look this morning, just come straight up to the podium – regarding the perilous state of healthcare at HMP Wymott. It’s resulted in an appalling level of service to prisoners, it’s caused utter chaos with staff, it’s added to all sorts of stress levels, etc., etc. The report-back that we’ve got, that it is currently outstanding with HMPPS, well, that’s not good enough. I know it’s HMPPS’s fault, it’s not these people’s fault, but still, if we’d have been getting a quarterly update on that, we could’ve put more pressure on from our end. There’s also more we could’ve done. We would expect the employer to live up to their responsibilities and it would’ve been nice to get a reminder and an update on where that was going, but it didn’t come. So, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC. Firstly, thank you Glen, for your congratulations. We understand the sentiment and the motion for Conference, but we’re seeking rejection. We currently have, and I counted them up, 842 items of policy on this document, this is our document, from Conferences past and present. The oldest motion on there is from 1993, colleagues. Now, the wording of the motion doesn’t stipulate a timeframe. If we went back to give you a quarterly update on every item of policy that we’ve got for this Union, we’d be hamstrung. We understand why the motion’s on the paper but, again, with 842 items of policy, it’s unachievable and we’ll be doing it at the detriment of other work. I’ve already diarised a meeting for the end of this month, Conference, to get the Standing Orders Committee together to look at this policy document to see what we can do. Conference paper 1 talks about restructuring – part of the terms of reference is that. So, Conference, with that explanation, I’m asking you to reject the motion with the promise of there will be work done. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell to reply? No. Straight to the vote, then. All those in favour, please show. Against. Thank you, Conference, that’s lost. We have the results from the card vote, motion 47(a). Number of votes in favour – 10,100, number of votes against – 12,928 so that motion is lost. Moving on to motion 53, Elmley. Secunder please for Elmley? Thank you, Feltham.

MOTION 53

That Conference instruct the NEC that in all future negotiations with the employer where a ballot of the members is required, a separate ballot should be held for each agenda item, rather than multiple agendas on 1 ballot paper.

ELMLEY

JOHN LYNN – BRANCH CHAIR, ELMLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 53 reads, ‘That the Conference instruct the NEC that in all future negotiations with the employer where a ballot of the members is required, a separate ballot should be held for each agenda item, rather than multiple agendas on one ballot paper’. In essence, Conference, I’m asking that we get exactly that. This was raised on the back of having to ballot on our pay, which was tied into a reduction of our pensionable age from 68 to 65. We, as a membership, rejected that offer. Why would we reject a pay increase and a reduction in pensionable age? Well, it’s because there was a caveat on that, which reduced the pensionable age from 68 to 65, or three years off state pension age. We rejected it because we as a membership actually look after not only our

current members but our future ones. So, in essence, we could've taken a pay increase today to make our younger colleagues work to the age of 69 if the state pension age was increased to 72. So, with that, can we make it from this day forward that the employer knows from the outset that we will only ballot for one agenda item all told. Please accept the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC, asking me to reject this motion and I thank Elmley for bringing it, but if Conference passes this motion, you simply tie our hands. Ballots almost always follow a number of meetings between us and the employer and during these meetings, both sides put forward proposals and, in the immortal words of the Stones, you don't always get what you want. Many people believe that negotiations are all or nothing and there has got to be a winner and a loser and nothing can be further from the case. Whilst the goal of negotiation is to get what you want, the fact is that the best deals and the ones that stick incorporate terms, ideas and requests from both parties. If we apply this logic to ourselves, separate ballots will inevitably lead for members voting for what we want and voting against what the employer wants and that will simply lead to stalemate, nobody will get anything. The HMPPS have just invited us into talks on a number of very, very important matters for our members. Don't tie our hands, Conference. Please reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Elmley to reply.

JOHN LYNN – BRANCH CHAIR, ELMLEY: Conference, can we cast our mind back to the opening statement by Mr Chair, which was that he wants reduction in pensionable age to 60, no strings attached. How can he do that without this motion? Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Take it to the vote. All those in favour, please show. Against. That motion is lost. We're now on to 53(a), which is Appeal 2 from Hewell. Do we have a seconder for Hewell? Thank you. Feltham.

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference, with what I'm sure you'll be pleased to know is the last of our motions. Motion 53(a) reads, 'That Conference instructs the NEC to bring its current NEC election postal process into the modern electronic era, as used by major political parties'. Colleagues, the postal returns in the just completed NEC election was of 9% and are very similar to the returns of previous elections. 10% of that 9% were spoiled returns. This poor return comes at a cost of over £20,000. I've been asking my branch the reason why this doesn't happen as you would normally expect and the reasons from the branch for not voting are several and range from, 'I didn't realise the closing date', 'I don't feel my vote matters', 'I'm far too busy', 'I don't use the postal system anymore'. We have to engage with our membership to give our elected leadership credibility. To criticise the membership purely for their disinterest shows a lack of engagement and empathy with our colleagues on the shop floor. In an attempt to reverse the electoral apathy of our membership, the Hewell branch have proposed this motion, which would bring us into line with NEC elections for major political parties. If it's good enough for them then it's good enough for us. Our current voting system is from the last century and we need to continue to modernise in order to remain relevant and improve engagement with our branch membership. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: NEC, Conference, asking you to support this motion. Conference, national elections are an embarrassment. They have regular poor turnouts with the majority of the time only 2000+ members voting, when we have a membership base of over 25,000+. Conference, we need to change the way we elect our NEC. How many times do we see election envelopes cast aside in pigeonholes at our establishments? In fact, going back some years ago, I remember appealing to the General Secretary in regard to the election of a National Chair when Colin Moses failed to get re-elected by a small majority, myself finding 200 ballot letters thrown into the corner of the Correspondence Office. Something has to change, Conference. Social media is the future, social media's the new way elections are being run in this country and this Union needs to be looking at the electronic ways for our members to vote at national elections. So, please support this motion.

<Applause>

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, OAKWOOD: Chair, NEC, Conference, G4S, on facility time. Please support this motion. We need things to change. 9% is just diabolical. How are we supposed to get a proper elected NEC when we've got no members interested in what we believe and what we stand for? My members, they looked at elections and they all

said, 'Well, we thought it was just local elections. We weren't interested because it just says, "electoral roll" and it's off the piece of paper'. They're not interested. They threw it away in the bin. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Laura, as a seconder, you get the opportunity to speak directly after the main speaker.

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Well, that's a bit embarrassing then, isn't it?

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Don't worry about it. It's a learning curve, don't worry about it.

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: I'll go back down then!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Well, you can sit up there if you want.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: It's up to you. Is that a comfier seat?

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. The main problem with this particular motion is that it's the anti-Trade Union law TULRCA that says we are obliged to use a paper balloting system. Now, that means we have to change the law. I don't think our NEC are going to be able to change the law on their own. Of course, as Trade Unionists, if we went on a campaign march, as I saw so many of you on Saturday with the TUC call behind our branch banners, then perhaps a big turnout of POA members wanting to see a change in the law and protesting that this law is unjust, then maybe we'd be in with a shout. But the law as it currently stands, the anti-Trade Union law, says no, we can't. So, just bear that in mind. If you pass this motion, that's fine but don't rely on the NEC being able to change the law of this country. It's done by voters, our members and by its branch officials telling them, 'Well, if you want to get rid of anti-Trade Union laws, you're going to have to vote against parties that support them'. So, just bear that in mind when you vote on this.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan for the NEC.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much, Chair, Conference and thank you very much, Wandsworth, for your eloquent input there in reminding delegates out there about the anti-Trade Union legislation. You heard me talk about it during my finance speech and I'll now quote you the legislation under that anti-Trade Union law. It's called the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, Section 51 and it governs National Executive Committee elections.

Why did the Tories put it in? Because they wanted to see poor turnouts. They wanted to destabilise Trade Unions. That's the reality. It's not just this Union that suffers from poor turnouts in ballots. We would love nothing more than to have electronic balloting and so forth, the way that political parties do that, and when you go to your Council elections and general elections. Yes, it would be nice to do that but it's not this Executive's fault that Thatcher put that legislation in and it's just been tightened up even more by the Trade Union Act of 2016, and Stewart is absolutely correct. If you want to change it, start campaigning and vote for a party that isn't going to be anti-Trade-Union and in my mind there is only one at that moment that ain't anti-Trade Union.

So, the reality is, there is nothing that we can do about this. We are governed by that anti-Trade Union legislation and until that is repealed, we are not going to move forward. We will continue through the TUC, which we are at this minute in time and I've got to say, we have put information out in the past and this has been debated time and time again at Conference. It doesn't seem to make any difference because some people are just not understanding that legislation. We are governed by that, unfortunately, and people use it against us as well. People quote from the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. They cherry-pick the bits that they like and cherry-pick everything else.

So, the reality is, we're asking you to vote against it. We're actually asking you, as well. Yes, it's an education process with our members and I accept what Hewell was saying; that sometimes the members can't be bothered, there's apathy out there. But it's our job, as a National Executive Committee, and it's also our job as local officials to educate our grassroots

members and tell them that it's their Trade Union, it's their money that's been spent on ballots and it's up to them as to who they want to see elect them on the top table. It's not unique, you know. You look at other Trade Unions' returned ballots, it ranges between 10 and 15%, sometimes it's lower than that, but there's only people to blame for that and it's the Union members themselves, for not actually filling out their ballot paper, putting an 'x' in the box and posting it. It takes five seconds.

Until we can get the legislation changed collectively through the Trade Union Movement, then I'm afraid the legislation is here to stymie us. So, the reality is, the only people that we've got to work with in that framework at this minute in time... because if we went to electronic balloting, then someone might run to the Certification Office and say we've run an illegal ballot. That's the reality of things. If we don't do it correctly, then we open ourselves up for spurious complaints and so forth. I would much rather a show of hands, quite frankly, on a whole variety of issues, but we are governed by the anti-Union legislation, make no doubt about that. And it's just been strengthened by this Conservative Government that are propped up by the DUP, make no mistake about that. Thank you.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Conference, with all due respect to Steve Gillan, we should be actively seeking to change the law from 1992, which is from last century. We're not blaming the NEC for the current situation; we're asking to actively go and change the current situation. I don't accept there is nothing I can do. There's always something you can do. I remember somebody behind me stood on this podium and said, 'When I get up there, we can at least try and when I get up there, I will be trying'. Well, go on then, try.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, then, Conference. All those in favour, please show. Against. That motion's lost. 54, Feltham. Secunder for Feltham. Thank you.

MOTION 54

That Conference recognises that the POA is an exemplary employer when it comes to pay and terms and conditions of employed staff. Additionally, conference recognises that with the POA suffering year on year financial deficits and declining membership numbers that this places this great union at risk for future generations, both members and employed staff.

Therefore Conference instructs that the current incumbents within the roles defined as;

Finance Officer

Assistant Secretaries (inc.N.I. & Scotland)

Deputy General Secretary

General Secretary

Will receive no further or future pay rises or other financial or personal incentives to carry-out their role as the current remuneration packages are sufficient.

FELTHAM

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Morning Conference. Conference, NEC, Chair. Motion 54 reads, 'That Conference recognises that the POA is an exemplary employer when it comes to pay and terms and conditions of employed staff. Additionally Conference recognises that with the POA suffering year on year financial deficits and declining membership numbers that this places this great Union at risk for future generations, both members and employed staff.'

Therefore Conference instructs that the current incumbents within the roles defined as: Finance Officer, Assistant Secretaries (inc.N.I. & Scotland), Deputy General Secretary, General Secretary, will receive no further or future pay rises or other financial or personal incentives to carry-out their role as the current remuneration packages are sufficient.'

Conference, some may see this as a controversial motion, but the truth is, Conference, that we, as a Union, are bleeding. We are bleeding members, we are bleeding revenue. We have lost over 6,200 prison officers from 2016 to 2017. Many of us in this room who are on pre-F&S have seen little or hardly any pay rises over the last eight years, or since 2010. We need to live within our means as a Trade Union, set a good example to our members, many of whom are financially struggling due to the current pay restraints imposed by the Tories since 2010. How can we justify such huge salaries and pay awards to the very people that are struggling to make ends meet and pay their POA Union subscriptions? Some members are even struggling to pay their POA Union subscriptions because of the high cost of living, especially in the South East and London area.

Here are some examples of current salary scales our full-time officials are currently receiving. Finance Officer, currently receiving a salary of £56,789 plus expenses. Assistant Secretaries, including Northern Ireland and Scotland, currently

receiving a salary between £49,000 to £59,000 plus expenses. Deputy General Secretary, currently on £71,639 plus expenses. General Secretary, current salary of £78,659 plus expenses. The NEC need to set a good example, to say to our membership, 'We feel your pain, we understand your pain and suffering and we will not accept any more pay rises because the pay we've got now is quite suitable'. We are a small to medium-sized Union, we cannot spend drastic money on this kind of pay scales, it's not sustainable. Conference, please support the motion.

<Applause>

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. Conference, I urge you to reject this motion. I acknowledge the sentiment brought by the Feltham branch, however this motion cannot be passed. As mentioned yesterday by Steve Gillan in the Finance Officer Report, membership is increasing and income to the Union has increased. The POA continue to be a very relevant Trade Union. We have a wealth of experience and knowledge amongst the full-time employed officials on the NEC and I'm guessing any one of them could walk into a job within another Trade Union. If this motion is passed, we are opening up the door to lose the plethora of knowledge and experience sitting on the stage behind me. We simply cannot allow that to happen.

I acknowledge that we may not know what the full-time officials do week in and week out and that is something I've spoken on in the past, in regard to improving communication, but asking for pay restrictions is ludicrous. As Trade Unionists, we surely cannot support a motion calling for a pay cap. We've been fighting for years against the Tory Government and their imposed pay cap on the public sector. How hypocritical would it be if we voted in favour of a motion imposing a pay cap on our own officials? Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference. The opening part of this motion says, 'We recognise that the POA is an exemplary employer' and then the motion continues to say, 'But we're going to put a pay cap on some of our employees. Not all of them, some of them'. Now, the question of whether our NEC full-time employees actually give value for money is for another arena, I would say, but where can we go when we're attacking ourselves? These people behind me, I'll give them a verbal kicking and everything, they deserve it and I would expect anybody else to do the same. But on this, this, I'm sorry, it's ludicrous. If you want enemies, watch Prime Minister's Questions. There are plenty of targets down the left-hand side. That's the enemy, colleagues. It is discriminatory and therefore, I don't believe it can be passed.

As regards membership numbers, I don't know. We have, in our branch, an increase in membership but we have a decrease in some areas of membership. We have more to be done, but that's down to us, that's down to branch officials. That's down to getting out there, speaking to our branch and speaking to people who aren't in our branch and pointing out why they should be in the Union. But seriously, we cannot pass this. It's a discriminatory motion which would impact some employees of the Union while leaving others untouched. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

PAUL MALLIBAND – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRESTON: Chair, NEC, Conference. The first thing I saw when I read this motion was 'Trades dispute with the GMB'. I used to be a member of the GMB and I was a branch official. I understand that most of our full-time employees, etc. are members of that Union. It says in the opening statement, as colleague's just pointed out, that we're an exemplary employer. Are we, are we really? I wonder what the working week is of these people that we appear to be listing to attack and victimise going forward? Our working week is 37, 39, 41 hours. Is that what we expect of them, when we're ringing them up at 2 o'clock in the morning? People need remunerating for what we expect from them and what we expect is the best from our officials, and that's what we get, I believe, even if we disagree with them occasionally. Who's next? The administration team? I've got news for you. If Michael Spurr had tabled this, we'd be lodging SFCs. We are a Trade Union and we set the standard that we expect employers to respond to when we're asking them for things. To put a pay cap, which is exactly what *they've* done for the last seven years, which we've moaned about constantly and quite rightly, is unbelievable. In fact, it's third world stuff, isn't it? This motion needs to be rejected by Conference.

<Applause>

JIM MCCABE – BRANCH SECRETARY, BARLINNIE: Chair, Conference. I came to urge you to reject this motion, but just so I get it right, we're Union members, we're employing people to go and get us better terms and conditions, but we, as a Union, are telling these employees, 'No, we're not increasing your terms and conditions'. Exactly what we're sending them out to do. If you go further, for what we stand for, the POA will ensure it's regarded as an exemplary employer, except we're actually not an exemplary employer if this gets passed. We're going to cap what people can earn. Also, until when? Because it doesn't say, at the end of the motion that this is for a year or two years or three years. Until when, forever? Just because somebody's jealous that somebody's getting better travel money, overnight subs? No, this motion has got to be rejected please.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, guests, speaking on behalf of the NEC, speaking against the motion. Conference, I think it's a sad, sad day that we see a motion like this on our Conference paper. Trade Union members saying that we shouldn't be giving a pay rise to our employees, or some of our employees? The motion says we have a declining membership. Neil's correct. When moving the Finance Report, the General Secretary told us there's a 400 increase in membership last year. The motion says that the POA are suffering year-on-year financial deficits. That's also not true. The General Secretary's told us there was a surplus last year. So, Conference, the POA isn't at risk for future generations. Who decides that the current remuneration package is sufficient? What would we be saying to HMPPS if they said to us, 'We're not giving anyone a pay rise because we think the Prison Officer remuneration package is sufficient'? What would we say then? The POA employees have a recognised Trade Union themselves, the GMB. I'm sure they'd have a take on this view. Conference, we're a Trade Union. We're supposed to be protecting our workers' pay and our workers' conditions. How can we do that when we're not even looking after our own employees? Conference, reject the motion.

<Applause>

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Thank you, Jackie Marshall. They said there's a surplus within the POA. I'm a bit confused, actually, 'cause I've just had a look at the POA accounts. Stuff in the Gatelodge, it's for everyone to see, it's blatantly there and I'll give an example. I think the Union is struggling financially. £200,000 was transferred from the relief fund this year to make the POA balance look like it had achieved a surplus of £134,000. However, the reality of the financial position is observed by looking at the balance sheet and if, in layman's terms, the number is less than the number last year, then we have costs and expenses that outweigh revenue. In the case with the most recent accounts, until December 2017, we are down £96,000 from 2016, meaning that our expenses are higher than our actual income by that amount. This has been an ongoing, continued thing for several years with the balance sheet steadily reducing. We must act on these warning signs if the POA is to survive for future generations and be able to sustain employment for many people that we are employing on our members' behalf. We are actually making a loss. We are losing members. We've only actually gained 400 members. Look how many prison officers we lost in the last two years, 6,200. Let's have a reality check. Please support my motion, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, then. All those in favour of this motion, please show. Against. Thank you, Conference, that's lost.

Motion 55, Feltham. Do we have a seconder please? Thank you.

MOTION 55

That Conference instructs the NEC to review the branch official training package and ensure that it is fit for purpose and accessible for all branch officials. To evidence this the NEC compile a list of trained branch officials and untrained branch officials to be disclosed to each branch and addressed if necessary, with a view to have all branch officials trained by Conference 2019.

FELTHAM

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Conference, NEC. Motion 55, 'That Conference instructs the NEC to review the branch official training package and ensure that it is fit for purpose and accessible for all branch officials. To evidence this the NEC compile a list of trained branch officials and untrained branch officials to be disclosed to each branch and addressed if necessary, with a view to have all branch officials trained by Conference 2019'.

Colleagues, we as a Union locally, need to be more robust and proactive. To achieve this state we need to review how we, as a Union, can improve our Union Rep current training package. With a surge in incidents and violence within our prison estate, this will lead to more investigations, staff sickness and increase disciplinary investigations, disciplinary hearings and capability hearings. We have felt, and I've seen this at first-hand, we are seeing an SMT around the country that are inconsistent, unable to follow mandatory action within their own policies – we've discussed that earlier on.

I've also come across managers that don't even know what mandatory actions within the PSIs and the PSOs are. Shocking, but the team seem to ignore everything. We are seeing managers ignoring Health & Safety laws and employment. One can argue maybe management are becoming difficult through deregulation, also known as autonomy. These people will have more power and that is quite scary because they're ignoring everything we've got now and Employment law and Health & Safety law, they'll end up ignoring that because they're so ignorant. We cannot allow this.

As a Union, we need to become more robust and effective and ensure that our local reps are given the best training. To represent our members who pay you for this service through their subscriptions, we need to ensure that we have many

local reps trained, prepared, engaged in gaining the valuable knowledge, understanding along with experience needed, and also feel confident in carrying out their as Trade Union Reps. Let us improve, overcome and adapt to the challenges we face ahead, colleagues. Conference, please support this motion.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning Conference, Chair. Unfortunately, we're going to ask you to reject this motion on the basis that it is unachievable. It says here, 'with a view to have all branch officials trained by Conference 2019'. On an average that we have seven branch officials for most establishments, that's a huge number of officials that would need training within a very short period of time, but we're also reliant upon the employer to provide the facility time for us to train our officials. I can fully understand the idea of the motion itself and that is, we should always progress as a Trade Union. We should ensure that our training and the skills of our branch officials is up-to-date and sufficient for the day and the work that we require of them. However, it's quite unachievable, we just cannot achieve this motion. So, therefore, please reject.

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, OAKWOOD: Chair, NEC, Conference. The date is unachievable, let's be honest. I did my branch official training in 2013 and what benefit was it to me in 2013 in the private sector, learning about public sector ideas and ideology and policies? Waste of my time, waste of my colleagues' time. So, us in the Private Sector Committee, that was addressed through the Committee, that we have put in a package for proper training, generic training, which I believe the NEC are going to start this year. So, moving forward, there is a positivity that we all will be able to understand each other's policies and procedures. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you, Chair. NEC, Conference, speaking on behalf of the Executive, seeking rejection. Dave from Elmley set out one of the biggest hurdles that we face in this and that is to get everybody trained by 2019. Absolutely impossible. The cost of doing this is not a problem. If we want the Branch Official training to be on every week, we'll get as many people as we can there, we'll get the facility time, happy days. Me and Joe will go to the residential area, spend a year there, we'll train everybody but we wouldn't do any other work because it's a full-time job doing that.

Looking at the issue, Jane's talked about the fact that when she did her training, and I couldn't quite hear whether it was 2013 or '15, but we review the Branch Official training after every single training session. We talk to the delegates who'd been there, we get the feedback on what was good, what was bad, what needs to be changed and we've moved away from using Prison Service policies and tried to use generic policies to talk about the principles of what an investigation is, what a disciplinary is. We've also affiliated to the GFTU, so that any member can go on training at any time that they want and they have thousands and thousands of courses on throughout the course of year. And they pay for them, you just need to apply. The list has been sent out on a circular, it's available on the website, so if people feel that they can't get on Branch Official training or Advanced Branch Official training and/or the new Health & Safety course that Joe's developing... we go over to Northern Ireland and we train delegates in Northern Ireland. Scotland do their own training within the SNC, that's quite right and proper, and me and Joe, along with the Executive, deliver three training courses a year, two Initial and one Advanced, and we would love to do more, but the reality is, it's about time, it's about facility time. The spirit of the first part of this motion, Lak, is absolutely superb because we need to do that.

The other thing, you all had the GDPR training and so we're going to have to be really careful about when we share your information about people's personal details going forward. So, we're not even sure if we could actually do a list of everybody and share that with you at this time. We'll need to get clarity on that. We do compile lists of who's done training, many of you have done it more than once because it's changed and you've said that it's changed. So, with those issues, Conference, we would ask you to reject this motion and allow the NEC to deliver training as we see that it's there, taking on board your feelings when you attend the training so that we can seek improvements, not once but every time that we do that. Thank you very much, cheers.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Lak, do you wish to reply?

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Thank you, Steve. I understand that this might be an unachievable target but, to be honest, we need to get as many reps trained as possible. Deregulation is coming, autonomy is coming and Governors will have more powers and control and we need to be best prepared to overcome, improvise and adapt to that. Please support this motion. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour of this motion, please show. Against. Thank you, that motion is lost. Motion 56, Feltham. Secunder for Feltham? Thank you.

MOTION 56

That Conference instruct the NEC to seek legal assistance and take action with regards to the fitness test and new age of pensionable retirement. Ensuring that the test is fit for purpose and safe for all staff.

FELTHAM

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Conference, NEC, Chair. Let's see if I can get it right this time. The motion is, 'That Conference instruct the NEC to seek legal assistance and take action with regards to the fitness test and new age of pensionable retirement. Ensuring that the test is fit for purpose and safe for all staff'. I just want to remind you of the equalities statement from the PSI, which states, 1.4, 'The fitness standards and assessments are based on the requirements of the job which in theory and in practice female and male Officers are required to carry out in the same way. By basing the fitness standards and tests on the requirements of the job, we are ensuring that the deciding factors are job-related and not related to gender or age. Thus, the fitness test strategy is age and gender neutral'.

If the below statement remains as printed in PSO 8625, then the following would apply to the age and fitness level of a fair, 65-plus-year-old, as we are all expected to carry out the same duties, regardless of age or gender. The current fitness test is based on a minimum fitness level of a 60-year-old person. This was introduced in 2001, 17 years ago. 'The Woolf Report recommendation (No. 156) stated that the Prison Service should establish a minimum level of fitness for unified staff.' This is from PSO 8625 1.1.

You will see in front of you some statistics for the bleep test taken in 2016. I put these out last night, so I'm hoping that you have all got them. These results are widely reported on various sites. How can it be right that our employer has ignored the latest statistics, breaching their own policy? I'll tell you why. Because our employer doesn't want to continue with our employment to retirement age. Our employer does discriminate based on age and gender, yet hides behind an equality statement in favour of the outside world seeing them as an equal opportunity employer. The bleep test, as it stands today, is not fit for purpose and safe for all staff. It is time that this great Union challenged the employer through the courts.

A colleague at Feltham dosed herself up on painkillers in order to get through the fitness test, only to collapse at the end, unable to move the next day. I witnessed this happen myself. She is 54 years old and has suffered several injuries to her body in her 18-year career. She is an outstanding prison officer, who is more than capable of performing her duties. According to these statistics, an able-bodied athlete of her age would only achieve a fair score of 3.6 to 4.4 and I'm sure this athlete didn't spend 18 years rolling around the floor, restraining young men and suffering traumatic injuries to her body. This female officer has also been assaulted multiple times during her career, some resulting in very serious injuries. Therefore, she is being discriminated against and forced out of employment, due to her age and her gender. The bleep test needs to be in line with policy and set at 2.2 not 5.4 if the employer insists on continuing with this test. By reducing this, we will ensure that staff stay employed. We must fight this. year on year, motions regarding the fitness test are put forward by branches, yet nothing seems to happen. Let's stop talking and start fighting, for the sake of our membership.

One of my members, when this motion was put forward, sent me an email and asked me to read this to you today. 'For those that might say that everyone else should be able to pass a fitness test because it's not that difficult, I would admit to thinking that myself several years ago. However, what we don't take into account is the illness or injury that we might be experiencing at one stage of our lives that can impact drastically on our ability to pass a test at that point in time. Add the psychological aspect into the mix too and the increased stress and the pressure that that does to us. For me personally, any future changes might be put in place too late, but I strongly support this motion, as I do not want to see my colleagues in the future be in the same situation as I have now found myself in.' I don't want to let her down.

In the report-back booklet in front of you all, the NEC have reported back and I'll quote from there and there's one word that I can't read. 'We have not gained abolition of the fitness test. We have had an acknowledgement from the employer that any quality impact assessment is required to examine the issues that we believe are discriminatory within the current testing process in relation to age. A second alternative test has been introduced and involves a walking on a treadmill. Our opposition to the fitness test remains and we will continue to endeavour to remove the fitness test.' Let's endeavour to take that to the courts. Let's fight this properly and let's win this. Let's not come back next year with motions on the fitness test and talk about it again. Let's do something now. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

ROB SMALLWOOD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HOLLESELEY BAY: Chair, NEC, Conference. I agree with the sentiment of the motion. Unfortunately, we're in a position where this was the policy of the Union. Motion 28, 2015, we sought to challenge it on legality and ethics, the fitness test. Last year, we had a report back from the NEC that we'd taken seven cases to Employment Tribunal and lost every one. Last year, motion 35, it became policy of the Union to abolish the fitness test and we should stick with that policy, Conference. If we start trying to meddle with it, we've got to set aside the policy of abolition. Please reject the motion.

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Hewell branch wish to commend Feltham for their diligent research in this motion, however Conference policy is to abolish the fitness test and this is what we need to be achieving, not approve a motion which enables it. So, purely on this basis and this basis alone, Hewell branch ask Conference to reject. However, what Feltham have done is strengthen the argument for its abolition and I hope the NEC take this evidence forward and pursue the abolition of the fitness test. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC. The NEC is seeking rejection of the motion. Now, I agree with everything Laura's just said. That's why we mustn't forget current policy, Conference, and the current policy of this Union is to get rid of the fitness test once and for all. We discussed it yesterday, motion 43, this fell, from the Feltham branch. As is mentioned, 35 from Hewell seeks the abolition of the Prison Officer Grade fitness test, 41 of 12 from the Rochester branch requires the NEC to have the fitness test removed and replaced with health screening. The NEC are currently awaiting a quality impact assessment from the employer. We're hoping that this will give us evidence as to why the employer should cease testing our fitness.

In conclusion, Conference, current policy mandates us all, each and every one of we, not the NEC, each and every one of we, to seek an end to fitness testing. For that reason, Conference, please reject.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Laura to reply.

LAURA DUGGAN – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference. We've tried, we've been looking to abolish the fitness test. It hasn't worked, we're still here now. Staff are still losing their jobs. The lady who said that it'll be too late for her; if this motion isn't passed, it is going to be too late for her. If the equality statement says that we should be working towards the fitness level of a 65-plus-year-old female, then why should she be working towards the fitness level of a 26-year-old female? It's completely unfair. This test is really unfair and we need to legally challenge this because we're getting nowhere. Unless we legally challenge the fitness test and the fact that it is discriminatory based on gender and age, we're not going to get... please support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll take it to the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show. Against. That motion's lost. 57, Ford. Secunder for Ford please? Leyhill, thank you.

MOTION 57

That all awards given to the membership ie, Cronin Clasp, Steve Oxby and all others have a closing date in line with Annual Conference motions, that being 31st January each year prior to Annual Conference in May of that year.

FORD

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, Conference, invited delegates. This is just a simple motion to tidy up a motion. I'm a branch secretary, I'm not the brightest in the world. Getting this through would help us so we can apply for things on time for our members. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Speaking for the NEC, Chris Donovan.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC. Thank you, Ford, for bringing this motion to Conference. The NEC support this motion, as it does what it says. It brings Conference business closing dates together to one day, that being the 31st of January each year. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Ford, do you wish to come back? All those in favour, please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. 58, Hindley. Secunder for Hindley? Thank you, that's Whatton.

MOTION 58

That Conference instruct the NEC to send a message to Michael Spurr from Conference that the £20,000 bonus he received is nothing more than blood money for the disgraceful and shameful way he allowed the Prison Service to fail.

HINDLEY

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: NEC, Conference. Unfortunately, the guy who I'm going to talk about is not coming until tomorrow morning. I wish he was here now, but our motion reads, 'That Conference instruct the NEC to send a message to Michael Spurr from Conference that the £20,000 bonus he received is nothing more than blood money

for the disgraceful and shameful way he allowed the Prison Service to fail'. Conference, don't be surprised if one day, radicalised public-sector workers smash those Westminster stained glass windows with fire hoses, tasers, batons and dialysis machines, while their fellow public servants, who they elected on the promise to make this a richer and fairer country made it only richer for themselves. But Conference, those that dictate what happens in the public sector are all the same. They love to munch on their pots of gold, while telling the rest of us to sit quietly in the corner and be lucky you have a job. But not all public-sector workers have suffered under the austerity disguise... oh no. Let's take our own leader, for example. A man who said we can't have a pay rise because we ain't got a pot to pee in, but managed to sort himself out a nice little half a daily earner, disguised as a Russian oligarch's £20,000 bonus. For ten years, Conference, we got the pot to pee in. For ten years, we sat there, got nothing more than a couple of one-off payments amounting to a couple of £200, while the man in charge sat around with his family, dining on the untold misery of prison staff across this country.

Conference, I was looking at an old wage slip from 2008, I was on £28,136 per year. Today, ten years later and my wages have risen by just £1,483. That is an absolute disgrace. Ten years' work for a 7p per hour pay rise. Well, Conference, while we're all burnt, or, in Mr Spurr's case, the Prison Service, he was receiving his pound of flesh in £100 banknotes. He allowed this to happen at the expense of staff who were having to beg at foodbanks. He allowed this to happen while staff were being assaulted, spat at, potted and untold unrest in the Prison Service so high that the system was and still is on the brink of collapse. People putting their lives at risk every day while getting nothing in the form of an effective pay rise for ten years, while he pocketed £20,000 worth of bonuses. Conference, it was just like nabbing the last seat on the Titanic rescue boat, ahead of a man who just put you from the sea because unlike him, you have the last First-Class ticket. Conference, the man in charge just took his bonus and pocketed it, probably laughing at us along the way. But do you know, Conference, you can keep your bonus, Mr Spurr, because at least I can look at you in the eye and say, 'Keep your 20 pieces of silver. Enjoy it, spend it wisely because at the end of the day, I know this is nothing more than blood money for the disgraceful and shameful way you've allowed the Prison Service to fail'.

So, Conference, I ask you to support this motion, to send a message back to this man that we know what the money was for and when he sleeps at night while one of his hard-working members of staff are laying in hospital after being assaulted, he should have a thought for the £20,000 he has pocketed because, Conference, he is actually no better than those politicians who claimed we were all in it together. Please support.

<Applause>

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, Conference, NEC, seeking complete and utter support for this motion. On 3rd of March this year, I received a text message off our area rep, Andy Baxter, to inform me that one of our members had been seriously assaulted whilst they were on detached duty at Bedford and it's touch and go. Now, let me tell you, if anything gets the adrenaline going, it's that. The support we've received from everyone behind us has been absolutely outstanding. I'd particularly like to thank Mark Fairhurst, Pete Chapple and Andy Baxter, who's been absolutely brilliant, and all you guys as well. The outpouring of support from all the branches, individually and as a branch, has been absolutely outstanding. We've raised a lot of money and when Tim's well enough, he'll be trying to get onto a holiday. It's going to be a long road back for him. The most disappointing thing is he has heard nothing from our CEO. He's not driven down the M3 to visit him, to show a bit of support for him. He's not written to him, he's not lifted a pen and he's not even lifted a phone to ring him. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Mr Chair, the NEC, Conference. It's me again. The safety exits are there, there and at the back.

<Laughter>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: It's that time of year again when SPDRs are being done and I just happened to be a fly on the wall when Michael Spurr's was done the other day. I can't quote it verbatim but it went a little bit like this.

<Laughter>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: 'So, Michael, we've been through all of the things here and we're down to the last bit here, which is the bonus. So, I'll let you kick this one off and tell us what you think.'

'Well, you know, it's been a tough year but I think we've really done well and I reckon for next year, I should be in the bottom end of the six-digit one this time because I reckon that's what we've done.'

'Oh, OK. So, there are a couple of things the Board want to know about and I'll put it to them and see what you've got to say

about this. Now, last year, you presided over riots at Bedford, Birmingham, Hull, Swaleside and a load of other places and all of this got into the press, was on YouTube, Facebook and everywhere and really put the Prison Service into disrepute and made us look, to be honest, not really clever. What have you got to say about that?’

‘Well, you remember, I did ask for funding to stop all these phones. If they didn’t have this ability to push out this information, the press and the public would never have got to find out about it.’

<Laughter>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: ‘But, hang on, I remember when you put that paper up, didn’t you say that was to stop drugs coming in, to protect victims and to stop gang leaders still running their businesses from prisons?’

‘Well, there’s that as well, but don’t worry. As long as we can stop the public knowing about what’s happening in these prisons, we’ll be alright.’

<Laughter>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: ‘So, now, what about these Unions? They keep kicking my door down and telling us that serious assaults on staff have gone absolutely through the roof.’

‘Well, you know what they say about statistics. Any person can twist it any which way around to come out with these means at the end of the day. Although, I have to sympathise with them. One staff assault is too much, but we have got the absolute solution to this problem. We have got the violence diagnostic tool now and I’m told by the Governors that at the management meetings they have every month, they push out this paperwork, it’s all in colours and everything and they are well impressed.’

<Laughter and applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: And I’ve got to say that these assaults, it’s actually their fault because they now know that all of these assaults, or the majority of them, take place in cells on association periods and at mealtimes. Now that they’ve got that information, this time next year, we won’t be talking about serious assaults on staff because they’ve got all the information now and they can deal with it. You know, we can’t do everything for them. They’ve got to look after themselves a bit.’

‘OK, well, so what about the statistics on Spice? Those are your statistics about the number of incidents in the prisons and all the staff that are going off sick. What would be your response to that?’

‘Well, yes, it has become a little bit of a problem but it is something which we are going to be dealing with. And one of the problems that is coming up, and this VDT tool has got an extra thing to it, too. Now, when we lose control on a wing and all the staff draw batons and that still doesn’t work and they have to withdraw to a place of safety and we put the chains on it, as long as one prisoner’s hit another one, we can just record it as an assault prisoner-on-prisoner. It doesn’t become a concerted indiscipline anymore. So, all of these things that they used to be able to complain about, they can’t complain anymore.’

‘They’re complaining about lack of experienced staff. They’re all leaving, all these closed grades.’

‘Well, actually, you should be seeing that as a positive. Just think of how much they’re costing us. We’re getting all these new staff in at just above the living wage and it’s a Billy Bonus because the majority of them are leaving before they get to 60, so they’re getting a 5% year-on-year loss on their pension. Alright, the Treasury’s gaining on that, not me, but I think you should be rewarding me for this.’

<Laughter>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Now, the only problem, folks, with this motion is, we’re asking the NEC to condemn him for getting a bonus. I can’t stand for that one. I want the NEC to tell him to hand his keys in. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Beat that, Terry.

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Impossible. Chair, Conference, replying to motion 58 for the NEC, obviously in support of this motion. We thank Hindley branch for bringing this motion. I'm not going to cover the part that Steve has covered with regard to pay and Martin's covered his bit and he's mentioned the riots that's been in charge, but I'll cover some of the stuff that Mr Spurr has overseen since his tenure in office that took place in 2010. He came into the post in 2010 and since that point, our Prison Service has gone downhill rapidly. year upon year, we've seen a decline in our service, in our prisons and he doesn't see it as a problem. He doesn't stand up and challenge MPs and say, 'You've got to do something about what's going on in our prisons'. He sits behind his office door and says nothing. We are in a situation now where violence and serious assaults are at an all-time high and it's now an average of 23 of our members who get assaulted every day. Does he come out and say anything in the press about that? No. He shrugs his shoulders as if it's just another day in the office.

We've got acts of self-harm running at levels of 44,000 incidents a year, of self-harm in prisons. Let me tell you something about that, just a little bit of detail about that. Most prisons will have Safer Custody Officers on their profiles to deliver safer custody. Thousands upon thousands of those safer custody hours are being lost every week because the staff in those safer custody departments who are meant to be looking after the most vulnerable are redeployed onto wings in order to unlock prisoners so they can mill about aimlessly and causing problems in assaulting our members in the drive to reach a KPT for out-of-cell hours. I think that is bordering on being criminally negligent on behalf of Governors, who want to put a KPT of out-of-cell time before trying to prevent self-harm. We've seen year-upon-year nearly every HMCIP that comes out is a negative one. Anything done about it? Absolutely not.

The NEC and Steve Gillan, your General Secretary, has gone out in the press, condemning everything that Michael Spurr has overseen and it won't be long, colleagues, before we see someone in the papers who's lost their life in a prison. That nearly happened at Bedford. What did we get from Michael Spurr? Very little. A little bit on the intranet, saying it was terrible but he's not out there in the press, telling everybody. They haven't got a clue how to resolve this problem. He will tell you we've criticised F&S and we've criticised benchmark. He'll tell you that we voted that in. Yeah, we did, but we didn't vote to give them carte blanche to allow 7,000 experienced prison officers mass exodus on a VEDS package. We didn't vote for that. Those staff should've been left to leave through natural wastage in order that we weren't left in the mess that we've been left in through having to flood prisons with inexperienced staff and having no experienced staff there for those staff to learn from. It's been an absolute disgrace and we are more than happy to send that message to Michael Spurr and we thank Hindley for bringing it. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: I have a sneaky suspicion this may get carried.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour? Any against? Thank you, Conference. Conference, I hand over to Steve Gillan, who has an announcement.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you, Chair, thank you, Conference. Just the issue about the point of order raised by one of the delegates in Northern Ireland. I just want to say that it wasn't a point of order because you passed Standing Orders on Tuesday. Point two is the point of order must deal with the conduct or procedure of the debate, not in relation to speakers. However, I have got a statement to make on behalf of the Executive. The reality is we weren't going to withdraw the invitation for our guest speaker and honorary life member, John McDonnell, but John had made his way up here, was waiting in the office. I told him of the reaction from some quarters of Conference and John has asked me to pass the following to you; that he wishes all POA members every success. He will continue to work hard in pursuing our aims and objectives on the right to strike, getting rid of the anti-Trade Union legislation and bringing private prisons back into the public sector. He doesn't want to disrupt Conference or cause any controversy, so therefore, he has declined to speak at our invitation because he will go back to Parliament. But what he has said is he is more than happy to go to Northern Ireland and speak to the Area Committee to get rid of some of the misinformation that has been put about him by, shall I say, the right-wing media.

The reality is, I don't personally know what the man's views are on a variety of issues, but what I can say is, I think this is a missed opportunity because I think John was going to indicate to Conference some of the things that the Shadow Cabinet have been doing behind the scenes. What I know is, when Colin Moses was National Chair and Brian Caton was General Secretary and I was Vice Chair, we went through a period where the lives... and they still are in danger in Northern Ireland and I remember we were actually going to take Northern Ireland out on strike because of some of the issues that happened. Finlay came across, we went to Millbank in Westminster to try and thrash out a deal on safety and so forth and one of our biggest supporters, whether you like it or not, was John McDonnell back in 2002 and 2003. He was our biggest supporter on safety for Northern Ireland. And you know what, Conference? We all have short memories here because you made him an honorary life member in 2009 for some of the magnificent work that he's done on behalf of this Trade Union. He's spoken

at this Conference on at least three occasions and no-one has uttered a word of objection.

That's the reality. We have few friends in the political world. We will continue having him as a friend because he understands some of the issues that our colleagues in Northern Ireland have mentioned. I don't believe for one minute that John McDonnell is pro-IRA or pro-anyone else, quite frankly, but the reality is that's how he's portrayed. That's why even last year and the year before, when Jeremy Corbyn was invited and he was going to come to this Conference to cite what his views were in relation to the anti-Trade Union legislation, everything that plights us, I withdrew that invitation because I got wind that there was going to be an orchestrated demonstration. I think that's sad but that's democracy as well. It's your Conference, but the reality is, we were not going to withdraw that invitation. John does not want to cause any stir at this Conference, he wants it to be a successful Conference and I just think it's a lost, missed opportunity. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference. We'll break there. Back at 11.40 please.

<End of recording>

<End of Morning Session - Part 1>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Wednesday 16th May, Afternoon Session - Part 2

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we're going to start this session with a guest speaker, Helen Dyer, who's the Director of CASPA, which is life with autism. Helen trained in theatre studies, worked as assistant director, community and education at Sutton Theatres, ran her own theatre company and started at CASPA in 2014 as a drama facilitator, and I have been told she's a trained actress as well. She became passionate about neurodiversity and threw herself into working with the parents who set CASPA up to develop the charity into the amazing organisation it is today. She's undertaken numerous courses and qualifications since working with the Casper children and is proud that CASPA has a strong reputation for effectively supporting some of Bromley's most vulnerable, complex, challenging children and young people. Helen has four children and works fulltime as our CASPA director. The goal is to enable all those with autism, ASDs, neurodiversity, emotional and behavioural difficulties and social and communication disabilities that come into contact with CASPA to be inspired, gain independence, have their voices heard and ultimately be properly integrated into our society, and it's my great pleasure to welcome Helen to our Conference and over to you.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER - HELEN DYER, DIRECTOR, CASPA - LIFE WITH AUTISM

Thank you. Thanks very much. Sorry, I'm just waiting for my thing to come up ... we've got it. Brilliant. OK, so thank you so much for having me here, and thank you, Andy, for inviting me to highlight our work at CASPA. My name is Helen Dyer and I'm the proud director of CASPA. CASPA is a community organisation, an autism charity based in South London, but it's more importantly a community made up of hundreds of children, young people, parents, careers, extended family, colleagues, professionals and many more, all passionate about creating a world for us and our children to live in where difference is celebrated and diversity is cherished, where pain is reduced and where smiles flourish. CASPA, which was originally an acronym of 'Children on the Autistic Spectrum Parents Association' was set up in 2002 by parents who felt that there was no appropriate provision for this specific group of children and young people, where they could learn social skills and develop in order to integrate more fully into society. the majority of children who attend CASPA have an autism spectrum condition and diagnoses include autism, Asperger syndrome, pervasive developmental disorder and ASD. A significant number will also have a secondary diagnosis of ADHD, oppositional defiance disorder, pathological demand avoidance disorder, or other health and behavioural needs. We currently work with around 270 children and young people a week, ages 0 to 25, and they never leave, so some of them are heading towards 30, 31 now, in the London Borough of Bromley. Most of our children and young people have what is known as an invisible disability. You generally cannot see immediately that someone has autism or is neuro-diverse. In other words that their brains work in a way which differs from the majority of people in our society.

At CASPA we don't really call autism a disability because actually it's very often a positive thing, but we know sadly that because of a lack of understanding, tolerance, time and acceptance, our autistic children and adults are disabled by their differences, or rather they're disabled by the people around them who don't understand the differences. If a child has severe autism they fit more easily into a general special needs category. People are sympathetic, give time and energy to support them. There is, of course, more local authority money to support respite and activities for the more severe, but at CASPA we work largely with those grey area children and young people who because of their average or above average academic intelligence are not deemed to be disabled enough to get that kind of support. We work with them *because* they're in this grey area, where self-awareness and intellect can just compound their isolation and feelings of being ostracised. We work with them because there's a gap in provision and services for this group of people who are not afforded the same level of sympathy or empathy by others that a child who's a wheelchair user is, for example. Very often the negative behaviours presented as a result of anxiety, sensory issues or frustration are viewed as naughty and therefore the natural conclusion that people come to is that their parents are bad parents, which is actually far from the truth. Our parents are worried parents, fighting every day to have their child's needs met and for understanding.

Autism is a life-long condition which affects a person's ability to understand social clues, communicate how others expect or want them to or form relationships, all things that we see as inherently human and which without, can make life extremely difficult. The prospects for many of our young children are pretty depressing with 85% of adults with autism in the UK being out of work and therefore relying on benefits to survive. I know there's no good reason for this and I know this does not have to be the case and CASPA is determined to address some of these inequalities by building up the young people, enabling them to believe that they are worthy in this world, that they can and should take their place proudly in our communities and by simultaneously spreading the message about autism and neuro-diversity, by raising awareness and helping the non-autistic world to feel more confident and less *afraid* of including those with autism, ultimately with the goal of achieving true integration. It's easy to make reasonable adjustments for people with physical disabilities, so why is it so difficult to include those with neuro-diversities?

Many of our children and young people are really struggling with meeting the expectations placed on them with schools, in public and even within the family, these frustrations often lead to behaviours that challenge, such as complete withdrawal, aggression, violence, and then as they get older these things can get worse and include depression, leading to reclusiveness, self-harm or even suicide attempts. At CASPA we work to address these issues from a young age by providing an appropriate environment for children and young people to develop in inspirational activities, meet many others like themselves, develop relationships, gain confidence and ultimately have fun, and begin to feel more positive about their future and the possibilities of independence and integration. And I know it works because of feedback like Jenny's, one of our young people who was 18 at the time. She said to me, 'Helen, you know Gay Pride?' and I was like, 'Yes, Jenny, is there something you want to tell me?' And she said, 'Well, I see CASPA as Autism Pride.' To me that says it all. We celebrate, not commiserate. She also said, 'If I hear one more person say that I suffer from autism I'll go mad, I'm quite happy, thank you, I don't suffer!' And that was just prior to her graduating with a Degree in Biomedical Science.

A significant number of our young people, however, are school refusers, and are not in education, employment or training and so spend the majority of their time alone and involved in their special interests, activities, i.e. playing games online, where there's no social pressure or relationships to negotiate.

In order for us to deliver the unique activity programme that we know best benefit our children and young people, we employ experienced, qualified, subject specialist and facilitators, rather than generic youth or childcare workers. We have a team of professionals delivering the programmes, all of whom work on a part-time basis but who work weekly on the programmes. Continuity of staff is vital when working with these children and young people in order to build relationships and gain trust, it's probably something that resonates with you, as well as to ensure that we get to know all the many and varied speech, language and behavioural needs of each particular child.

Since CASPA first started our first social club the feedback year after year from both children and their parents is that it's the only place in their lives where they can be themselves, I mean how ridiculous is that? To be proud of who they are, feel safe and not vulnerable to bullying and being able to make friends. In a specialised environment we celebrate the young people's special interests, talents, quirks, which goes a long way to building confidence and they can take that into the outside world, for which for many is a fearful place. We've seen how home life has improved dramatically for the whole family with parents able to provide more time for other siblings and better able to access support services because CASPA staff or other parents they meet at CASPA activities can advise them. One parent summed up her experience with CASPA for me when she said, 'At CASPA I don't have to do the walk of shame.' So her child was in mainstream school and every day she'd get the, 'Can I have a word, can I have a word, he's had a bad day?' and it's the walk of shame. She said, 'It doesn't matter if he's hitting me, if he's crying, if I'm crying, at CASPA it's OK, we know everyone can deal with it in a positive way.'

So this is where we're at now as CASPA, a nationally recognised charity, working to support over 350 families and we see ourselves as a movement, changing perceptions as well as working to develop those children and young people. And our

CASPA values are compassion, acceptance, support, pride and aspiration. I've got a little film I'd like to show you, Andy has seen this because he attended one of our annual fundraising balls and his daughter features in it, actually, which we weren't aware of until then. It should tell you a little bit more about who we are and what we mean to our families.

<Film shows>

The thing that made me feel a bit emotional in that film is when a really quiet young man, Aden, says, 'Important,' when he's asked what CASPA means to him, because that's exactly what it is, it's important to Aden, to his family, to his family's friends and colleagues and to our society.

I acknowledge totally that I'm stepping into your world today and I don't really know what you do and how it really feels, but in regards to where I work, fits in with yours. I'm sure you've already noticed lots of connections and although autistic people are more likely to be victims and witnesses of crime than they are to be offenders, it's becoming more and more obvious and recognised that a disproportionately high number of prisoners and ASDs. I read in one article that this could be up to four times more than in the general population, so we're looking at potentially a couple of thousand individuals who are diagnosed or who have gone undiagnosed in your workplaces and then, therefore, it's your responsibility to work with them inside as we work with them on the outside, with love, tolerance and wisdom, which I'm sure many of you do.

It makes sense to me that people with autism may find or put themselves in risky situations. We all know the case of Kane Gamble who hacked into the computers of America's most powerful spy chiefs and the case of Gary McKinnon who hacked into nearly 100 US military and NASA computers to look for documents pertaining to UFOs. These are great examples of where someone with autism wouldn't *intend* to hurt anyone or break any laws but where their *obsession*, which we aren't allowed to call obsessions anymore, we have to call them special interests, is so deep and all-encompassing that the possible consequences of their actions are not even in sight. The desire to follow something through to its very furthest conclusion is the most powerful force, that is not to say, of course, that autism is an excuse to commit crime, only that it may be a *reason* or a contributing factor to how someone ends up in the criminal justice system.

I just want to give you a few bits of food for thought around the experience someone with autism may have as they move through the system. Autistic behaviours may appear odd and draw unwanted attention, their literal interpretation of requests may be problematic:

'Can you step out of the car, madam?' 'Er, yeah, I can,' and then don't move.

'Would you like to give me your name?' 'Um, not really.'

'Please take a seat.' 'Oh, god, where am I supposed to take it?'

'He's got something up his sleeve...' Looking for something up his sleeve.

Get it? And with that as a start we can also throw into the mix that people with autism commonly have no theory of mind, in other words, they cannot predict what someone else is going to do or is thinking, often seen as a lack of empathy. They may not understand other people's motives, they may be hyposensitive and not feel pain, they may be hypersensitive and feel every touch like razorblades and hear every sound like thunder. Some of you have probably read the accounts of some people who are inmates and have autism where the noise that goes on within a prison can be extremely disturbing and terrifying when you have hypersensitivities or sensory issues. They may not be able to communicate how we expect them to, may not understand social cues, may act inappropriately by looking at people for too long, not giving eye contact or just seeming *weird*, often leading to accusations of inappropriate sexual behaviour or attention. They may experience sensory overload, may not understand personal space, may flap or stim to control anxiety, may speak to those in authority in factual or straightforward manners that could be interpreted as rude, defiant or challenging. We have a lot of young people who don't necessarily recognise the authority structure and they will tell you exactly what they think when they think it. Have social naivety and be vulnerable to persuasion and manipulation and if asked whether they have a disability they will mostly say no. It's not a specific enough question or they may not associate their autism with a disability.

I don't think I need to go on, it's a complex issue and the solution for us as professionals really is we can only ever be kind, it's that simple. Yes, you have to be like a ninja, get a black belt like I did, it makes you feel safe and confident and it frees you to have fun and be consistently kind and humorous whilst constantly aware but mostly kind and humorous. At CASPA we often deal with the child versions of what you might have to deal with, the aggressive, the angry, the emotionally unstable, the confused, the fantasist, the obsessed, the defiant, the unreadable, but we always come back to this truth as a team, the children who *behave the worst feel the most pain* and this to me is a universal truth, those who feel the worst *inside* behave the worst. And once you realise this you can be kinder and more confident and not need to fake some kind of authority for yourself, you can just be you. helping them to be the best version of themselves and not disabling them. It's

all about the quality of interaction.

CASPA is a beautiful example of where a need is identified by those experiencing the issues, in our case it was parents, and a solution to meeting this need is provided. We've become established and well-known locally and beyond for our amazing work, to the point where we're now commissioned by the local authority, researchers, schools, and many other individuals and organisations often approach us to work with them, including Microsoft. And we were shortlisted for a national diversity award in 2015. There is no other organisation working with this particular group of isolated children and their families on such a scale or so effectively, not just locally, but across the Southeast, possibly the country. Having grown so organically CASPA is very well placed to meet the needs of these children and families because our experience, strength and understanding of what they need and want. CASPA's continuing to grow as the autism community's leads are doing likewise. Our vision is to enable all those with autism, ASDs, neuro-diversities, emotional and behavioural difficulties and social and communication disabilities to be inspired, gain confidence and independence, have their voices heard and ultimately be properly integrated into society and that includes those who are in prison.

So where we want to go? In 2018 and beyond we are hoping to be able to offer all of our services throughout the Bromley Borough and beyond. We hope to continue to work closely with Bromley Mencap on delivering the family service, we hope to improve our physical environment by investing in specialist equipment and upgraded buildings, hopefully. We continue developing our services including all the training and autism awareness and behaviour management, managing challenging behaviour and building inclusive environments, this is where Microsoft engage with us, because they wanted us to help them to understand what building a truly inclusive environment is for those with autism. So that's one of our specialisms. And then developing our workplace and independent living skills, so for the over-18s and working in greater partnership with people like yourselves, schools, colleges, employers, to make sure that our work has a wider reaching effect.

So we don't receive any funding from the local authority or central government, we raise every penny of our funds ourselves through subs, community fundraising, I just ran 120K in four days over the last Bank Holiday, my knees are not thanking me for it, but we did raise over £23,000 and continually applying for funds from trusts and foundations. So your support means a massive amount to us, thank you. I'd love to speak to any of you here today or hear about the things you're doing to support your autistic inmates or making your environments more inclusive. I hear on the grapevine, you know, in the news, that Feltham young offenders are doing really well and they've got their autism accreditation, which is very impressive. I'm well aware that you're expected to perform miracles with very little support and are working with, quite literally, the most vulnerable and challenging members of our society, but I want to offer *my, our support*. If there's *anything* in what I've said or if it triggers some thoughts for you around training, learning, building environments, just building up the confidence of your staff or yourselves, then just connect in some way, because this is important.

Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Just over to Steve Gillan before I say a few words.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much Chair, Conference. I think after that presentation some of the wonderful work that's been going on with CASPA can only be admired. The Finance Committee did have a discussion this morning about making a donation of £1,000 for them to continue that tremendous work that needs to be done. Can we have Conference's permission to do so?

Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Helen, thank you very much for that presentation. A very worthwhile cause. Just for information really, you know prison officers get no training whatsoever in dealing with autistic prisoners; nothing at all. I think you should develop a training package for prison officers and get the employer to pay you for it, because there's 20 grand going spare from Michael Spurr's bonus!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Which is obviously better spent on you developing a package for us! We'd just like to give you a little token of our appreciation. Thank you very much. Smile for the camera!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, I now come to the awards section of Conference where we've got

Cronin Clasps, health and safety and Toe to Toe awards. So there should be a few surprises in the room.

Dealing firstly with the Cronin Clasp winners, first Cronin Clasp award goes to Neil Burge from HMP Full Sutton. As always I take no responsibility for what I'm about to read. Neil Burge is a longstanding and active member of this Union and has inspired many members of Full Sutton to take the step up to committee duties. Joining the service at Bristol in the dim and distant early eighties, he was part of the staff who helped open Full Sutton for its first non-paying guests in 1987. Originally a Trades Officer, he was even then free with helpful advice. Apparently callouts 20 quid an hour and poo runs downhill is basic plumbing. The current committee's personal knowledge of Neil stretches back only 20 years, but in that time we have known him, we have learnt from colleagues across the estate of the esteem in which he is held and the work he has done for not only the branch but the wider Union. Never one to rant and rave, he is nevertheless quietly passionate and dedicated to achieving the right outcome for his members. Neil has served Full Sutton's members for 20 years, joining the committee in 1998, most impressively as secretary from 2002 until 2013. At this point he stepped down as secretary to act as our representative on the team tasked with the benchmarking procedure. It is no exaggeration to say that ours would be a different and far less safe prison without his efforts. We would certainly see less white shirts every day. His skill and knowledge in the dark art of profiling has seen him help other branches work through seemingly irreconcilable differences with their SMTs and I'm sure this is appreciated. The support he's given our current committee on the profile of Full Sutton certainly is. Having spent many years running the prison library, Neil has, in recent years, been situated in our central detail office or People Hub as we should apparently now call it. Those of you who combine working in this sphere with Trade Union membership will realise how difficult this can sometimes be, but Neil continued to wear two hats up until his recent partial retirement and he should know how much the committee and the branch appreciate him acting as a control measure on some of the more maverick ideas proposed by managers. It can't have been easy.

It is a pleasure to see Neil's wife, Mandy, on the stage as she has been an important part of Neil's life for some years now and a civilising influence on his exuberant, Celtic nature. It's not that often Wales overcome their larger neighbours to the east in sport, but when they do we certainly know about it. There is no doubt that without Neil's knowledge, experience and passion the Full Sutton branch would not be anywhere near as strong as it is today. The committee appreciate this and want Neil to know how grateful we are. As mentioned earlier, Neil is the lucky so-and-so on the home stretch of his career but before we wave him off to the retired members' branch, the current committee have the task of leveraging all that knowledge and experience out of his head in order to better serve our members in the future. Neil often refers to himself as a simple valley boy. He is anything but and is a fully deserving recipient of this award.

That was written by Gerry Lennon and it's my great honour and privilege to award Neil Burge the Cronin Clasp.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Come on Neil, Conference, Neil Burge.

<Applause>

NEIL BURGE – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: NEC, Conference, I'm absolutely overcome. I've worked with some absolutely fantastic branch committees. Stan Walpole was a mentor of mine, Jim O'Neil, Dave Manning, the committee now are absolutely superb, probably the best I've worked with. I'm just overwhelmed! Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: The next Cronin Clasp winner is Darren Dunridge from Channings Wood. On behalf of the branch at Channings Wood I would like to congratulate Darren on his well-deserved Cronin Clasp award. When considering taking on the branch chairmanship at Channings Wood, one of the main factors was the support and knowledge Darren offered. For those of you who don't know Darren, Darren's been an active member of the POA branch committees in different establishments just short of a quarter of a century, and has the grey hairs to testify. Darren has long been an advocate of Trade Unionism and is passionate in carrying out his duties in support of the branch and his colleagues and is the go-to guy whenever there are more serious or complex concerns involving members. This is in part due to his almost forensic knowledge of the code of discipline and investigations and his fearless and dogged determination to see that procedure are adhered to correctly. I'm sure Darren has caused more than one investigating governor sleepless nights over this and there are many staff still in uniform thanks to his efforts. Darren, as well as being an invaluable asset to the committee and the POA as a whole, has also become a close friend and so I would also like to say well done and well deserved. Written by Jim, your branch chair. Darren, get yourself up here!

<Applause>

DARREN DUNRIDGE – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: It's a bit overwhelming to receive an award like this. I'm eternally grateful to my branch and to Conference. As Mark just said, I've been on branch committees for a long, long time. I worked

with some wonderful committee members along the way and this award is as much theirs as mine. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: The next person is Dick Knox from Parkhurst. Unfortunately he's deceased but this is truly well deserved, and I'm glad that Glen Holmes is going to come up on behalf of the family to collect this award.

: What can we say about Knoxy without swearing?

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: The answer is very little as he had the ability to swear in every sentence without fail. We will make this speech short and as clean as possible. A staunch Trade Unionist who gave every minute of his life to support this union to the highest standards and all the members he represented. He would not be taken for a fool and would argue with anyone and everyone including the top table if he believed they were wrong. Knoxy would be fuming and going mad right now, knowing he'd been given this award, as he always said, 'If anyone ever puts me up for that, they can go away in short jerking movements'.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: But since he is not here, tough luck, Knoxy. This is for all the trouble you've caused me since you died and left us with your crap to clear up!

He was a legend to all of the members on the Isle of Wight and served on the committees at all three prisons and was chair of Camp Hill until it closed. Then he came to Parkhurst and took the role of secretary until he died on the 21st August 2017. Well, even then he never had a day's sick in service and towards the end of his life took TOIL as in his words, 'The bastard management' weren't going to see him take any sick. He was a wealth of knowledge and even if he was wrong he would quote a made up number of a policy and say to the governor, 'You are not following this PSO' or PSI. This would set the governors off in a frenzy looking for the said policy while he would look at me say, 'That will give us a bit of time to get them on something else.'

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Knoxy knew at last year's Conference that he had terminal cancer and it was going to be his last one, but said to me that no one was to know as he wanted business as normal without any fuss. He had a sense of humour that was infectious and sick but always made us laugh, even during tense situations. When he finally ended up in hospital all he wanted was to go home to be with his family. Two things that stick out to us when Dick was in hospital was when he was told by the doctors how long he could have. His response was, 'What will be, will be. At least I don't have to give me fags up now!'

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: 'And don't give me any treatment. Give it to someone that will benefit from it.'

And secondly, after a fall in this hospital, where he broke his hip, he only agreed to have it patched up if they gave it to a new surgeon who needed the practice, so they could use him to improve on their skills!

<Laughter>

GLEN HOLMES - PARKHURST: Dick always put everyone else first and Dick's family should be proud of what he has achieved and what he has done for all of this Union. I have had the honour of being with Dick's family and got to know them and they have become part of the prison family and always will be. However, a word of warning, if you happen to see Emma out; don't try and beat her in a drinking game, as a I guarantee she will beat you all hands down' and always ask to see her smurf, as if she hasn't got it, she has to buy the round. This is a tradition that Dick brought to Conference.

Dick finally got to go home, as he always wanted, and got what he wanted on his last night with us. He had a roast dinner, and he wanted a beer that Glen got him. After a couple of sips he looked at Glen and said, 'Holmesy, this beer is really shit and I bet it comes from Scotland!'

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: He then said, 'Go get this lot pissed and see you one day again mate.' He then

later that night passed away with his family around him. I know he is missed by all the staff on the island but if Knoxy was here today he'd been given special thanks to those in his words, 'The girls at Cronin who help us and are always forgotten about, but they are the ones that do everything.' God bless you Knoxy, you old goat.

Glen, come and collect this award.

<Applause>

GLEN HOLMES – ON BEHALF OF CRONIN CLASP AWARDEE DICK KNOX: I'll do my best to say something. I'm going to struggle, and if I do I apologise now. Unfortunately Knoxy's daughter and ex-wife that's not really his ex-wife, but that's a different story, can't make it today due to illness but send their thanks and thoughts to everyone here. I will pass the award onto them and send pictures to the *Gate Lodge* magazine. Emma would like to thank the NEC and Conference for everything they did whilst Knoxy was ill and after his passing, not just for the support from Mark Fairhurst and the Welfare Committee, but also his special petals at Cronin who he thought so much of and his colleagues on the island. If Knoxy was here now he would say he'd done nothing different from anyone else and he just was the same as everyone as a Trade Unionist. He would not want all this fuss and be saying, 'Get on with business so we can get to the pub.'

If you didn't know Knoxy, you've missed out on a true gent, a great friend and my wingman, so thank you Knoxy, you old goat, we miss you. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well done Glen ... sappy git!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Next Cronin Clasp winner, Dave Lee, HMP Stocken. Dave started his career on the 26th March 1984 at HMP Norwich. He then went on to train at Leyhill on the 24th April '84 and firstly joined as a POA member. On 21st June 1984 David was posted to HMP Coldingley where he spent three years. In 1991 Dave completed his hospital officer's course at the Scrubs and was posted to Birmingham. Five years later, Dave was posted to Lincoln as a hospital officer before being posted to Stocken in 1997. He was co-opted onto the POA committee as a healthcare rep. in 1999 Dave was voted onto the committee as a branch official at Stocken, and in 2007 was voted to be the branch secretary. In 2011 was voted to be branch chair at Stocken but in 2013 Dave sadly stood down as branch chair but remained as a POA member. Obviously Dave missed the endless phone calls at all hours, the continuous silly questions, estimate pension calculations and saving members from dismissal so much that he put himself forward and was voted back as branch official in 2015. In 2016 Dave was voted back as the branch secretary and remained in this post until he retired from the service in early 2018. During his time in service Dave has dedicated his work and personal time in order to assist members 24/7, 365 days a year. Dave has helped an incredible amount of staff over the years, from handing out advice and pre-discussions with governors before investigation hearings, ultimately saving members from dismissal. Dave, to this day, continues to give up his days off, breaks and personal affairs to assist members in their worst time of need. Only a few days before he retired, Dave dedicated his day off to assist a member who was sadly medically retired. Dave not only provided POA support, he gave mental support as well. He even went out of his way to drive this member to the prison and continued to offer aftercare and support to this member. This is just one example of his commitment, dedication and personal touch offered to many people. Dave is very knowledgeable in all policies and procedures and is also the pension guru, giving out figures like Carol Vorderman in the numbers round. When Dave retired on the 14th January 2018 it was a bit loses to HMP Stocken, the POA committee and its members; not only did they lose a great POA figurehead and colleague, we also lost part of the furniture. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of the Cronin Clasp than Dave Lee. And that's written by Rob Atkinson.

Dave, come and collect your award.

<Applause>

DAVE LEE – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: Just getting myself together first! Colleagues, NEC, never thought I'd be here, but thank you. Thank you, Rob, thank you NEC, thank you colleagues at Stocken. Just one point – I did actually serve at Brixton for a while so Rob, you got that wrong! During my long career, I learnt an awful lot about Trades Unionism, and the first time I ever needed the POA was during a hearing when I faced dismissal and the late, great Ron Adams represented me. From that day on I wanted to represent people and that was my personal inspiration to represent staff throughout the service. Thank you very much for giving me the highest award I could possibly ever imagine! As you can hear, it's affected me! Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Next Cronin Clasp winner, Paul O'Brien from HMP Wakefield. Paul has been a serving prison officer for 28 years, 18 of which have been on the local POA committee at HMP Wakefield. He is our longest-serving committee member and has held the post of branch treasurer for many years now. He has unselfishly given his time to the branch, the membership and attended many events including several national conferences. He's very open and approachable and many members have his mobile number, which some use and others invariably abuse at all hours of the day and night, much to the annoyance of Sue, his long-suffering wife and POA widow. Paul was due to retire in August this year, and after suffering a serious bout of illness was tempted to go earlier, but a full recovery has meant that he's able to ease himself into retirement gradually by taking advantage of part-time arrangements. As we all know, there are no unhappy part-timers. Paul is our undisputed health and safety guru and has frequently crossed swords with management over this most fundamental and crucial of issues. Occasionally the dialogue with management can be colourful with Paul politely terminating the meeting, informing management that it would be reconvened when they stopped being silly and gained some insight into what the matter at hand actually was. A simple, but effective, way of conducting business. They always come back to the table with a different outlook, usually one that mirror's Paul's exactly. Aside from all this, it must not be forgotten that Paul is an absolutely first-class officer who has never been reluctant to get involved and indeed was a victim of concerted attempts by a prisoner to kill him with a sharpened shaft of a toilet brush. The weapon would surely have penetrated his vital organs had the blow not been deflected by the POA diary in his breast pocket.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: For that alone, he is deserving as a medal as big as a frying pan. I could go on all day but I wouldn't want to embarrass the man and he would only get ideas above his station. And that's written by Adam, your branch secretary. So Paul, please make your way to the stage to collect your Cronin Clasp.

<Applause>

PAUL O'BRIEN – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: I'd just like to say how humbling this is and I'm proud of this great Union. Thank you very much and I'll kill *you* later!

<Laughter and applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And our last Cronin Clasp winner, Phil Tuck, HMP Cardiff. Phil was born a long time ago in a south Wales valley, far, far away.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: On leaving fulltime education he decided not to pursue a traditional valley job like mining or shepherding, and decided instead that his future lay elsewhere and joined the army, spending the next eight years in Germany and the odd bit of active service thrown in. Phil remembers arriving in Germany just before his eighteenth birthday, quickly finding out that sex in the valley as he left was in its infancy. This dark and mysterious period of his life probably goes a long way to explain why he has three ex-wives.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: In 1987, after leaving the forces, he spotted a job advert in his local Job Centre window which advertised a well-paid, disciplined, secure position with good career prospects and pension within Her Majesty's Prison Service. If only he knew then what he knows now, he would still be in the army with six ex-wives!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: On completion of his initial training at Newbold Revel he was extradited to Wellingborough where he spent a great deal of time on detached duty at Gartree, Bedford and Littlehey. He returned to sunny Cardiff in 1990, where after almost 30 years in the job, he has recently found himself carrying out detached duty at Bullingdon, and now he firmly believes in déjà vu and the full circle of life.

Phil's first contribution to the wants and needs of Cardiff was the production of a monthly comic called *The Exocet*, which highlighted and lampooned the amusing antics and behaviour of the Cardiff staff as well as senior managers. He carried on with this right up to January 1994, where he lost an argument with a Ford Sierra which resulted in an injury so severe he was off work for three years eight months. We think this is a record to still be employed after such a long time off. He wasn't expected to last the night and the police were dispatched to collect his mother to identify the body. On her journey to the hospital she was heard to say, 'This had better be him!'

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: After making a complete recovery, although the jury remains out on that statement, Phil returned to work on the first of September 1997, his return being slightly overshadowed by some poor driving in a Parisian tunnel. It was around this time he was approached and asked whether he had thoughts of joining the branch committee, and for some strange and inexplicable reason, probably down to a mixture of medication and strong coffee, he did, and within a week or two the rest of the committee resigned, leaving him and the one who was to become known as his little fat friend to toss a coin to see who wanted to do what. Phil lost and he became chair.

In the weeks, months and years that followed, he succeeded in becoming known as the short-tempered, no-nonsense chair who was more likely to square up nose-to-nose with governors than sit down and drink tea with them, which made some meetings extremely short, as managers got up and left. During this time, he successfully set up a unit to work with prisoners with special needs, as well as setting up the first induction unit in Cardiff a few years later. In 2002 he put down on paper what was to become known as the Cardiff Experience, a team-based self-rostering model of attendance which allowed staff to better balance their working and personal lives, and through which allowed him, along with his little fat friend, to present it to over 60 establishments around the prison estate. It's to his credit that the self-rostering model he first developed was until the 8th January 2017 still operating at Cardiff, some 13 years after it was first rolled out. Never one to leave a member without a voice he has had the habit of picking up those cases which to some are unwinnable, and I know he has sometimes worked quietly into the night in order to find some angle in order to try and save a person's job. There are few meetings, discussions or consultations which Phil has not attended over the years and it is not unknown for him to interrupt his own leave or come in on his rest days in order to be heard or to put the branch's view across. More so and especially over the last nine years, when he was acting as the fulltime carer for his elderly mother Betty, who suffered with dementia; he somehow managed to juggle what he says were his more important duties to her, as well as turn up as required and give one hundred percent. Unlike his early years, time has actually mellowed him and although he can now sit with management and drink their coffee, his younger version has a habit of sometimes breaking through, making some meetings interesting to say the least. Phil has always been the one doing the research so that the facts are always presented at meetings. It has been said by some that this is what you pay your monthly subs for, a chair who can quote PSIs and PSOs. Phil, on the other hand, will say it's because he hasn't got a life. The reality is somewhat different. He does it because he cares.

I've known and worked alongside him for almost 20 years. I can say that his imagination and sense of humour knows no bounds. As co-designer of the flapping tent it's easy for me to say that if we ever made it to the Dragons' Den, he would be immediately arrested.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: All I know is that whatever he thinks of himself, there are many others who look up to him to offer the right advice and guidance on any issues they may bring to him, and to his credit, he has never let them down. It's been a pleasure to work alongside him over the years and although we may not agree on everything, it's always been interesting and it's been fun. If anyone deserves the recognition for their hard work and diligence, I can think of no one better than Phil Tuck. Written by your little fat friend, Graham Dale.

Phil, it's a pleasure to award you this. Get up here now! Come on.

<Applause>

PHIL TUCK – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: Well ... sad part of all that was it's all true!

<Laughter>

PHIL TUCK – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: But it's about bloody time is all I can say! I can now at least look the rest of the scrutineers in the eye when we go into the private bar and lounge! Thank you very much. It's been a pleasure. It's all I can say. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, once more, Cronin Clasp winners.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we now come onto the David Evans Health and Safety Rep Award, and I'm pleased to announce that this goes to Barry Hardy from HMP Preston. This year's David Evans Health and Safety Representative of the Year Award is given in recognition of a high standard of commitment and achievement. This year's recipient of the award, Barry Hardy, has demonstrated those qualities not only over the last year but throughout his fourteen years as the appointed branch health and safety rep. Over this period of time it's fair to say that on occasions he's been

described politely by some as keen. The POA prefer to use the description of like a dog with a bone. There can be many examples of the work carried out over this period of time, notably the first was to establish rights under the Safety Reps and Safety Committees Regulations, specifically facility time, won after a successful and lengthy grievance process. This was accomplished following a tribunal hearing that Barry attended as a support and witness for the POA, that established the principles at HMP Nottingham. The ruling was published via a POA circular. Barry has been contacted by many new health and safety reps across the estate with regard to how to get the recognised facility time. Barry produced a comprehensive workplace inspection checklist and presented it to the NEC for consideration, to assist reps in the field. This was placed as a resource on the POA website and has received many hits, demonstrating its usefulness. Believe it or not, Conference, Barry had to struggle in the early days to get a certain governor to put in place the correct Data Protection Act compliant accident book. This was important to ensure copies of all accident records affecting our members were given in their entirety to health and safety reps. The longest and ultimately most rewarding campaign for Barry was to achieve an establishment free from exposure to second-hand smoke, a campaign that at one point saw Barry escorted out of his establishment. Barry was represented by our then legal team and submitted three grievances, fully supported by the NEC, the local committee and branch, and over time, with a national campaign gaining momentum in accordance with Conference policy, the establishment became smoke free. Barry took some satisfaction in observing that the governor who had not upheld his grievance was named as lead in the smoke-free project. That particular grievance took two years to resolve, went to area office twice and stood at stage 4 for a period of 12 months; hence the POA description of Barry as a dog with a bone. Risk assessments and safe systems of work are written by the employer. They hold a duty of course.

Following a meeting some years ago between the governor's representative, the Health and Safety Executive and Barry, there was a discussion regarding concern over the standard of the assessments at Preston. Following that meeting, Barry began reviewing the documents, highlighting the deficiencies and identifying where there were no assessments in place, jointly working to produce new assessments that were signed off by the duty holder to everybody's satisfaction. This approach continues to ensure that health and safety will fully underpin the regime management plan at HMP Preston. Barry's branch has requested that we recognise his total dedication to his appointment as health and safety rep as he steps away from the role and prepares for retirement; dedication and commitment not only for this year but for the last fourteen. Barry has used his experience, knowledge, persuasion, passion and reputation to establish a correct and positive collaborative relationship within this establishment and also assisting colleagues throughout the estate. Barry is keen to point out that he's also received support from many colleagues at all levels. He would like to acknowledge Joe Simpson, Helen Whitaker, Debbie Davis, the POA Health and Safety Consultative Committee, Jim Starkey, Paul Malliband, the rest of the committee and branch at HMP Preston, past and present, for their support and for their understanding. Barry is now in the process of handing over to his successor and spending more of his time with his wife of 44 years, Sheila, and his three sons.

Barry Hardy, winner of the Health and Safety Rep of the Year Award.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well done Barry.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: He's very professional, Barry!

BARRY HARDY – WINNER, DAVE EVANS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR: Should be a handrail on that staircase!

<Laughter and applause>

BARRY HARDY – WINNER, DAVE EVANS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR: Chair, NEC, Conference and guests, first of all I must thank Paul, branch secretary, my relief to speak. He was the one that encouraged me, or coerced me shall I say, to fill out the form. I certainly didn't expect to be up here. It's an honour and a privilege to receive the award and I'd just like to recognise there are many reps doing a fantastic job across the estate and I'd like to dedicate this award to them as well. Health and safety isn't everyone's cup of tea and I'm told can be a good cure for insomnia. I'm a self-confessed anorak I have to say. At a health and safety committee meeting last year a manager, at the round robin at the end of the meeting, said to the committee that he found the subject dry and he had nothing to offer on the round robin. That rattled me a little bit so I had a word with the chap afterwards and I explained to him, 'I get that, I get the reason why you might think it's dry, RIDDOR, Health and Safety Regulations, RIVO, everything that goes with it, risk assessments, I understand all that, but at the end of the day when you left your house this morning and you attend your workplace and left your family, your family expect you back in exactly the same condition that you left.' Back at the end of last year I was asked by Jim to get involved with the risk assessment for safe systems at work regarding spice. I'm still working on that, to be honest with you, 'cause I'm struggling. How do you develop a safe system of works to prevent inhalation, ingestion and absorption of a substance? You do the risk assessment in your head and I've got one control measure that I've come up

with at the moment and that's a biohazard suit!

<Laughter>

BARRY HARDY – WINNER, DAVE EVANS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR: You might get some of those cheap due to recent events ... because we all know NOMS like to save money.

I'm absolutely delighted to receive this award, and finally I would like to thank my wife, Sheila, for her unwavering support during this journey. Sheila, 35 years ago, was on a picket line ten miles from here at Seaforth Dock. She was put in the back of a police van and escorted off the premises. I proposed to her that evening.

<Laughter and applause>

BARRY HARDY – WINNER, DAVE EVANS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR: She's a good POA member, 19 years and counting. She also translates my reports from Scouse back into English!

<Laughter>

BARRY HARDY – WINNER, DAVE EVANS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP OF THE YEAR: Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Should be rubber round that glass, Barry! It's a bit sharp!

Final award is the Toe by Toe award, courtesy of the Shannon Trust. The POA Shannon Trust Cup, Shannon Trust is a charity that was set up to help prisoners read via a mentor type of project, so it's very cost-effective 'cause it costs up absolutely nothing to implement. And our goals are to get this in every prison throughout the estate. They train prisoners to teach other prisoners to read. There's profile time to do it and everybody in this room has six hours' profile time to implement the Shannon Trust Toe by Toe. I was actually at an event last year where the Shannon Trust had commissioned a report via a very reputable university, a lecturer, which proved beyond doubt that this scheme is a massive success. So I would encourage everybody, if you haven't got in your goals, to get in touch with the Shannon Trust and get some positive work done. I'm going to hand you over to Angela from the Shannon Trust to say a few words and deliver the Shannon Trust Trophy. Angela.....

ANGELA CAIRNS – CEO, SHANNON TRUST: Hello everyone. Thank you, Mark. Just on a little point there, we've renamed it the POA Shannon Trust Cup as we're no longer using Toe by Toe, but that's just an aside there. It's fantastic to be back here in Southport and to be talking to you all and to be celebrating the fantastic work that POA members do in unlocking the power of reading for thousands of people in prison every year. So my personal thank you is to everybody who has unlocked one of our learners and mentors in the last year, who's encouraged someone who's struggling with reading to take part in the reading plan, and who has championed the value of learning to read in all of our goals. Taking part in the reading plan, as Mark says, has been shown to work. It does teach those vital reading skills, but also helps to change people's behaviour and brings hope and aspiration for a better life. Many, many of our learners go on to further education and training, and one of the things we hear a lot about is how it helps them to stay in touch with their family and friends, and the pride that comes from all of our learners and mentors when you speak directly to them is incredible. And that's thanks to the efforts that you make. I have a little plea here. Although we're continuing to reach significant numbers across the estate, and that's nearly 4,000 learners a year, our learner numbers have dropped. We recognise that you are all working in really difficult circumstances right now and we appreciate the difficulties around this, but we do need your help to get as many people access to that one-to-one peer support for learning to read that's available to them, so, as Mark says, if you're not sure what's happening in your prison, if you go back and try to find out who the reading plan lead in your prison is, that's someone who's typically a prison officer, sometimes it might be a librarian or another member of staff, but they will be able to tell you how the reading plan is operating in your prison, and although it is a national network and we have a national system for doing this, we want to have in each prison something that fits each establishment and their differences. Also our mentors wear bright blue Shannon Trust t-shirts so they should also be able to tell you what's happening if you spot any of those.

So moving on to the award; this year Mark and I received a range of nominations for the POA Shannon Trust Cup and that highlighted that really high level of commitment there is out there amongst you for supporting people to learn to read. And one of the things I think about this cup is that we are awarding it to one person today but to me this cup is a thank you to all of you for everything that you do and the help and support that you give to people in learning to read. This year it was a really hard job, as it always is, to decide who the winner was, but we are really proud to announce that the 2018 Cup winner is Officer Paul Masters for Parkhurst. He can't be here today. We have someone else to receive it on his behalf, but I'd like to read you a little bit of what was said in his nomination. We ask for evidence as to why someone should be awarded it.

'When Paul took on the role we were under the impression that things had fallen behind at Parkhurst. We soon found out that the Shannon Trust reading plan was still happening although there wasn't a reading plan lead officer to run it. Paul took it on board and re-energised it. Reading session figures have kept growing since then, from 80 a month up to 160 a month in just a year. This is outstanding. I've seen that Paul is very quiet but very keen on the Shannon Trust reading plan and has proved to be instrumental in the growth of Parkhurst's figures. Paul works closely with mentors to identify new learners. He read the guide that was supplied at the back end of last year and has now started, on his own, a mapping exercise to identify new ways of identifying new learners. Although there were difficulties in running the reading sessions due to lockdown time, he's identified workshops that work well and have enabled this. Mentors now use workshops to run the reading plan with the learners.'

There was lots more said there about Paul and it's a fantastic achievement that he's made, which echoes the fantastic achievement of many other POA members and people in prison supporting the reading plan. So this year's cup goes to Paul Masters and I believe that Glen is going to accept it on his behalf.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: As usual, Parkhurst give out the wrong information. Who's it going to be? Pete Cullen? Is Pete Cullen here? Well done Pete.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Angela, this is for you; a token of our appreciation.

ANGELA CAIRNS – SHANNON TRUST: Thank you! Unexpected. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: There's a photo opportunity for all our award winners outside at the back of the hall, with the delegates from your branches. We've got a really professional photographer, allegedly. Is he outside, is he, 'cause he's not in here!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Please be upstanding for your award winners.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference. We have a fringe meeting in the Waterfront Suite, prostate cancer, and we'll reconvene at 2 pm please. Thank you.

<End of Morning Session - Part 2>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Wednesday 16th May, Afternoon Session

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. While we're all drifting in taking our seats I'll introduce our guest speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce Professor David Wilson, who is an ex-prison governor who I met last year at a Shannon Trust event. We got on like a house on fire, we put the world to rights and we solved all the problems in the Prison Service! We had the same views, in fact he had the same views, I was going to give him a POA membership form. Let me just tell you a bit about him. David is one of the UK's leading Criminologists specialising in all aspects of prisons and imprisonment, murder and serial murder. He is a regular commentator on TV and radio appearing on diverse programmes including *Newsnight*, Radio 4's *Today* programme, BBC5 Live, ITV1's *This Morning* and Chanel 5 *The Right Stuff*. David presented the Channel 5 series *Killers Behind Bars: The Untold Story* where he examined the true scale of crimes committed by some of the country's most notorious killers. His most research into British hit-men received national media coverage including *The Guardian*, *The Observer* and *The Mail on Sunday*. David worked on a Channel 4 programme called *Interview with a Murderer* which received the Royal Television Society Award, and he's currently working on another

Channel 4 sequel to that which is *Interview with Serial Murderer*.

We're very lucky to have him because he's a very, very busy man; he travels all over the world doing his programmes. He's a fascinating person to listen to and that's why I'm absolutely made up that he's agreed to address Conference. And what we're going to do, we're going to watch a short five-minute video and then David will take the rostrum and he'll fascinate you like he fascinates me. Thank you.

[Video clip played]

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, Professor David Wilson.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER - DAVID WILSON - EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CRIMINOLOGY, BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR DAVID WILSON : Well, thank you very much, Mark, for those very kind words that you gave and it was great fun putting the Prison Service to rights at the Shannon Trust. I thought very carefully about whether or not I should show that little video prior to speaking to you, and in the end I thought I would because I wanted to talk about prison officers and their audiences. So there were a number of overarching things therefore about the audiences that I'm given through the work that I do as a criminologist and also as a broadcaster. The last thing you saw there was an ITV series called *Dark Angel* and that was based on one of my last books about Mary Ann Cotton who is our first ever female serial killer and that has less relevance to what I'm going to say today. I thought we'd show the little clip of *Bring Back Borstal* because I very deliberately tried to use that series, which again was an ITV series, to get the public to start debating the reality of incarceration for young people today, albeit we tried to use the 1930s, we used a kind of construct to try and get people to think about how we might try to approach young people who get into trouble. IF you saw the series I still keep in contact with about six of the young men that went through the Borstal experience, and indeed the only one that has re-offended is the small one that you saw in that first clip. He is currently in Frankland, I think it's Frankland, so if there's somebody here from Frankland I think he's in Frankland for further violent offences.

But the real reason that I wanted to show that clip was because of the second clip that we showed which is called *Interview with a Murderer*, which as Mark said, won every award last year for the best documentary on British television. I'm saying that because the only reason I could do that documentary with structure that it had and the depth of analysis that it had was because of the work that I did with prison officers in the various prisons that I worked with. For your information, I always choose the clip where he says to me, 'And it fits *you* to a T'. That was shown at the BAFTAs, that was shown at the RTS Awards. It's shown every time we show a clip. And I do that very deliberately because it reveals Bert Spencer's psychopathy perfectly, because he has no genuine emotions, because he doesn't *understand* what it means to be ashamed or to be excited or to have remorse, because he doesn't have those emotions genuinely like you and I might, he simply copies our emotion. He simply copies my language and that's why he said, 'And it fits you to a T', because that is typical of how a psychopath would behave.

Two things in relation to that bridge I was saying, the very first place I was trained to do the P-scan was in Grendon in the 1980s and the very first person who ever introduced me to the idea of psychopathy was a hospital principal officer called Don Strong in the hospital annex at Wormwood Scrubs. So in some senses I felt I wanted to show these clips because it's beginning to make a bridge as to why a former prison governor was invited to speak to you. But I've been thinking very hard about a number of things in relation to my career in the Prison Service because there's a fashion in publishing at the moment about professional memoirs. And some of you might have read the current vogue in professional memoirs, Henry Marsh, it's usually surgeons, brain surgeons, heart surgeons, indeed sometimes nurses and the vogue at the minute is for those people from those professions to write popular books about their career. I was commissioned by Little, Brown to write my own, which is going to be published next year and is called *My Life with Murderers and Other Violent Men*, and I started to think about the incidents that I should write in that book.

There is a Danish philosopher called Søren Kierkegaard from the Victorian period and he said, 'We're condemned to live our life forwards but only understand it backwards.' And when I was forced to think about my life backwards I suddenly realised actually the people who defended me as a direct entrant assistant prison governor in 1983 in Wormwood Scrubs, when I knew nothing, was a Glaswegian senior officer who took me to one side and tried to explain to me how I should cope with the circumstances I found myself in. Literally within one week of being on C-wing at Wormwood Scrubs I had to interview the very first serial killer I ever interviewed, who died this week, called Dennis Nilsen. So a lot of my experience with serial murderers comes directly as a result of the professional career that I had. So I started to think about those things, I started to think I would like to talk to prison officers because actually a lot of my professional career and the audiences that I'm given access to comes from the background that all of you share. And indeed, if you're in Blackpool this weekend I'm at Alan Brown's bloody second stag do, he's been married so many times, so I'm in Blackpool this week with prison officers from Woodhill.

The second reason I wanted to speak to you was because the final job that I did in the Prison Service was to be the Head of Prison Officer and Operational Training. And one of the consistent things I talk about, and which I'd like to talk about a little more towards the end of the speech, is the need for... when I was the Head of Prison Officer Training I was fighting the Director General of the day because the 16 weeks that we took to train someone as a prison officer seemed to me to be scandalous. And I understand that if we're talking about 16 weeks that is a long, long time ago in relation to how prison officers are trained today. So that was the kind of policy element that made me want to talk to you because I still feel passionately about how we train people to do the jobs that you do and why we don't give you the status that we should give to you in relation to the job that you do. But then how do I make that come to life with the spirit of your Conference banner: Their Crisis, Our Opportunity? I'm sure I'm not the first person to point out to you that the Chinese symbol for crisis is two different symbols, the first is danger and the second is opportunity. How do you turn danger into opportunity? And so I wanted to try and take a theme in my academic work, and I see there are some former students of mine in the room as well, I wanted to take a theme of something that I had written about in terms of the so-called prison crisis. I'm one of those people, one of those academics who say, 'You can't use that word *crisis* and apply it to prisons', even though it routinely is. Because crisis is something that's short-lived, crisis is like the sewers crisis, the banking crisis, crisis is something that happens and then quite quickly changes. The crisis subsides. How can you use that word to describe the problem, the crisis that's been ongoing in our prisons for frankly the last 40/50 years?

And so in my academic writing I've tried to say that there are difficulties with applying that term and instead of thinking about the crisis in the way that the newspapers might think of the prison crisis: a crisis of resources, the roofs are caving in, the prisoners are changing, they're smuggling in legal highs, whatever the crisis might be. Instead of thinking about the crisis in those kind of journalistic terms I've written that the reason why we consistently have problems in our prisons is that prison has to be legitimate to three different, and sometimes competing, audiences. And there is my use of the word *audience* again. That prison has to make itself legitimate to three *different*, and sometimes competing, audiences. And as far as I'm concerned those three audiences are the public, and the public would include politicians, *The Daily Mail*, *The Guardian*, penal reformers. So the public very broadly is one of the audiences, the second audience are prisoners and the third audience are prison officers. Now, sometimes there is a perfect alignment between those three audiences who want to make prison legitimate, and classically what I've pointed out in my writing, the last time we really saw that was in the wake of the Strangeways riots. Suddenly everybody was on board. I'd love to stand here and tell you it was as a result of penal reformers that we got rid of slopping out. *We did not* get rid of slopping out as a result of the Howard League for Penal Reform or the Prison Reform Trust or any number of politicians who said really lovely things about how dreadful it was and we must make some changes. We got rid of slopping out when those three audiences, prompted initially by prisoners at Strangeways, decided that enough was enough. And in fact the person who led the Strangeways riots was the first person, and it's wonderful to see Phil Taylor from Woodhill here, the very first person that we took into the special units at Woodhill was the chap who started the Strangeways riots. And again, I go back therefore to some of the things that people say to me about, 'How do you manage violent men?' Well, actually you can ask some of the prison officers in this room who've worked in that environment.

So these three audiences sometimes come together perfectly to try and shape the public debate about prisons, as in the Strangeways riots, but by and large they compete with one another. How can that come to life? The example I normally give is about food. If you asked the public what sort of food should prisoners get, should they get three hot meals a day or one hot meal per day or no food at all, give them bread and water? Food is a really emotive issue for the public and you also know it's a really emotive issue for prisoners. I learned that to my cost when I tried to change breakfast at Woodhill from the traditional porridge and bacon, that nobody ate, to give them a continental breakfast. It's a very emotive issue. And if you think about how those different audiences might react to something as simple as food you begin to see how prison sometimes struggles to make itself legitimate to each of those audiences, at the same time, which continues to breed *the crisis* that people want to talk about. Now, I've talked about food, I could easily have talked about situational sexual relations in the long-term prison estate, you know, should we make condoms available? There are a whole range of issues that sometimes become legitimate to one audience but become a place on which you must not go to the other audiences. I used to think that one of the voices shaping the audience reaction to prisons were prison governors. And when I was thinking about my professional memoir I realised that I had probably seen the last of the generation of *character* prison governors. The last prison governors who really were eccentric, if you want, but big personalities who were prepared to stand above the political debate of the day and explain to, beyond the politician's head, 'Look, these are the problems'.

I was fortunate enough to be at Wormwood Scrubs under Ian Dunbar and prior to Ian Dunbar I had the opportunity to work with John McCarthy. These names are probably dinosaurs, both men have passed, both men are dead, but both men were prepared to tell politicians what really was happening in their gaols and you should not mess with X or Y or Z. I used to think that prison governors were one of those groups that might shape the public debate about the crisis in our prisons. I no longer believe that. I no longer believe that, both because I've had the opportunity to reflect because I'm writing the book or have written the book, but I know that because I see what prison governors say or don't say in the public debate, which is nothing. They don't say anything! And so guess what, where do newspapers go if they want a prison governor to make a comment about the current crisis in our prisons? They come to me! And I go, 'I haven't been a prison governor since 1997, why don't you ask the governor of...' wherever it is, just go down the list, 'Why don't you go and ask the governor there?'

They'll tell you.' And they go, 'Oh no, no they're not allowed to make any comment at all.' So in the absence of the prison governor voice it seemed to me that I wanted that third audience, you, to be far more public about what is happening in our gaols.

I usually say at the minute that I'm really delighted that so many mobile phones have been smuggled into our gaols because that mobile phone footage, which is leaked to the papers, suddenly allows the public to go, 'Well, that's absolutely disgraceful! Why are they getting away with that? Why are they allowed to behave like that?' And one of the things that you'll see probably tomorrow or the day after is that I'll be clouted in *The Times*, because under a Freedom of Information request I was able to get access to the numbers between 2012/13 to 2016/17 about crimes that aren't solved in London. And the crime of rape, there's been 138% increase in unsolved rape between 2012 to 2016. 138% of rape increase does not get solved. Even if you go to something like aggravated assault, you know, a typical Friday night punch up, the unsolved increase between 2012 to 2016 is 117%. And the reason why I'm saying that is that I said to *The Times*, 'You know, look, here we've got proof positive that if you take bobby's off the beat, if you reduce the number of police officers that are able to gather local intelligence or arrest people or stop and search people to see what weapons they're carrying, of course there's going to be a consequence!' And that, for me, is also a way of thinking about that point that I started with. I think it's really, really important that *you* have a voice, that your voice and what is happening in terms of recruitment to the Prison Service is given a much louder listening, hearing to.

I want to say two things about that, one is trivial and one is something I believe in passionately. The trivial thing is... I know Stewart McLaughlin's here, I think, from Wandsworth who has that wonderful museum in Wandsworth. I've just finished doing a Radio 4 documentary about sentencing policy in the wake of Worboys, and I went to do part of the recording at the Courts of Justice of blah, de blah, de blah, the usual suspects, Oxford University blah, de blah, de blah. But I also went to the National Justice Museum which is in Nottingham. Do you know the National Justice Museum? I went to the National Justice Museum to get a sense of people, what are they consuming when they come here and to do a few vox pops, you know, do you think sentencing's too tough, do you think it's too lenient, do you think we should change this, change that, bring back hanging, all those kinds of things. What struck me forcefully when I was at the National Justice Museum, because we were Radio 4 the museum director had lunch with me and all that kind of stuff, she said, 'What can we do different in this museum?' And I said, 'Well, you could link it up to what's actually happening in our prisons.' I made two prison trips last year abroad, I went to Robben Island in South Africa off Cape Town and I went to Alcatraz in California.

Robben Island was awful. It was awful because every single person that was taking us around Robben Island was a political appointee, they all were from the ANC, they knew nothing about the prison. They had learned a script and if you had a vague awareness of some South African history, if you'd read *Long Walk to Freedom* by Mandela you knew more than they knew about what was happening in the prison. On the other hand, Alcatraz, they had in their... Alcatraz is also a museum; they had a former prisoner with a former prison officer. And so I said to the women in the National Justice Museum, 'There are so many prison officers who could be bringing the story to life for the public, why don't you try and get them to be part of the tour?' The National Justice Museum has a very interactive... they've got actors playing warders from the 18th century and prisoners from the 18th century, so as you go into the exercise yard there will be a prison warder shout across the exercise yard to a prisoner at the other side. So they have actors playing the historical characters so why can't they have real prison officers, perhaps retired prison officers, talking about what life is like today in our prisons? And she said, 'Oh that's a really good idea!' I have absolutely no idea if she will take up that idea, but trust me, I think this just shows, for me, the lack of awareness that many people who are key opinion formers, key culture informers, their lack of understanding about the work that you do and the quality of the work that you do and how you could be involved in transmitting that culture about what life is genuinely like in terms of the crisis.

That seems like a trivial point and in some ways it's not the key point I want to make, which is this: I still believe that if you are advertising... I don't know how many of you saw the advert for new prison officers that's currently going round, have any of you seen that? The advert says... I'm paraphrasing, I might not get this completely right and I understand all of that so forgive me if I'm not quoting it directly. But the advert for prison officer says, 'Must be 18 or over, no educational qualifications necessary, must be reasonably fit and have common sense.'

<Laughter>

PROFESSOR DAVID WILSON: That's it. That's the current advert to recruit people because we have cut, and cut, and cut the numbers of prison officers currently working in our gaols. And you all know that who that therefore attracts is the 18 to 24-year-old age group who'll get trained up in, I think, 11 weeks. Is it 11 at the minute?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah, it's 10 and 2, 12 yeah.

PROFESSOR DAVID WILSON: Ten weeks and other weeks. And you know it attracts that age group and you know that they resign within 12 months of being on the job. My daughter is a princess; her mother and I are totally shocked by her career choice. Her career choice as a little princess was to be a nurse, she said, 'I care passionately about people and I

want to help them.’ Her mother and I looked at her as if to say, when did that start?

<Laughter>

But it meant that we had to suddenly become aware of nurse training. Nurse training is a degree training, you study to be a nurse for three years with a mixture of university and hospital experience. But it’s a three-year degree course that was paid for, in her case, it’s changed this year because of the Tories, it was paid for by government. Nursing is so important, the NHS is so important we are going to pay young men and young women to be nurses. I have absolutely no idea why that model does not also apply to be a prison officer. If we were thinking about Scandinavia, and again, because of the audiences that I get I often am able to talk to the public about what they do in Scandinavia. Alan Brown’s best man, you know we’re going to Blackpool this weekend for his stag do, another stag do. Alan Brown’s best man is Bob; Bob is a prison officer in the Norwegian Prison Service. It takes two years to become a prison officer in Norway and at the end of that two years you graduate with a social work degree. I’m sure that there are lots of people that might say, ‘Well, you don’t need a degree to be a prison officer.’ But my gosh! What it sends out a signal about is how serious the job that you do is and how therefore seriously we should take what it is that you do. And if there’s any help, and I’m saying this now to the National Executive Committee, if there’s any help that I can personally give to try and make any of that become a reality I’d be only too delighted to do so. And I’d be delighted to do so because I know, having been condemned to live my life forwards and thinking about it backwards, that the only reason that I have those audiences and those platforms and this platform, is because I’ve stood on the shoulders of enumerable prison officers in different gaols between 1983 and 1997 which is what has made me the country’s leading criminologist. And if I never get any other opportunity to say so, other than this, let me say it fulsomely and sincerely. I thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well, thank you David. We have a legendary speaker that will go down in history at POA Conference, a very famous England footballer...

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah, you know who I mean, but you’ve certainly surpassed him. Just picking you up on a few points, I too have been to Alcatraz and it reminds me of when I first joined the job over 26 years ago. I wouldn’t say it was a bad place because they had good working relationships and they had plenty of staff, ‘cause as you go down to Alcatraz, as David said, it’s now a tourist attraction and it’s obvious the way they ran things there was similar to the way we used to run things here: control, order and discipline. Reference retired prison officers going to the Justice Museum. You’ve got no chance mate, they’re all on bed guard earning 22 quid an hour!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And, you know, we struggle to get ACCT trained, never mind getting a degree but we would love to be recognised as the professional people that we are, recognised not only financially but by getting that professional qualification ‘cause I think it’s the least that we deserve. So on behalf of the POA I’d like you to accept a small token of Southport crystal.

PROFESSOR DAVID WILSON: Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And before you go, David, you said if there’s anything you can do to help us progress on all our issues, well, unless you can sack the entire HMPPS directors board, there’s nothing you can do mate. David Wilson.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, I’m just going to hand over the rostrum to Stephen Cavalier who’s the Chief Executive of Thompsons Solicitors. Stephen.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER - STEPHEN CAVALIER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE THOMPSONS SOLICITORS

STEPHEN CAVALIER: Mark, thank you very much, and thank you also, David, for that fascinating speech. Thank you, Conference, National Chair, it’s great to be here to address you. I’m hoping for a better start to the speech than the last time

I spoke to you in Portsmouth in 2010 when I was introduced by Bob Crow who compared me to a pox doctor, so I think on that basis hopefully things are on the way up. But that's not the only reason I remember that day in Portsmouth in 2010, it was significant I think for two reasons. Firstly, because it was on that day of that Conference speech that Cameron and Clegg were announcing the formation of the Tory/Lib Dem coalition government. Both of them have since gone but the damage they and their allies have done, with their policies attacking working people, continues to this day with cuts to public services and jobs and an economy skewed in favour of their rich mates. And 2010 was also the first Conference since Thompsons started working with the POA. We are broad that, joking aside, Bob was praising us for the work that we had done with the RMT and the wider Trade Union movement. And I am immensely honoured, as Chief Executive, that Thompsons are the law firm for the POA and immensely proud of the work that we have done together, the victories that we have won together for you and your members, the campaigns that we have fought together and will continue to fight for justice for all of your members across all establishments across the country. And we are delighted now to be working with you in Scotland and in Northern Ireland as well as in England and in Wales. And throughout the time that we have worked with you on the unique issues and challenges faced by POA members, requiring that specific knowledge and expertise that you have and that you share with us to ensure that every member receives highly specialised, dedicated legal support, advice and representation. And that's backed up by national and local representation enabling us to work with you at all levels, not just here at National Conference, but at area meetings, at branch meetings which we're also happy to attend to discuss the issues that you face and the legal representation that the POA provides.

Now, I'm pleased to present the POA Legal Report 2017 which you have in your Conference packs. I won't go through the cases in the report but I'll pick out some of the themes and highlights and talk about some of the legal issues facing your members and some of the wider legal issues facing all trade unionists. One specific challenge which you and your colleagues uniquely face is the high level of assaults by prisoners, and often the failure by the police and the CPS to take those assaults seriously and to take the proper steps. We have worked with you to make sure that appropriate action is taken, including prosecution where appropriate, and challenging decisions not to prosecute by complaints, and where necessary, by judicial review. We have also established through this that the public interest test for a prosecution should not be disregarded for assaults in prisons, and that police and prosecutors must consider the impact that assault has on the prison environment, on staff morale and the need to deter future attacks. Police forces are getting the message on this and are taking action when they are challenged. And this includes us using together the European Convention on Human Rights, in Judicial Review Challenges and in support of the POA's Violence Reduction Strategy, including targeting issues at HMP Bedford and building on this work for other prisons facing special measures.

Some members have faced themselves the immense strengths of themselves being prosecuted for misconduct in public office. By painstaking use of criminal law procedure, by forensic examination of the evidence, by the utilisation of expertise and knowledge of the particular challenges we are making sure the court knew the full context and unique difficulties faced by officers in the prison environment and we work together with you to make sure that your members secured their acquittal. With you we are pressing for changes to clarify the definition of misconduct in public office to make sure that members do not face unjustified prosecution. We're also working together on the issue of the prosecution seeking to use against your members the interviews with the Police and Prisons Ombudsman, interviews which take place without the legal protection of police interviews and where your members are under threat of disciplinary action if they do not cooperate. As a result of your intervention on this issue the PPO has now agreed to the POA's demand that members may be legally represented at those interviews. And on employment rights, together we tackled cases of discrimination and cases of unfair treatment. We've won victories on holiday pay, that Payment Plus payments are intrinsically linked to the role of offender supervisor and should be included in the calculation of pay for statutory holiday. And we are working with you on issues around Fair and Sustainable terms, unpaid meal breaks, relocations and travel arrangements, unlawful deductions in pay, rights to recognition and collective bargaining, and defending against local changes being made without consultation.

Now, we all know in this room that health and safety at work is of paramount importance, now whilst it's a tribute to the POA's legal support that members have secured nearly £3 million in compensation for personal injury in the past year, it is a great concern that so many injuries are still occurring and so many members are suffering from inadequate protection in the workplace. You can see from this year's report that far too many POA members are suffering assaults at work. POA members carry out very challenging jobs in a pressurised environment and I pay tribute to the professionalism and dedication of you all. But this must not be taken for granted by employers as it too often is. There can be no excuse for employers disregarding health and safety and failing to give proper protection to prison staff. The cases in the report show a recurrent pattern: warnings not heeded; action not being taken when concerns have been raised; exposure to unnecessary risks; potential hazards not being remedied; not providing staff with proper information or support; inadequate staffing levels. Yes there are individual cases, each a profound consequence for the individual affected, but there are also collective issues: the pernicious epidemic of novel psychoactive substances; the under-resourcing and loss of large numbers of more experienced staff in recent years, as David has just been describing; the need for increased security measures, including the need for PAVA incapacitant spray to be rolled out across the prison estate. And we work with you on these issues with a dedicated team looking at all cases involving these specific issues, such as NPS or second-hand smoke and with joint initiatives with you to improve protection for members such as the Violence Reduction Pilot Scheme running in the Northwest.

Personal injury cases form an important part in holding employers to account and in enforcing workplace health and safety, which is why we, and all trade unions, condemn the government's proposed changes under cover of the Civil Liability Bill which will mean that in around 40% of cases of workers injured at work or on the roads, they will no longer be able to recover their legal costs from the other side even if they are successful, they will have to meet those legal costs themselves. This is a disgrace! It is a denial of justice, it effectively prevents thousands of injured people from bringing a claim, it attacks trade unionists and it attacks trade union legal service. And why? All so the insurance companies can still bloat even further their huge profits at the expense of ordinary people. Don't get me started on insurance companies and their rip-off culture, it is a scandal! And it is also a scandal that trade union laws are designed to prevent the POA members from taking the action they should be democratically entitled to take to enforce health and safety at work and to protect their rights. The provisions of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 that prevent prison officers from taking industrial action to defend their rights, the continuation in force of that legislation, the continued use of that legislation in the courts against the POA, and now the permanent injunction granted trying to tie the POA's hands and to hold as a threat against the very existence of the POA and your right to represent your members.

It is wrong and it is dangerous for government to suppress legitimate protest, freedom of association and the exercise of collective rights. And I pay tribute to how you and your members have continued to stand up for your rights with protests and other action to protect members facing a serious and imminent danger at work. You have shown what can be done in the face of legal threats but it is wrong, it is wrong that you continue to face those threats and we will continue to campaign with you legally and politically until those threats are removed and your legal rights are restored. And these attacks on collective rights are part of a wider attack on trade unions and the rights of trade union members. The Trade Union Act 2016, one of the first acts of this current... well, actually it wasn't the current, of the Tory government from 2015, is a full frontal attack on the democratic rights of trade unions in this country, imposing thresholds and restrictions on industrial action ballots trying to restrict and undermine Check-Off and Facility Time, and granting sweeping new powers to the certification officer turning the role into a snooper on behalf of the state with power to look into every nook and cranny of the Trade Union even when no member has raised any complaint and to become prosecutor, judge, jury and sentence. It is wrong! It is state interference in democratic, autonomous organisations. It gives unwarranted powers to a state official to make decisions without a proper appreciation of the operation of trade unions under their rules and to override the democratic processes of the union, and it is part of this government's wider attack on the collective freedom of trade unions and their right to represent their members.

The legal and political threats that we face are real. I am proud that we at Thompsons stand together with the POA against those threats. I pay tribute to all the work that you do in your workplaces and through the Union to represent your members so tirelessly and effectively. And we will continue to fight together with you for justice, safety and rights at work for every member of the POA. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you very much, Stephen, that's most welcome and we do value your support and advice and representation. I was going to buy you a brolly after Saturday's TUC March but you've got some nice crystal instead.

STEPHEN CAVALIER – CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THOMPSONS SOLICITORS: Thanks very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Stephen Cavalier.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, just handing over to Chair of the Standing Orders, Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, Conference, for the information for Conference the Standing Orders Committee have received an emergency motion from HMP YOI Hindley. This emergency motion reads:

"That Conference accept, without prejudice or challenge, that any guest invited to speak at Conference should be heard."

Conference, the Standing Orders Committee have met and made a determination that this motion doesn't meet the criteria of an emergency motion. We have relayed that decision to the Hindley branch and the Hindley branch have said that they want to waive their right to appeal. I want to thank Hindley. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Terry. Conference, we'll move onto motion 63 from the NEC. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Chelmsford, thank you. Just to advise Sudbury, motion 78 will be incorporated into this motion if this motion is carried. And to advise Feltham that 64 will fall if 63 is carried, so you may wish to speak on this.

MOTION 63

Conference acknowledge that the NEC have achieved significant savings within the POA since 2010 in a period of austerity where there has been no growth in membership due to Government cuts. During this period a partial restructuring exercise was necessary but Conference accepts in order to be fit for future generations to ensure the POA remain a sovereign independent trade union that further work needs to be done leaving no stone unturned. Conference therefore accepts Conference Paper 1 as a terms of reference for a small working group to make clear recommendations by Conference 2019.

NEC

GEOFF WILLETTS – BRANCH CHAIR, SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, it's more not a point of order, a point of clarification. I'd like the NEC to clarify whether the motion is to incorporate the outstanding recommendations from 1 to 10 or is this motion only to be used in Conference Paper 1. As the paper states many parts of the previous papers have not been achieved so are you going to give assurances that the outstanding recommendations for the restructuring from 1 to 10 will be incorporated? Can the NEC confirm that these previous restructures will be incorporated into the new restructure of Conference Paper 1 is not clear.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well, as I say, it's not a point of order but it will be clarified during the moving of the motion. Steve Gillan for the NEC.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Yeah, Sudbury, I think that's quite helpful actually and I'll try and clarify that in the brief speech that I make, however, if it goes through I don't want it to tie up the independent people who will be actually doing this. So, the motion actually reads: Conference acknowledge that the NEC have achieved significant savings within the POA since 2010 in a period of austerity where there has been no growth in membership due to government cuts. During this period a partial restructuring exercise was necessary but Conference accepts in order to be fit for future generations to ensure the POA remain a sovereign independent Trade Union that further work needs to be done leaving no stone unturned. Conference there accepts Conference Paper 1 as a terms of reference for a small working group to make clear recommendations by Conference 2019. You will all have read Conference Paper 1 and the terms of reference have incorporated some issues that were contained within Conference Papers 1 to 10 anyway. What we don't want to do is tie the hands of the independent people to come up with their own ideas as well. And the reason that I say that is because we're not always the best people to restructure ourselves, and that's why the Executive determined that we would have an independent person, a guy called Mr Pat Cuff, who done the independent restructuring in the Republic of Ireland, so as it was seen to be hands clean from the Executive. That would mean that they leave no stone unturned, it will be chaired by our honorary life member, David Evans, because David was one of the longest serving general secretaries of this Trade Union, highly respected. We can bring in honorary life members from Scotland and indeed Northern Ireland as well so that they have an input into the whole of the United Kingdom. It looks at a variety of issues, so for example, let's just pick one: subscription rates. I hear quite often, and is brought back to Conference time and time again: is it fair that operational support grades should be paying the same as some of the closed grades; is it fair that part time members pay the same as a fulltime member? That's something that, if this goes through, can be looked at.

Let's look at the structure in England and Wales. We have looked before whether it should be a regional structure or a national structure. In relation to Scotland, if you remember in Scotland the last restructuring we completely left Scotland out of it, and quite rightly so, because there was nothing to tinker with in Scotland at that time because they weren't coming under the same pressures of Facility Time and so forth that we were. In Northern Ireland it was exactly the same there. But, you know, we can never actually stand still. For example, we've had to take, even before we embarked on restructuring in 2012 all the way through, we had a situation where we had to look, for example, I've had to make tough decisions as the General Secretary in relation to support staff. There's been a 25% reduction of support staff since 2010. Now, lots of other trade unions out there have made redundancies and some of them have been compulsory redundancies. We're in a fortunate position that internally I looked at it, we done a restructure internally which meant that the assistance secretaries as well took on more responsibility, they increased their hours, we didn't replace Jim Dawson when he went and as a result that work was consumed within. When our support staff, who are very hardworking as well, when individuals chose to either leave for other jobs or any other reason we looked at it and determined not to replace those individuals. That is hard to accept, I wish I had an endless pot of money but I don't and we don't as a Trade Union.

But I want to make something absolutely clear. This is not an attack on any country within the Union, whether it's England and Wales or Scotland or Northern Ireland, in fact you will see in the Conference paper that the bottom line actually says, 'This is not about a cost-cutting exercise.' But clearly there's things in our rules and constitution that may need to be amended. So for example, our rules are silent on the issue of individuals who may be a part time member who wishes to be a National Executive Committee member. At the moment they're not excluded, they could stand, but that would mean they're only doing one day's Facility Time and one day in an actual branch. Our rules don't provide for it and our mechanisms don't provide for it, but that's excludes some people which may not be right. We've heard Pete Hancox talk about a retired members committee and a retired members branch and the future of that, and I think all that has got to be explored so that we can progressively move forward. If you remember the last report backs we sort of shelved it because there was so much

going on with the changes that were happening with the white paper that was then abandoned. That was the report back that we gave. Now, there was this moment in time we'd concentrate on what was happening within the white paper because there was no point in that happening but things evolve. You can never stand still. And this leaves no stone unturned. It even says to look at the remuneration packages for all staff, including the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, support staff and indeed involving the recognised trade union, the GMB. So let's have it warts and all, let's look at everything. The reason that we're saying allow our honorary life members to do a small team is because no one will get the Facility Time to do that because it's a Trade Union activity. So the reality is we either do it in a structured way with report back to next year's Conference to try and lay the foundation for going forward, I would suggest it would be a missed opportunity if we don't because our rules and constitution may need amended from time to time and this is a good opportunity for everybody to work together, come back with recommendations, but not just speaking as well to branch officials and the National Executive Committee and the support staff, but speaking to the wider membership actually to see what they want. And we can do that quite easily through different surveys, not me, not the Executive but that would be tasked to a small team to do that work and report back at regular intervals. I think that's a sensible approach. Thank you, Conference.

WILLIAM REID – BRANCH SECRETARY, CORNTON VALE: Chair, Conference, what I actually have is a question that hopefully the NEC will be able to answer regarding this motion and the possible outcomes that may or may not result if it's passed. And that is after Mr Pat Cuff presents his findings and recommendations to you, the NEC, will the NEC take an executive decision like you did with the legal providers in Scotland to pick what you think the NEC thinks is best for us, the members, or will you, if there is recommendations for change, allow the members to decide? Like I said, I hope someone on the NEC will answer this so that the members here can make the decision to support or reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Next speaker.

PAUL MALLIBAND – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRESTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, if you read this motion you would think that we were in crisis, yet we were told earlier we weren't when Feltham queried some figures that had been put in front of us from the finance report. For the POA to remain a sovereign independent union is language that suggests that we have to do something immediately. There is no doubt that this Union needs to restructure and it says so in the motion that further work needs to be done leaving no stone unturned. When you actually read the Conference paper it says that, 'if changes are necessary', well the motion says they are, the paper says maybe. There were ten papers submitted in 2013, motion 61 in 2011 and then acknowledgment in the Conference paper that very little has been done. It suggests that there should be an independent person, now I don't know who Pat Cuff is but apparently he assisted with the Irish POA and he seems experienced enough and I think it's eminently sensible that we have somebody independent doing that and I accept that. What I don't accept, however, is that the working group should be made up solely of honorary life members. And that is not an attack on honorary life members in any way, shape or form, of course they have a place on a working party, but we the sovereign body of this Union, should have people on that working party. And if motion 64 is going to fall, which calls for that, then it's right and proper to raise that here and now.

So I don't accept that the working group should be purely honorary life members. We talk about a Union fit for purpose going forward and I see a lot of new people at this Conference who weren't here last year who may have some input. We've already discarded various motions off the floor in relation to using new technology for ballots etc. quite right, it's against TULCRA, yet now we're going to adopt it to do a SurveyMonkey of our members. Very little suggests that branch officials and whatnot, other than being consulted with, will actually have that much input. If you run a restructure that is based on remuneration packages, subscription rates and rules revision then there's going to be an issue because we are talking about cost. The reason that was given for using honorary life members is that they cost us nothing, yet the Conference paper says that it's not an exercise based on cost. That's a total and utter contradiction. We need to expand out the working group and involve other people; hopefully Steve will maybe address that later.

We rejected motion 53 off the floor some hours ago because they wanted to ballot people on individual items when an employer puts an offer on the table. Well, you're being offered a package here that has a too wide a remit in terms of terms of reference and an exclusion of people on the actual working party. Those are elements of a package that is in front of you that are not acceptable, therefore reject the motion.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Chair, NEC, Conference, I think it's been said a lot there. Conference, 2013, you lot there quite said that we're going to have Conference papers 1 to 10. It quite clearly says in there that they've not achieved this as we aim for transparency. Also the wording, I'm a bit, what can I say? Bedazzled. We've just had Pete stand up from the retired members committee, that doesn't cost us anything, why are we narrowing it down just to the honourable life members? All I can say is we want assurances, assurances that papers 1 to 10 are in it 'cause that's what Conference says in 2013 and if we haven't got them assurances we shouldn't be doing it. So therefore reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve to come back?

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Yeah, I'll come back on a couple of issues. Cornton Vale, no, the National Executive Committee will not just meet and put everything through because it says that it will come back to annual Conference in 2019 so it will be you as delegates that will make those decisions, not the National Executive committee. In relation to what Preston said, I didn't actually say that the honorary life members, it would be cost neutral or it wouldn't cost anything because what I've said is, in actual fact, that Conference also authorises the finance committee to set a budget for this time-bounded piece of work; you can't expect the honorary life members to do it for nothing. What I did say was that they wouldn't suffer any detriment to Facility Time because they're retired, so the reality is the Prison Service, if we went to them and said we want half-a-dozen or a dozen branch officials to do this piece of work, they're not going to give you the time to do it. So if you want branch officials to do it then you reject this motion. What I'm saying is, on behalf of the National Executive Committee, there is a piece of work to be done. Yes, Conference passed motions 1 to 10 and that was because, once again, the Executive had the foresight to see that nothing stands still forever. If you actually look, what I did say in the Conference paper is that there's 76 affiliated unions in 2010, now there's 54 affiliates, some larger unions than ours have merged with each other out of financial necessity. I don't want this Union taken over or merged with anybody. I want us to remain as an independent Trade Union for as long as possible.

Now, it may well be that the honorary life members who do this and the independent person come back and say, 'Well in actual fact we've looked at everything and there's very little that needs changed because in actual fact you've done most of it.' Because we've done quite a lot actually over the years since 2010; I've just told you about the reduction in support staff by 25%; I've told you about the reduction ... we've amended pensions so it's no longer a defined benefit, it's a defined contribution for employees unlike yourselves. So we have made massive strides forwards, in actual fact, we have actually done some of the Conference motions 1 to 10, we've not completed everything and I've explained why that wasn't done and that's the rationale behind this, to incorporate... it's mainly Conference paper 10 actually that needs to be finalised because no one's actually got round to dealing with Conference paper 10. We can't leave the private sector as it is and it should be incorporated into this piece of work to identify the proper structures. If you don't want to do it then vote against it, but all I'm saying is we've got to have the vision for the future to try and make sure that we're thriving for the next generation. That's all I'm saying on behalf of the National Executive Committee. It's a matter for Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Steve. We'll take it to the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show. Against? That motion is carried. Feltham, your motion at 64 falls. Conference, I'm now going to call John Clinton to address Conference, he is the General Secretary of the Southern Ireland POA and he's very welcome, John Clinton.

<Applause>

FRATERNAL SPEAKER - JOHN CLINTON – GENERAL SECRETARY, SOUTHERN IRELAND POA

JOHN CLINTON – GENERAL SECRETARY, SOUTHERN IRELAND POA: Thank you, Mr Chair. Colleagues, once again it's a great pleasure to be here to offer you fraternal greetings from your colleagues in the Republic of Ireland. I'd like to thank Steve and your NEC for the kind invitation to me and my colleagues to be here with you at your Conference. I always enjoy having the opportunity of coming over to this Conference as it's a trade union Conference that addresses many of the problems and the challenges that we actually face ourselves in our prison system. And it's always very interesting to hear the views of those working at the coal face of the British Prison System. This year, however, is a sad year for me as it will be the fourth time since I've been coming over to Conference here in the UK that I won't get to have and enjoy a drink with honorary life member Mick O'Dwyer, as sadly Mick passed away shortly after Conference last year. Mick used to always say to me out in the lobby, 'Are you coming over to the pharmacy', and what he actually meant was I going over to the Victoria to have a pint!

<Laughter>

JOHN CLINTON – GENERAL SECRETARY, SOUTHERN IRELAND POA: Colleagues, regular media reports keep us very much in touch in Ireland with what goes on over here in the prisons of the UK, so I am aware that The Mount prison in Hertfordshire was the third major riot in UK prisons in less than a year, and that over a three week period you had riots involving inmates at Birmingham, Moorland, Bedford and Lewes prisons, while recent years had staff injured in a disturbance at the Young Offenders Institute at Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire. And we heard recent reports where a General Secretary outlined in the national media that the spice epidemic in the UK gaols is now beyond crisis point and needs a government-led enquiry into the scale of the problem. And I also saw that you had a gangland attack recently in Manchester prison where a prisoner was seriously assaulted by inmates requiring prison staff to intervene.

We recently had our Conference where we went to great lengths in the national media in our country to highlight the problems that we are having in our prison system with criminal gangs. We have organised criminal gangs now that are global organisations, they have huge resources and money and they have significant influence both inside and outside of the prison system. Yet we find it extremely difficult to get the support that we need to deal with these organised criminal

gangs and we have found appeasement to criminals to be now common place within our prison system. You might find this surprising to hear, but our Director General stood down conflict resolution dogs, he won't issue us with batons, rigid cuffs, PAVA spray or body cameras. Standard PPE equipment for prison officers and policemen across the world because during the course of our working lives we come into contact with very dangerous criminals and some of them are very violent and unstable. Instead we have people in Ireland such as our States Claims Agency that come along and tell us that when one of these gangland figures is beating the life out of another one that we should go over and talk them down. And this is coming from people that have never stood on a prison landing or worked on a prison landing.

The people that run prisons, senior management, should listen to the concerns of prison officers and their trade unions because we actually know prisons better than anybody else and we don't need all these experts from the outside to come in and tell us how we should run our prisons. Of course the subject of violence is not confined only to prisons. I was recently at a trade union event in Holland being run by the CNV trade union over there on the issue of violence in the workplace, and the prison officers in Holland were experiencing the same issues with us, as we do with violence in the workplace, but also it's very common now in the schools over there that teachers are being attacked by children in the workplace.

On a more positive note, last April we got a €1,000 pay increase, we followed that on then by inching into a set of pay talks last June with our government. And when I was here last year I said we were expecting the figure that they were talking about to be in and around 6%. It was actually more. And we concluded a payday last September that our members accepted by a huge majority on the basis that we got our rent allowance at €4,000 consolidated over into our pay, we got a €500 increase on top of that. So that increased our operational allowance which is 8% of our basic pay and is a pensionable allowance that we get for working annualised hours. It also increased our hourly rate for working annualised hours because that's 1.8% of our hourly salary, and that in turn obviously would increase all our attendance allowances that we get because once the basic went up everything else went with it. From January next year our pension contributions will cease on non-pensionable pay which will give most people about another €1200 per annum into their pay. We maintained our pay and pension link to continue for the lifetime of the agreement and overall the agreement was worth about 6.68 to 7.33%. So we do have some good stuff going on. It's taken us a lot of time to claw back the attacks that we had on our pay and pensions from the financial crisis but we are thankfully going in the right direction.

It was very interesting to hear Professor David Wilson speak there about training and training for prison officers. We actually have a third level qualification, a two-year training course and a person gets a diploma at the end of it, it's called the Higher Certificate in Custodial Care. And we spent a lot of time back in 2005 putting this programme together with the employer because we saw if we had a professional qualification it would help us in the long run with regard to maintaining good pay. And when people join the Prison Service in our country they don't normally leave, they actually will stay with us, so we're not in that problem with people being in the 18-24 age bracket and then leaving the job, most of our people when they come in will stay till the end of their careers and it is because we have maintained attractive pay and conditions for them.

Steve also touched upon the review. At our Conference recently we had our second review within a ten-year period. He is quite right in what he said, you can't stand still and every organisation, whether it's the Trade Union or anything else, has to look at itself internally from time to time to ensure that we're actually giving the best value for money to our members in what we do and on their behalf. But the most important thing for me in relation to anything like that is that it comes back to a Conference floor for delegates to decide on what they're going to do and that's to, in my view... I'm not here to tell anybody their business, but in my view, it would appear to be the best approach that you, that activists, will get to see what comes back and make the decision on it.

Just to conclude, colleagues, it was great to see Brian Caton here last night. Brian started out as a General Secretary at the same time as I did and I know from Brian, working with him over the years, how much the POA means to Brian and in fact the Trade Union movement as a whole and it was great to see him back here. Just to conclude, colleagues, I would like to finally thank you, the activists of this Trade Union, without whose work out there on a day-by-day, year-by-year basis prison officers would have horrendous conditions, a horrendous job without the good work that's being done on their behalf by the POA and you, their activists. And on that I'd like to say thank you and I hope to get back here again next year, as I said, I love coming over. Thank you, colleagues.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Don't go away, John. I've got something for you here. Thank you, John, you're always very welcome. And that's just proof what collective bargaining can achieve and we desperately need to get into that game because we just cannot retain staff – pay is so inadequate. John, I've got a little token of our appreciation. I actually picked it up from Goodison Park before 'cause apparently Allardyce doesn't need it anymore, so.

<Laughter>

JOHN CLINTON – GENERAL SECRETARY, SOUTHERN IRELAND POA: Thank you, Mark.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: He's gone at last.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we're going to get through a few more motions, we will be finished by 5 so we're looking at motion 65 and Feltham, do we have seconder for this motion? Thank you, Wandsworth.

MOTION 65

That Conference instructs the NEC to form a field based team to review our legal services, including provider and current policy, making any necessary recommendations, if at all, to Conference 2019.

FELTHAM

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Conference, NEC. Motion 65 reads: That Conference instructs the NEC to form a field based team to review our legal services, including provider and current policy, making any necessary recommendations, if at all, to Conference 2019. Comrades, we at Feltham have seen several members who have had their application for a number of legal claims being rejected by the current legal provider. Several of these cases the members had to find and instruct their own legal advisors to pursue legal action. They actually achieved success through their own legal representatives. We know there's a current appeal system, however we at Feltham feel that the review must take place in our current policy with our current provider. Does the current system ensure that our members receive the best legal advice? Does the current policy that is in place ensure that our members receive the best legal support? All we're asking is that the NEC form a field based team to carry out a review on the current legal policy and the current legal provider of choice. Please support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

BLESSING UWEDE – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Chair, NEC, Conference, what a convenient coincidence that a few moments ago we had a Chief Executive of Thompsons Solicitors come and make a speech just before motion 65. But moving forward, Conference, stagnation is bad. Autonomy does not promote growth or even competition. Competition on the other hand is good for business. What are the aims of a review? Basically, that things could be done differently or improved, as we do in our daily lives personally, review my insurance, my financial status. Motion 65 is only asking us to review. Conference, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Can you just identify yourself for the verbatim report, identify name and branch please.

BLESSING UWEDE – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Oh sorry. My name is Blessing, I am the Branch Chair, HMPS Wormwood Scrubs.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Chair, NEC, Conference, the last motion which was presented by the General Secretary at which they suggested no stone would be left unturned, unfortunately did not turn over the stone headed legal services, and obviously this motion has then been left on the paper which leads us to believe that the NEC believe all is well in the world of legal services. I have to say I have heard the General Secretary stand up there and say the legal representation offered to this Union is second to none. And I have to agree with him in all the cases which I have dealt with where we have had our members unnecessarily dragged to the courts by the employer for alleged assault, excessive uses of force and alleged criminal activities, to the extent where you almost felt sorry for the CPS when they got such a beating from our solicitors and our barristers that if it wasn't in a legal environment they could've claimed bullying. However, there is a but! This does not seem to apply to the other part of our business which is personal injury claims. And as we are all aware, with the escalation in violence these claims are becoming more and more frequent. I have to say in this arena from my time at Wellingborough where I had a little nagging doubt in the back of my head, which over the years has come to be quite a loud shout, that when I phone you, my colleagues with whom I network and from whom I seek advice and guidance not being a very wise man, I hear the same problems. That we are not apparently being well served in this particular area. So I would appeal to the Conference that we accept this motion which is to ask the NEC to have a look at how we are running our legal services, because possibly and maybe there is a problem somewhere. Because it's very embarrassing for me as a Branch Secretary to hear members of my branch coming to tell me that I have taken my personal injury case to another solicitor because I don't have any faith in Thompsons. This does not sit well with me because I want to support this Union and its solicitors in every which way that I can. So please, Conference, let's ask them to have a look,

let them report back and let them tell us that all is well and things will improve where there may be problems. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Anymore speakers? Glyn Travis.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Good afternoon Chair, NEC, Conference, full time officer speaking on behalf of the National Executive and asking you to reject the motion. Is there a need to review legal services? Absolutely. We review legal services every single day and every single week and every single month as we progress, spending the members' money in representing members. It's a non-stop process and today many of you will have picked up the revised legal advice handbook which has been reflected and changed to take account of a number of factors. If we have a field based team and if that's what you want, Conference, to review the legal services that is a decision for you. They're going to make report backs to Conference, well, they would be a field based team, they would have to put the recommendations to the National Executive so that the Executive then could put forward the motions 'cause they wouldn't have the right because they're not a branch to do that, and we can overcome that if you determine to support this motion. Is this motion talking about England and Wales, is it talking about England, Wales and Scotland, or is it talking about England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland? Not sure, 'cause it talks about legal services. What we've attempted to do, and we've just been through a tender process, a very painful tender process for legal services in Scotland, and we've done the same in Northern Ireland and the Executive made decisions about who the provider is.

What people must recognise, and it really, really amazes me, having sat behind the legal officer's desk in Cronin House as a prison officer, 'cause that's all I am. Glyn Travis isn't a clever fella, never have been, never will be. I work hard for you, the members, and I do a job. And I've tweaked the legal scheme with the solicitors and with you, Conference, from the day I started. We've saved money, we've changed processes, we've introduced issues that have been brought to the table such as the Crown Court contributions raised by Hindley over two years ago. When the Tories introduced Employment Law Fees we amended that and we setup loan arrangement to ensure people are there. We're dealing with historic abuse cases dating back to 1980 through our legal providers with specialist teams of criminal lawyers dealing with those. And people turn round to me and say, 'Our members have gone to another firm of solicitor because they didn't have a case with Thompsons.' Well, if they did it wasn't Thompsons who told them that they didn't have a case. Thompsons do not have the authority to turn a case down. Thompsons only provide advice to the member. The member, under your rules and constitution, has two avenues of appeal of their advice set out under Rule 19: an appeal to the Legal Aid Committee who will then determine whether the person who's dealt with that, whether it's a personal injury claim, an employment claim, a CICA claim or a review or any other element of claim, whether they've got it right. And if the Legal Aid Committee don't believe they've got it right they will determine to either have it reviewed, ask for a counsel's opinion on behalf of the members and/or they will tell Thompsons to run the case and that is what Thompsons do. If the Legal Aid Committee can't make a decision, and often they don't because they believe that the advice is right and proper in relation to employment law or in relation to the personal injury claim, it goes to the National Executive Committee who make the final decision 'cause that's what you've said. You set the criteria. Not Thompsons.

And what you've got to remember is if we have a field based team and they're going to go and look at the services and the providers, where are we going? Are we going to go to a local firm that's near Feltham or near Liverpool or near Edinburgh or near Belfast? I don't know. There's about 600 legal firms out there so we're going to have to look at what they can offer. How many of those legal firms will have a criminal legal aid franchise that covers the whole of England and Wales? So would we be restricted? We don't know and that's why we use Thompsons. But please, if you're going to support this motion that's fine, I hope the people who select and put themselves forward have got the knowledge and if directed by the Executive I'll be there to support any of them and give them advice when they go out and look at where we are. But you've got to have a criteria somewhere, colleagues, 'cause let me tell you this, there is one big issue that you will always find, if you run everything you create bad law and bad law is very, very bad for you the members and your members.

And just for a little bit of history about Thompsons. We review every single case that comes through, every member has a right to appeal, I don't believe any member should be frightened of appealing, it's not a rocket science job it's a one-liner to the General Secretary, 'I want to appeal the advice'. Since 2013 we've had 29 appeals that the NEC and/or the Legal Aid Committee have directed to take forward and they've instructed Thompsons, and this is just in England and Wales, to run those cases. Out of those 29 we lost 24, one was successful and three were settled on the steps of a tribunal. The one that was successful the member got £10,000. It cost the Union £38,000 to run to get the member £10,000. That's how much the legal case cost. The three that were settled were what they called nuisance claims where the employer turns round and says we'll settle this, one member got £1,500, one got £2,500, the other one got £5,000. And the other 24, colleagues, were all lost. 'cause it's your criteria, better than 50% and that cost this Union £215,000, give or take a penny or two. So whichever decision you make, Conference, and if you want a field based team to review it, fine. Bear in mind it's your criteria, they're your rules, but whatever you do make sure that when you have that and if you make recommendations that the only people who own your legal system is you and the member. Do not give that away. Please reject the motion, thank you.

<Applause>

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Conference, all we are asking for review, nothing else and to report back to Conference in 2019, well that's all we're doing so please support the motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Take it to the vote, all those in favour please show. All those against? That motion is lost. Conference, looking around the room it's obvious that you've had enough today so we'll see you tomorrow at nine o'clock.

<End of Afternoon Session>

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Tuesday 15th to Thursday 17th May 2018

Thursday 17th May

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. Good morning. We'll move on with business. For information for delegates, we have Radio 4 with us today. They will be recording elements of today's proceedings and they're keen to interview anyone who wishes to be interviewed about the trafficking of drugs in prisons, and you have our full permission to engage with Radio 4 ... and Radio 2 as well. So we welcome them here. Reference Michael Spurr and the questions, we have eight questions from eight branches. Belmarsh, don't be greedy – one question only please! Nice try. I plan on inviting you to the rostrum one at a time. I've got printouts of your questions so if you want me to hand them to you as you approach then just say so. If you don't wish to come to the rostrum, I will ask that question on your behalf. We also have Richard Burgon addressing us shortly. Until that time, we'll probably get through one motion, so I'll now move back to motion 20 which is a debate, which is at 65a and it's Wymott. Do we have a seconder for Wymott please? Thank you, Hindley.

MOTION 20

That Conference debate the outsourced "Works" contract within Prisons, sending a clear message that these company's aren't fit for purpose.

WYMOTT

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, WYMOTT: Chair, NEC, Conference, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. Motion 65a reads that Conference debate the outsourced works contract within prisons, sending a clear message that these companies are not fit for purpose. As you can well imagine, this was a concern long before the Carillion episode but it has brought into sharp focus exactly our concerns. Carillion went bust owing 1.5 billion to its suppliers. At that time, it employed 20,000 employees, many of whom are now unemployed, all of which are now having to reconsider their pension and retirement plans. That's the wider issues. We all have our own stories about how poor works departments are at our own establishments. We're quite lucky, I say lucky in inverted commas, we have Amey at Wymott that do ours. Now if Amey were to ever advertise themselves and if they were to do it truthfully, the strapline would be 'a pound short and a day late'.

<Laughter>

For example, on our concourse we have a gent's toilet, obviously contains a urinal. This urinal was blocked and it took them eight weeks to come and unblock it. Eight weeks. I mean that really takes the piss... or not in this case.

<Laughter>

Why was the works department put into the hands of private business? It's a simple answer; it was politically driven, it's an ideology. The Tories are determined, either to a greater or lesser extent, to put as much of the public sector into private hands as they possibly can. Whether you agree with that or not is a moot point, but I personally disagree with it. So what has the net result been for us? Out on the landing, individually, on a daily basis, we're faced with angry prisoners, who are rightly frustrated that the toilet's blocked and has been for several days, sink leaks, taps don't work. You go to the office to try and report it and you're faced with a reporting system that just sends you round in a loop and tells you it's been repaired when it evidently hasn't. So you log it again, tells you it's been repaired, evidently it hasn't so you log it again ... phone calls don't progress it, complaints don't progress it. It is a failing system. Costs have soared, repairs remain undone. This is yet another failed experiment from failed ministers who are failing a once great service. We demand that the works contracts

are put back into public hands; it's the only way that we can resolve this. Coming over the hill shortly there's grave concerns about Interserve, there's equally grave concerns about Amey and it's only a matter of time before one of those two, or both, go pop. So let's have these works departments back in public hands as soon as we possibly can, and the start of that is condemning it utterly in its present parlous state. Please join the debate.

<Applause>

STEVE DOUGLAS – BRANCH CHAIR, HINDLEY: Conference, NEC, the outsourcing of our works contracts has been a national embarrassing disaster that's seen a giant of the construction industry collapse and another, in the form of Amey, criticised for the way it has failed to address the growing work as reported by staff on a daily basis. I have reliable information that Amey are telling their staff to report most repairs as criminal damage so they get paid twice, and also employing handymen to do the work of skilled men and then billing the minister as a qualified person. And this is just a snippet from the outsourcing that has seen another Tory disaster. But as with every Tory minister that causes millions of pounds of tax payers' money to be wasted, they walk away scot free. Conference, the first time I heard of Carillion was some years back. I was at a TUC course and a guy was handing out leaflets. He told me how the construction firm he worked for had made his life hell by blacklisting him and many others because he dared to ask questions about safety standards on site. For 20 years he, and more than 3,000 other workers whose names appeared on a Stalinist-type data base were refused work by construction firms. Eventually they took their case to the high court and Carillion admitted their blacklisting, offering compensation, apologised unreservedly, as they do, for the distress and anxiety caused and admitted it should never have happened. As you guessed, Conference, nobody in that company was ever disciplined for its ideology-driven outrage that went on for decades and devastated thousands of lives. We also learned something else that should never have happened concerning Carillion. It should never have been allowed to suck billions out of the public purse which was turned into handsome salaries for their board and big donations to the Tory party while running a £600 million pension deficit and collapsing under a £900 million debt, leaving workers, suppliers and subcontractors facing possible ruin. Conference, who didn't suffer déjà vu looking at the TV. Familiar photographs of mansions and ski resorts, ski chalets owned by the now disgraced bosses, the huge salaries they lavished on themselves for failure. The actual Finance Director, Richard Adam, earning £8.3 million between 2008 and '16 and the scam they pulled protecting their bonuses against the financial collapse. It shouldn't have happened but it seems to whenever highflying capitalisms fail they go cap in hand to the state for a bailout and it happens because every government since Margaret Thatcher has bought into a philosophy that private firms and their directors are the wealth creating engines of our economy while public sector bodies and trade unions are the wealth-sucking parasites. And where has this notion of private good and public evil got us? As Carillion crashed, despite the Tory government trying to prop them up with more contracts, we learned that the PFI scheme used to let private firms build our schools, hospitals and prisons will saddle us with 200 billion debt by 2040. We learned also that we could have built these buildings up to 70% cheaper if we'd let the state do it. At what point are we going to stop buying into this right-wing propaganda that running our own railways, utilities, prisons and building our own infrastructure puts us on the road to hell.

How long are we going to listen to them hark back to the days of 1978 and '79 winter of discontent, where councils couldn't clear the rubbish off the streets? That was then and this is now, and the British people are well capable of cutting out those profit-sucking piranhas in the middle and running things for the public good. Conference, if you walk around most of our city centres today, instead of bags of rubbish you'll see humans in sleeping bags, caused mainly by the same ideologist parasites that hype on about being all in it together. Labour has described Carillion's collapse as a watershed moment and pledged if elected to end what they call this outsourcing racket by giving the public sector the first option in providing government services. Such a policy cannot be wrong, Conference, and surely cannot come soon enough for us in this room and the rest of the public sector. Please support the debate.

<Applause>

PAUL WRAY – BRANCH SECRETARY, LINCOLN: I feel I've got to get involved in this debate because quite simply my governor has raised it at the PGA. We had an outbreak of legionella that was caused by false paperwork claiming jobs had been done when they hadn't and it's just not good enough. We are all stuck there, trying to survive. We don't need this little aggravation of cells not being repaired. At one stage we had 34 cells out of action and with just observation panels, and it was only us, as a Union, standing there and saying, 'No, you're not using those cells anymore' that actually got the ball rolling. You speak to the works managers and some of them are quite proud and absolutely embarrassed by what they're being expected to perform with the staff and people and tools they've got. It's not good enough. Let's condemn them. Please support the debate. Thank you.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: Chair, NEC, Conference, I joked for years about get rich quick schemes. My previous work life was in the daft and barmy and from DHE, DOE and all the other companies that used to come in and do the repairs to military camps and facilities, always been bent as a five bob note. What they charge for jobs

in a ... if you want a get rich quick scheme, find something that can sell to the military, to the prison service, to the police, ambulance, fire, and charge somebody ridiculous prices. At Humber we're just about to re-role, certainly in my two wings, into the IPP Progression Unit, so we've had a lot of work been done within the buildings that we're gonna be taking over and using. Amey, and I am in the wrong job, was asked to do a stud walling, approximately eight by ten foot with 3x2 timber, a bit of plasterboard, fixings and some plaster. Anyone hazard a guess how much they charged for that? 11 grand. I'll gladly do three of them a year! One thing, Dick Turpin at least wore a mask when he robbed you!

<Laughter>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: How can these companies get away with charging ridiculous prices like that? Why is our employer allowing these companies to be given these contracts? And they keep going, every now and again, on the intranet, that witchcraft thing that we have to work with, about corruption. Where does corruption start? Up there with our employers. This sort of stuff has got to stop. Join in with the debate.

<Applause>

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the National Executive to this debate. First of all Chair, with your permission I'd just like to thank everyone who voted for me to be your next DGS. You will never know how proud I am, you'll never know. Second thing is, I do not want the FA's guide to League One grounds. Thank you.

<Applause>

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Conference, this starts, and the reason why we're in this position is the abject failure of Prison Service management to negotiate a proper contract. That's what it's about. To allow two, well four companies to bid for it, to come in and turn around and say that we want to run your facilities management ... every trade union who belonged to the operations Whitley turned around and informed them 1) that it wouldn't work and 2) they wouldn't realise the savings that they said they were going to make and told ministers that the savings they were going to make. And part of that, initially, included the health and safety function. All of the health and safety function that we've got now was going to go over to Carillion and Amey and the POA turned around and said, 'No. That is absolutely not going to happen. We don't mind if you have a look at the health and safety function and reorganise it, but you are not putting that vital service to all members in the hands of privateers.' And thank god they listened to us on that, because our members who were serviced by Carillion wouldn't have a health and safety function.

Their failure has put our members' health and safety at risk. I walk round prisons when I go in and I do the pension roadshows, we've got staff walking round with shields in order to do a headcount, in order to get the roll in, because the one thing that they can't get in is observation panels. In Birmingham there's not one in. And we're hearing it all the time from all members, that we can't get cells fixed. Look at the state of HMP Liverpool! And that's with Amey. It's an absolute disgrace! They've taken the Prison Service, sold a vital thing, not realised the savings, and it's driven it into the ground. They even had to come back to the Prison Service and say the contract that we've negotiated with you, we can no longer deliver, so can we renegotiate it again? And the Prison Service turned round and went, yeah, OK. We'll make some changes to the contract to make it easier for you to make money. Absolutely disgraceful! And it's about time that they turned around with this ideology and said it doesn't work in prisons! I remember Colin Moses turned around at TUC, he turned around everywhere he went and he said to every trade union, 'If they can private a prison, they can privatise anything,' and that's come to fruit for some trade unions. Colleagues, this is an absolute disgrace and it should be condemned and the quicker we get these people back under public sector control, it'll make our prisons safer. Thank you for the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. As you can see, it's with great pleasure that I introduce to you Richard Burgon, MP, a great supporter of the POA. Richard is obviously a Labour party politician, he is now the Shadow Justice Secretary and we have unfettered access to Richard. Whenever I ask him to do something for the POA, he never ever refuses. He asks awkward questions in parliament for us, we have monthly meetings with him, so we can put the pressure on government. He is an avid supporter of your rights and the protections that we all hope to achieve by keeping political pressure on the Tory party. Richard, please take the stand.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER: RICHARD BURGON, MP – SHADOW SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE AND SHADOW LORD CHANCELLOR

RICHARD BURGON, MP: Thank you Chair and thank you Conference and delegates. Chair, president, delegates, I'd like

to thank you for this invitation to address your Annual Conference. I was very pleased to be able to hear the debate on the motion that you've just been talking about, about privatisation, Carillion and the rest of it, and I'll be turning to that subject in the course of my speech, but as a life-long trade unionist, it really is an honour to address fellow trade unionists today, especially those as well organised as the POA. Those who, like the POA, keep going, despite attack after attack on your conditions and the services that you serve and care for, and as a member of the shadow cabinet led by Jeremy Corbyn, it's a real pleasure to attend Conferences like this and to come with a clear message, a clear message that the decades of attacking trade union rights, the decades of driving down pay and driving down pension rights, the decades of rigging the system to benefit the few and not the many are coming to an end.

Before being elected as an MP back in 2015, I worked for nearly a decade as a trade union lawyer so I know only too well that those who organise together are always treated better by the powers that be than those who aren't organised together. I know that this is the only way of standing up to the free market fundamentalism that has dominated, for the past 30 years, and which has one aim: to transfer profits to the 1% while the 99% fall further and further behind, because when they rig a system against the interests of the many then they have to defeat those who will stand up to them. So crushing the trade unions was key to the new model that Thatcher introduced and that far too many governments since continued with. That's why Labour's new vision for Britain means a new respect for trade unions. As Jeremy told Saturday's TUC demonstration, it was the trade union movement that created the Labour party and, under Labour's new management, we will always proudly support working people coming together and organising to transform their workplaces and our country. That's why, in government, we will give workers and employees more power at work, strengthening their rights and their freedoms to organise together to improve their lives. It's why my party will create a new ministry, the Ministry of Labour, to enforce and expand trade union rights. It's why we'll repeal the Trade Union Act and reform the rules on Trade Union recognition so that more workers have the security of a trade union. And we'll ensure that Britain abides by the International Labour Organisation Conventions. No longer should trade unions be shackled from being able to properly defend and advance the safety, pay and terms and conditions, including pensions, of their members. But the contribution of trade unions goes further than just defending their own terms and conditions.

Trade unions are filled with the greatest source of expertise, the expertise of people who actually run the services, so your insights should not only be listened to, but they should be respected and drawn upon by those in government, and I can promise you that they will be under the next Labour government, because Conference, our justice system, as you know, is at tipping point. The deep crisis that Conservative cuts have unleashed could soon become an emergency. In some areas, our prisons, it already is. Cuts have consequences and they are driving this crisis in justice. The Tories have slashed the Ministry of Justice budget alone by 40%. 40%, that's the deepest cut to any department. We've had over 100 courts sold off for little more than the average UK house price. Youth Offending Team budgets are decimated with central government funding halving over the last few years, but it doesn't stop there. On top of this are big reductions in police officer numbers. Hundreds of millions more cuts are planned over the next two years. The government's attitude seems to be out of sight, out of mind, when it comes to justice. An underfunded system means crime is up. It means reoffending is up. It means the most vulnerable pay the price. And as the budgets are cut, then the push for outsourcing and privatisation of the kind we heard described in the debate that's just taken place increases. Some may even suggest that this in fact is the intention. A privatised justice system delivering a constant stream of profits but perversely not actually delivering justice, but you can't hand over huge swaths of the justice system to mega-corporations and expect anything other than profit to be put first. And that's what happened, as we've heard, with Carillion. That's what happened with G4S, Sodexo and others being put in charge. And just look now at our privatised probation services: failing on every measure but bailed out with hundreds of millions of pounds from the public purse. Imagine what we could have done to transform our justice system with that money. Instead, that money, your money, our money, went on lining the pockets of private companies. And imagine how that money could have been spent to invest in over-crowded and under-staffed prisons that are even more dangerous than ever.

Conference, our prisons have received vast amounts of media coverage over the past year and it's almost always for the wrong reasons. We've heard much of the prisons crisis, but I believe that we're at a moment when the word crisis is no longer enough. We've warned for crisis, you've warned of crisis for five years and more. Crisis has become the new norm. It's time we called it what it is: an emergency. One recent inspection described the worst conditions those inspectors had ever seen. This is a new low in the long list of damning evidence of how Tory cuts and outsourcing are fuelling a crisis in our prisons. But it was no one-off. A recent analysis of hundreds of inspections found 68% of prisons are now providing unsatisfactory standards in at least one respect, with two in five gaols deemed unacceptably unsafe. Now I've heard that back to basics is the new buzz term under the watch of the fourth Justice Secretary that I've faced in the last two years. Talk about treating the system with contempt. Apparently, it's the latest wheeze that will solve the prisons emergency, but even prisons chief Michal Spurr, who I know you'll be hearing from later today, has correctly identified the real cause of the prisons emergency. He said the situation in our prisons, and these are his words, 'coincides with a period where we have had to reduce costs substantially, a 24% reduction in our budget.'

Conference, that's what's making the situation unmanageable and no one is more threatened by the consequences of those cuts than you. But perhaps the starkest example of the failure at the heart of our justice system is the obscene levels of prison violence. The figures are once again at a record high. Every few months that tragic record is broken again,

although, we hear, we're all well aware of these figures, these figures should be repeated and repeated and repeated until this Conservative government takes real action to lower these figures of violence and assault. There were 30,000 assaults in the past 12 months. Every single day there are 81 assaults in our prisons, that's one every 20 minutes, morning, noon and night, every single day of the year and it's a national scandal that there are 8,400 assaults on staff, almost one every hour, up threefold since 2013. No prison officer and no prison staff member should go to work expecting to be violently assaulted, kicked or spat at. I agree with the POA, the safety of staff is quite simply non-negotiable.

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: We can't stand by and the POA can't stand by as staff are seriously attacked, like we saw at Bedford, where someone was so seriously assaulted that he needed life-saving surgery to treat brain injuries. That's why Labour supports whatever measures are needed so that prison staff can do their jobs in safety, and that's why we back the call to protect the protectors; backed not just by Labour in parliament but backed at our entire Labour Conference last year too. And that's why, and let's be clear about this, that's why high court injunctions should not be pursued to prevent the POA from protecting the health and safety of its members.

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: You can't ban people from protecting their own safety and a Labour government will tackle the root causes of this violence. Huge understaffing. It was the political decision to slash the budget of the prison service that brought us to this breaking point. Now of course new psychoactive substances and drones and mobile phones are serious problems, and in government we will work with prison officers, the real experts, not management consultants who claim to be experts, who will tell us what you already know on how to tackle these threats. We will listen to your recommendations and place them at the core of our plans. But the driving cause, the driving cause of the epidemic of violence is in fact the loss of staff. It's not a surprise to anyone that prisons are more disorderly, more violent and aren't rehabilitating when the staff needed to deliver the basics are actually being lost to the service. But the good news, Conference, is that the Tories are under pressure. They've lost the argument that staff cuts are cost free; they've lost the argument that staff cuts don't really have consequences; and they've lost the argument that more can be squeezed from a smaller workforce. So I welcome the Conservative decision to increase the number of prison officers over the past 18 months, but they do, with respect, need to stop the spin. Despite the government's belated recruitment drive, there are still 4,000 fewer front-line prison officers than in 2010 and people really, in parliament, shouldn't expect a pat on the back for increasing the number of officers by 3,000 when they cut by 7,000 in the first place. It's the equivalent of a burglar being expected to be congratulated for his generosity for bringing back the television he nicked when he didn't bring back the hi-fi and kept that instead. That's the equivalent, isn't it?

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: But the Tories have lost the debate and we have to now force them to go further. They need to return prison staffing to the levels of prison staffing we had before. So we will stand with the POA in demanding that staffing is returned to levels that make prisons safe. And under Labour prisons will be safe. Tories need to stop massaging the figures, the increase in officer numbers over the past year is undermined by the substantial loss of officer support grades, who check in visitors and manage gates in prisons. This has fallen by 3,300, nearly half, since 2010, and continues to fall with 250 of these key, crucial staff axed last year. You, as prison officers, should be actually able to get on with your valuable work. You shouldn't have to be compensating for staff shortages elsewhere on the prison estate. But Conference, this isn't just a simple numbers game. While the government's now claiming to be rapidly recruiting officers, research that I published last month shows significant numbers of experienced members of staff have walked away. Prisons have lost officers with tens of thousands of years of experience between them in the last decade, and estimates of up to 70,000 years of experience in the prison service lost since 2010, and more than 1,000 prison officers, each with five years or more of experience, leaving the service last year alone. And now one in three prison officers have less than three years' experience, compared with one in eight in 2010. One of the many prisons that I visit, I'll never forget when I was told that half of the prison officers in that prison, a challenging prison, a prison not without its problems, half of the prison officers had been prison officers for less than a year. That really is an alarming make-up in terms of the prison staff. But it'll take years to replace vital experience that was built up over the decades, but which is now lost for good thanks to reckless Tory policies. What's the result? The result is our prisons are more dangerous than ever with a dangerous cocktail of inexperienced prison officers and experienced prisoners. So I call, today, for the government to urgently launch a strategy to end this exodus of experienced prison officers from our prison system, and maybe, just maybe, addressing the retirement age of prison officers would be a good start.

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: But Conference, let's be honest, staffing can't be resolved separate to pay. I'm sure public servants get sick to the back teeth of being hailed as heroes in public one minute, only to be insulted in private when they

open the pay packets. Now I remember the headlines back in October when your new pay award came out. Apparently, so we were told, this was busting through the pay cap. Busting through? You got 1.7% and on the very same day new figures showed inflation at 2.7%. That's a pay cut in real terms, not a pay busting raise. So Labour makes prison officers a clear promise. There will be no more below inflation pay awards under a Labour government.

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: And we've fully costed that promise and we will be keeping that promise.

Finally Conference, and I want to touch upon the debate I heard when I came in this morning, you've done really badly out of these government cuts, but others have done really well out of them. G4S appears to be able to count on a steady stream of ministry of justice contracts despite repeated failure, and even though it's still under a Serious Fraud Office investigation for an offender tagging scandal. Imagine what would happen to a worker accused of serious fraud. Would that worker be lavished with new contracts? Would that worker be lavished with new money from the public purse? Isn't it another case of one rule for them and another rule for everyone else? And yesterday, as we've heard, we saw a scathing report into the role of Carillion. As a select committee in parliament said, that company went bust because it's leaders were, and I quote, 'too busy stuffing their mouths with gold to show any concern for the welfare of their workforce.' As Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, I have seen how well Carillion bosses have done out of our prison system. Sadly our prison system, as we've heard, hasn't done too well out of Carillion. In just over two years the Conservative government has given almost £100 million of public money to Carillion to maintain our prisons and the situation became so bad that in September 2016 even the then Conservative prisons minister, Sam Gyimah, commented, and I'm quoting him word for word here, 'I am particularly concerned about the rate of repairs in our prisons.' So what did the Conservatives do? I know that Sam Gyimah had a stiff word with them apparently, but they told him it was all OK; did they take drastic action? Did they do anything about it in practice? No. Instead, in 2017 the Conservative government gave Carillion nearly £40 million of new money to carry out maintenance work in our prisons. That's despite the wrecked toilets, despite the smashed windows, despite the broken doors that made rehabilitation less likely not more likely and quite simply made your job harder.

The failure of Carillion is about far more than the failure of one company. As the delegates said earlier, it's about the failure of the idea that's held sway for far too long, the idea of private sector good, public sector bad. In prisons, privatisation has helped push us to breaking point. It's not just the shocking revelations of rat infestations and Dickensian conditions. Already this year Sodexo-run Peterborough Prison became the first women's prison in years not deemed safe enough, and it's now come to light that private maintenance staff in prisons have not even undergone the basic suicide awareness training that all staff interacting with prisoners should have. Conference, such training could have prevented the death of Sean Plumstead. Outsourcing and privatisation are about cutting and the consequences of those cuts could not be graver. The collapse of Carillion demonstrates it's time for the Ministry of Justice to end its reliance on outsourcing, privatisation and agency work. No more race to the bottom. As Jeremy Corbyn said recently, Labour will create a society that ends the scam of privateers sucking profit from our public services. That's why a Labour government will bring the discredited outsourcing of prison maintenance works back in house.

<Applause>

RICHARD BURGON, MP: That's why we will oppose the creation of more private sector prisons. It's why we'll put an end to the wasteful scandal of PFI in our prison system and it's why we will restore probation to the award-winning service it once was, by returning it to the public sector, where it will focus on reducing crime, not racking up profits. We will return the respect to the rights of those like yourselves, prison officers who have stuck it out in a broken justice system through thick and thin. In short, Conference, we will begin working with you not against you, to fix a justice system broken by Conservative party attempting to deliver justice on the cheap. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan responding for the NEC.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much Chair, Conference. Richard, I want to read a letter to you and it starts saying, 'As you know, we have strongly opposed the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill on a number of clauses which represent a wholly unwarranted attack on the working rights of prison officers, the status of the Prison Officers' Association and unwisely introduced an extension of privatisation of the Prison Service. An incoming Labour government will want to put this situation right and ensure once again that prison officers are treated in the same way and with the same working rights as other public servants, and recognise the status of the Prison Officers' Association as an independent trade union. We would hold the extension of privatisation and ensure existing privatised prison contracts will be examined with a view to their non-renewal and full integration into the public sector Prison Service. This would provide for national Prison Service, equitable conditions of employment and recognise the POA and other service-related trade unions as full and independent trade unions in their own right.' Signed, 'Yours sincerely, Tony Blair.' That was in 1994. Now I'm not

in the habit of looking back, because the past we inherit, the future we build. We were lied to back then. We have had some very, very good dialogue with you, John McDonnell and Jeremy Corbyn, and others, Ian Lavery, of the shadow cabinet, and we have had some certain pledges that have indeed gone into your manifesto and we welcome that. But a word of warning: we don't ever want to be let down again because we are a suspicious bunch of people by nature, we trust people on their word at times as well, but we don't want any more broken promises.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: So we look forward to our continued, constructive dialogue to strengthen the manifesto going forward. And just to remind people of what was in that manifesto at the last election, which was one of the best working class manifestoes that I've seen in a long, long time, that was in favour of workers, so I commend the shadow team for putting that together and listening, not just to my trade union but all the trade unions. It was to halt privatisation of prisons. It was to restore our trade union rights and to get rid of the Trade Union Act. It was to increase prison officer recruitment and to have flexibility on pension age. We want to strengthen that for the next manifesto and we look forward to working with you to do that, but at the same time, in between, we are a broad church within our membership and we, as a National Executive Committee, will continue to have constructive dialogue with all political parties. So for example myself and Mark recently met with the DUP, who are supportive of us on the changes to the Civil Services Compensation Scheme, as you are as well, and we look forward to trying to defeat the new legislation coming soon before this Conservative government. So we will continue that constructive dialogue for those who treat all our members, no matter where they are in the UK, with integrity and honour, and we look forward to building that relationship. But it's not just about the politics of things, Richard; it's about the working conditions for prison officers. Let me give you an example. We had a debate here about our code of discipline and the application of it by senior managers and the unfair treatment of our members. Let me give you an example here today, so that it's on verbatim. We had a situation at Manchester prison where two of our members were charged with excessive use of force on a prisoner. It went to the Crown Court and our members were exonerated by a judge and jury. Let me tell you what's happening internally in the Prison Service. Now I know all about the balance of probabilities and the difference between beyond all reasonable doubt; those two members are still suspended at Manchester prison and being dragged through an unnecessary code of discipline after being cleared by a Crown Court. So surely on the balance of probabilities they're innocent. What a waste of money and a waste of resources and I hope that when you do form the next government you clean up at the very top in the Prison Service and tell them to treat our members with decency and dignity in their employment.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: So Richard, on behalf of the National Executive Committee and indeed this Conference, I hope you take those points back to the shadow cabinet and thank them for the magnificent work that they're doing to restore our faith in politicians, because, as indeed I said in the beginning, the past we inherit, the future we build, and we want to build it with you so as the next time you come here you're coming as the Secretary of State with an announcement to say that the anti-trade-union legislation has been repealed and there'll be no further privatisation of our prisons and those that are in the private sector will come back into the public sector at the first available opportunity. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. I told you were influencing Labour policy, I told you! You've heard it yourself now and it is great that we've got a politician and a political party that not only listen to us but act and are great allies of this Union. Richard, we've got a small token ... well I would say a small token, but I'm not an NLJ official and I don't lie, so hopefully you've had your Weetabix, so as a sign of our appreciation we'd like you to accept this.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And now for the moment you've all been waiting for.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, our next guest speaker is the CEO of HMPPS and I'd like to welcome to the stage to address Conference, Michael Spurr. Michael ...

GUEST SPEAKER: MICHAEL SPURR – CEO, HM PRISON & PROBATION SERVICE

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: Thanks Mark. I'm pleased to be here. Quite a few people asked me why I'm pleased to be here and was it a sensible thing to come to the POA Conference, and my response to that is yes, and I want to be here, and why am I here? Because I was invited, and I don't think I've ever turned down an invitation to come and speak to you. And the

reason for that, actually, is because for all there might be differences we share an awful lot. You're here because you care about your members. I actually care about our staff. They're the same people. You're here because you want to see improvement in the Service. I do too. You want to see a safer Service for your members, for colleagues. I do too. And I'm here because, although there are those differences, I genuinely believe there is a shared ambition and a shared goal for what we do for the Service. So it would be wrong not to recognise that of course it's been incredibly tough over the last few years and nobody's denying that. And as your last speaker said, I'm not trying to deny that through that period. It has been very difficult. We, like a number of other bodies from 2010 onwards, had to deal with a significant reduction in our budget. You know that. We took decisions to address that in a way that we had to do. Always the intention in doing that was to do the best for the Service in the conditions that we were in and with our public duty to live within budgets that government had voted for us and given us. I know that that has been tough but through that period again we had to do some very difficult things and I accept and recognise that throughout that period the POA were very clear about opposing any reductions in staff, about opposing some of the other things that we had to do, reducing the number of prisons, we closed 20 prisons through that period. And in doing that again I was open and said to parliamentary committees, in achieving the savings that meant we could not reduce crowding and your NEC and the POA consistently said, 'Don't close prisons, reduce crowding. Don't take the savings out.' We had to do that to live within our financial settlement. And we had to do work to actually reduce our overall staffing numbers and again whilst that was opposed by your NEC and by the Union, we worked with you on benchmarking. And I know that's a difficult word, but the process was designed to be able to be genuinely able to provide decent regimes and to maintain prisons running well. I know, and you know, that that's not what happened in the end. We had a range of other things that affected how prisons ran as we went through that major change process and reduced our staff numbers and reduced our numbers of prisons. And while we were doing that, at the same time we had the impact of psychoactive substances which really hit us. We had increased issues around gang violence and mental health. And there is no question that what we planned to deliver through benchmarking wasn't doable. And we ended up losing more staff than we'd planned to lose. I mean it's important to recognise that and I acknowledge that. In many prisons, didn't actually reach benchmark levels because staff were not at that level.

In 2015, at the end of coalition government, start of the new government, it was a success and I spoke to Union and publicly about winning an argument that we could take no more further reductions. And I genuinely believed from 2015 we'd start seeing some improvement but the reality was that actually that didn't happen and we continued to lose staff during that year. And it took a while to win the argument that we did need more resources, which was won by the autumn of 2016. And that was very difficult for us, and at that point we were operating around 15,000 staff below our benchmark levels. So pulling up from that has been difficult and I absolutely acknowledge that. And of course the whole issues about safety and violence are things that absolutely have hurt the Service and hurt your members, our staff and which we can't accept. But we are beginning to do the things that will make the difference. The staff number increase is really important as a part of that. And the most important thing about that is that in introducing the Offender Management in Custody Model and the keyworker scheme, which will make a difference, we've reflected that the ratio that we had in place under benchmarking isn't sufficient in terms of the threats and the challenges that you face daily on the landings today. So the benchmarking ratio for adult male prisoners was one prison officer to thirty, normally on a normal shift.

Under the key worker model it's 1:20. And that's important and I recognise the whole issue, this is still not as... we're recruiting 4,000 staff this year, the 2,500 additional staff that the government committed to and making up the vacancies and we will be there by the end of this calendar year. And you'll say that that's not as many staff as we lost and that's true but remember that we are operating with 20 fewer prisons and the ratio of 1:20 is around where we were before and that will make a difference. But I equally recognise that that's not enough and there's a lot more that we need to do given the very big challenges we've got on safety that you know about and feel every day.

We have made some progress, deaths in custody which rose to a dreadful level in 2016 were down last year, 69 is still 69 too many but it was the sixth best year in the last 25 years for deaths in custody and that's because of the work of you and colleagues across the country. So we've seen some progress but self-harm is still high and violence and individualised violence is far too high and you know that and it's been said in Conference very clearly already. The staffing will make a difference but equally we've got a whole range of work which is taking place to actually address and continue to address this problem.

A task force on psychoactive substances is working very closely with the police now to tackle that, not just in prisons but at source through organised gangs and that's really, really important. Ian Blakeman is leading that task force, we've got a police superintendent who is going to be seconded to it, we've got a health professional seconded to it and we will tackle the issue of psychoactive drugs as an absolutely priority and are doing that at this minute. We were the first organisation anywhere in the world to test for psychoactive drugs, we're doing work now and I'm grateful for the engagement around the impact of those drugs and the second-hand impact of those drugs on staff and colleagues in prisons and we're trying to get underneath what we need to do to support you, your members, our staff, in dealing with that massive issue for us. And it is a real priority for what we're doing. We're working with the police more generally in terms of our web address gangs, the case management of violent offenders, the movement across the estate and breaking up of gangs and the dealing with individuals.

The minister is very clear about our responsibility to get the basics right and that's something which I want to say absolutely we recognise and support, it is important that we do get the basics right and that does mean making sure that at a local level governors are ensuring that we are searching properly, that we are taking the right action when things occur, and recently all governors were asked to review the level of AFCs that are taking place to make sure that actually we have got resources devoted to the right things, to stay on top of the issues that we've got at local level. Ten prisons have been identified specifically to get some additional resource where we will accelerate the work to increase levels of searching and oversight of work to tackle the drugs issues in particular and a bit like we did with the pathfinder prisons before we got the additional funding for the Offender Management in Custody model and the keyworker scheme, that's important for us as we go in to the next spending review in government, to be able to demonstrate what we can do with the resource to tackle these very big issues that we have got.

I also recognise though that from an individual point of view staff have to deal with more violence on a daily basis and are more at risk than they ever have been before and that's why we worked with the NEC and the POA to pilot the use of carrying PAVA in four establishments. And I want to say unequivocally that that's something that's the right thing to do which is... we're not doing this with reservation, we're doing it because it's the right thing to do at this time. We've got to get it right and I'm very grateful for those establishments who are working through the pilot. I'm absolutely committed to what we need to do to use and support staff properly. The pilot in those four prisons will continue and the evaluation of that pilot will be completed by September. We're not looking at a long time ahead, we're looking at getting this right. And why do we have to get it right, because deploying PAVA is a serious issue, we've got to make sure the policy is right, the legal position is right, that staff are properly trained and properly protected and we're getting lots of lessons from the establishments that are in the position of piloting this at the minute. But I can tell you this is something that is serious and I recognise and have heard the point about using PAVA, we just have to make sure that that is right and the evaluation will be completed in September and we're working up plans about how we take this forward following that evaluation and the lessons that have come out of the pilots that will make sure that we actually use it properly, staff are properly trained and protected if we go on to roll that out across the estate, which again, given the evidence at this minute, looks a very strong argument.

So I recognise that there is a lot on at the minute but I am confident actually that we are doing the right things that will see improvement and indeed we're beginning to see some of that improvement now, evidenced through inspection reports, evidenced through the fact that whilst, yes, a lot of the staff that we're getting obviously are inexperienced, their numbers are beginning to make a difference, and that will accelerate over the coming months as those numbers genuinely increase. Still about 1,000 staff are in training and they will come back into the establishments over the coming months.

So finally I want to say, because I'm going to take questions and I was asked particularly to take questions and I think that's probably a good use of time, I wanted to finish where I began. There will always be differences between we on the management board and POA, NEC and you as a Trade Union, that's an inevitability about our relationship. But actually I do genuinely believe that we are trying to achieve the same things. The reality is that whilst there are differences, I've never wanted not to work with the POA, I've always wanted to work *with* the POA because you're critical to how we deliver our services in prisons. You're absolutely fundamentally critical to that. So rather than have conflict, which on occasions can happen, it's much better to work together. And where we have done that, and despite all of the difficulties we have done that on a number of occasions, there's been significant things achieved. I welcome and am grateful for the POA push and support and engagement to make prisons smoke-free and pay tribute to Terry Fullerton in particular, who's led on that and I know is retiring and leaving today. That was a very big issue for you as a Trade Union and for us as a service and we've taken that forward together. We are working together on health and safety, it is through engagement with the POA that we do have regime management plans and those are in place, and again, I recognise the importance of that and taking that forward. When we had the whole issues of Carillion and I heard the debate earlier, actually we created the government company, again I welcome and pay tribute to the engagement we had from the POA colleagues to actually set that up and move that forward, so that we were able to address that big, big issue that we faced earlier on in this year. And I'm glad that we're in a position now to begin to move forward on a local disputes procedure.

I recognise that we need to do more to retain staff, the numbers that going up will only work if we can reduce our attrition rate, 10% is too high, it's not as high as many organisations, it's too high for this organisation and that's one of the reasons actually, whilst I absolutely recognise where you are, I heard your motion about the engagement with the Pay Review Body, we did recommend this year all staff should have a pay rise and we are going to go in to engagement with your NEC on a range of issues that I think genuinely will make a difference; introducing the Advanced Prison Officers, introducing revised arrangements for Youth Custody Officers will provide opportunity for Closed Grade staff to get benefit and join new F&S terms and conditions with pay uplift and will provide future career options for F&S staff that will make a difference. We are committed to improving our promotion opportunities and pay differential on promotion, that's really important. We want to work with the NEC equally about potential for pensionable additional contracted hours, those are all key issues that we want to engage with you about and which we believe will make a difference to the service. So together I think we can make that difference.

I mentioned Terry Fullerton and I recognise he's retiring and Andy Darken equally and I know Chris Donovan who's engaged

with us over recent years is going back to his establishment at Liverpool. I was just going to say we've had interesting engagement with all of those individuals over the time, I can tell you that I never expect an easy time from your NEC and I never get one, actually, but I do believe that it's right that we engage. I don't want to be in a position where we're in injunctions and conflict, believe it or not, I want to be in a position where together we can work for the good of the service. And we will improve the service over the next 12 months and we will improve it going forward, because we have got more resource now and I will work and commit to work to do that with your NEC, with you as we go forward over the coming year and in the years ahead.

Thank you very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well thank you for that Michael, if you remain there we do have a few questions from the floor and what I'll do is I'll invite delegates up, if they wish to come up, and ask those questions. I've just got one question before I invite delegates, what was your SPDR marking this year?

<Laughter>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO, HM PRISON & PROBATION SERVICE: I suspect you're going to not be surprised to say I could have done better and I know what that's all about and I get all of that and it's not worth. All of us have had tough times, this has been a tough period for anybody that's actually been in the service and it's been a tough period for all of you and for colleagues and I never forget that. And it's a tough period here for me and I'm aware of some of the debate and people can have their opinions and I note the point that somebody said if you're a football manager you'd have been sacked.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: That was me, Michael.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: Well, there you are. And all I'd say to that is, you've got to be careful, haven't you, and make those judgements. Sometimes you sack a manager and you do better, sometimes you sack a manager and you get relegated like the three teams that were relegated today, so you make some choices.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: I'd like to invite Durham to ask their question.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I'd like to know, Mr Spurr, why senior managers are treated differently to officers in codes of discipline in disciplinary cases. I'll give you three things that's happened. A Senior Manager left the gate open at Low Newton, it was our yard, the member of staff has never been called to make a statement in a code of discipline. That person was you, Mr Spurr.

<Laughter and applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: It may be the acoustics back here, I didn't quite get what you said, genuinely didn't hear?

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Sorry, I'll speak slowly, because a lot of people don't understand what I say.

<Laughter>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: It's that accent as well, I'll tell you.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Sorry. A national prison service, now they're picking on Geordies!

<Laughter>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Mr Spurr, apparently an IR was put in, reference when you were at Low Newton because you left a gate open. You haven't been disciplined, I don't think? The members of staff there that have been called to the disciplinary are just... If it's me I get disciplined.

I'll take the second one now. The governor brought a mobile phone into Durham Prison, he gave it to three prisoners, one was in A list whilst on transfer, another prisoner was in the middle of a murder trial and ended up getting a 28-year and the third one asked if he could take a selfie with it. I reported it, I haven't been interviewed yet on a code of discipline about this person. If it had been me, and rightly so, I would have been thrown out the gate and sacked, and that's what should have happened.

And the last one is governors claiming RHA. You rely on a letter from Ian Mulholland saying that they don't have to do C&R,

yet the problem being is shared services say it, the PSI is still there and they should do it. However, what they're doing is, is ticking the box stating they're doing it when they're not doing it, that is fraud, simple as that.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I made a complaint and I reported it to the fraud line, the fraud line were quite happy to investigate it, however, when it comes to the top table and I believe it was Alan Scott said he would not investigate it because Ian Mulholland had wrote the letter. Still I complained because five years' prior people were still ticking the box before Ian Mulholland's letter came out and they weren't doing C&R, it's £6,000 a pot, that is fraud, Mr Spurr.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: I got that, thanks. So serious points and I take them seriously and it's not for me to talk about individual cases and I won't do that. It is the case that if governors don't act properly within our professional standards they have to be accountable for that and I can tell you governors... and I don't know all of those cases, governors have been held accountable and governors *do* face and have faced investigations and procedures. And it's not for me to share what those are in terms of that but I absolutely know that is the case. And I expect professional standards from all of our staff at every level, and frankly, the higher you are the more you're going to be under the spotlight, as I know personally myself, you've got to be able to do that. So the points you make are right.

There are occasions when things happen and we should follow process properly and I always believe in following process but there are occasions when NEC members come to me about particular things, then I will look at things. In fact Steve Gillan only spoke to me today about issues surrounding a disciplinary code issue at Manchester. I don't know about what that's about, I have said to him I will look at that to make sure we're looking at that properly. And I do believe in professional standards applying at every level and I'm not before anybody says it, I don't believe do as I say, not as I do, I *absolutely* believe that... and that's why I'm here today as well, that you've got to set high standards.

So I can't deal with individual issues but I take the point and it is really incumbent of us at a senior level to set the right model and professional standards that we expect for everybody.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Just one other thing about your speech, about space, about Iain Blakeman, why don't you come to the front line, the front line staff, and take some of them on board with it, because they're the people that's getting affected by it.

<Applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: We will.

<Applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: It's a good point. I agree with that and actually we do want to do that, I don't want to work *against* staff. Most of the time... and I still go around gaols and I still get on the landings, I actually involved in an incident on landings, including at one point being first on scene with a PS first and putting a I get that and I do want staff to be involved in it because that is how we're going to fix it. And I can't fix it in Westminster, it's got to be fixed by colleagues working together, that's the whole point about working with the POA and working together about it.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Durham. I'd like to invite Belmarsh.

BILL BUPARAI – BRANCH CHAIR, BELMARSH: Michael, if HMPPS accept that rehabilitation can only prosper in a non-violent atmosphere, then why can you not remove all performance and rehabilitation targets and replace them all with safety orientated targets?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: Because in one sense you know that running a prison requires you to do a whole range of stuff and there is no question that safety is the foundation of anything that we do. If you look at the rehabilitation triangle that we put up in places safety is very clearly there and the foundation of that triangle. But in delivering safety though we know that if you try and lock a prisoner up all of the time you'll simply create more and more frustration and issues, so *all staff* recognise that there's got to be a balance between how much you have time behind door and how much time you have on activity and other things. And it would be mad to have a set of performance requirements that do not reflect the need to do a balance approach to how you run prisons and actually you're quite right, rehabilitation won't happen without safety. And reinforcing the importance of that and I made reference to it to some degree with AFCs, I recognise that actually some of that's gone too far, at Liverpool they weren't doing AFCs like enough. That's not a fault of any of the staff by the way, I'm being clear, we put that back into place, it's important that we do some of those basic things and make sure we are doing

that and that's being reinforced and governors were aware last week, looking at those very same things. But it wouldn't be sensible equally to say we're not going to actually measure how much time we've got in workshop activity or in education activity because those things generally support a positive regime and support better relationships and support reducing violence, so you've got to get the balance right, it wouldn't be sensible just to have performance targets that only were about assaults without looking at some of the things that make the difference on that, which is including things like some activity, constructive activity, that the regime.

BILL BUPARAI - BELMARSH: Do you think the balance is right?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: We're looking at it again for this year, I think there are too many targets at the minute, I think the emphasis has got to be... the priority for us is about order, safety, absolutely, that's got to be right. There is though... there is a part of it and you've said it, your own motions rightly over the years have been saying if you end up with locking prisoners up all of the time and reducing regimes, that has an impact, you're right, so we've got to get that balance right. And as we move... as more staff come we've got to carefully improve the regime, not jump to it, carefully improve it, because we want people to gain confidence and be able to actually be... One of the reasons I'm keen on the pilot for PAVA is about giving staff a feeling of being able to feel more confident in terms of some of the stuff they now have to face, and that is really important, and that's why we're going down that route and again we're engaged in those discussions with the NEC but I don't want and neither do staff want that to be the first way that we engage with prisoners, it's got to be relationships, it's got to be personal engagement, as it's always been in our system. And that involves also having things for prisoners to aspire to and be able to get on, which they want, and it does mean reinforcing a regime that emphasises incentives and positive incentives for good behaviour and proper response when we don't have that good behaviour. And we do want to make sure that that balance is right and it's a fair challenge to say have we gone too far in the wrong direction?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Belmarsh. I'd like to invite Dartmoor.

JOHN MUMFORD – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, Mr Spurr, when it became clear that the government cuts you enacted were having a detrimental effect on the health and safety of staff and prisoners, did you ever approach ministers and raise your concerns?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: Yeah, and let's again try and see some of that context, because it didn't all happen overnight, and it's always easy to look back and say it was always obvious there. I remember the first time I went to Ranby in about 2013, which was one of the first prisons that got PS really hitting it and a prisoner had run off the landing, etc., I was talking to staff there, and at that point it wasn't across the system to the same degree that it is now. And yes, we've started some work on that and then that accelerated. And did I have conversations with ministers, of course I did. We are a directly managed part of government. I am, like you are, a civil servant. I have the privilege, therefore, of being able to argue and discuss and engage directly with ministers and I use that and I try and make sure that the issues around the service are properly understood and I'm accountable for what we do publicly through parliamentary committees and others. And of course I had those conversations with ministers about where we were, to some degree that is absolutely why we... and it's perfectly legitimate to say it should have happened earlier, but by 2016 we did get additional resource coming in. I agree it should have been earlier, I made a recognition... I genuinely thought winning the argument in 2015 that we shouldn't take any more reduction, it was a success. I accept now that actually what we needed in 2015 was additional resource coming in and that was delayed. And that's easy to look back and say you should have done more then, at the time I genuinely thought 2015, not taking further reduction and being able to stabilise the estate... and we lost a lot of staff after that, that's what really happened, the staff numbers went down, we didn't choose to lose those but for a whole range of reasons which you understand, we did lose them and we weren't quick enough to respond to it, and I recognise that.

Obviously advice and engagement I have with ministers is properly between me and ministers, but you asked me do I raise the issues of the service, I do. Your representatives do as well, I mean there's no question they do that and they can do that, to some degree, publicly. Mr Burgon quoted, he actually quoted my comments, and I don't expect everybody to read it, but from the annual report that I publicly led in parliament when I've tried to be honest about what's been happening, and that was from last year's annual report, that he quoted. And I acknowledge that in a perfect world we would have had the additional resource that we got in the autumn of 2016 a year earlier, and if we'd don't that we'd be a year further on and those staff would be in post now. It's a shame they're not but we are now moving in the right direction, the staff are coming into post, I recognise that brings its challenges, I recognise we have to address attrition, I recognise that means recognising and rewarding existing staff in a way that we haven't done before and I made those comments in the speech and we will do our best to move that forward.

JOHN MUMFORD – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Thank you very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Dartmoor. Humber?

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: We have got across the board 60/40% regime with new staff, POELTs learning from POELTs. You've been trying to run a champagne service on a cheap beer budget for the 10 years that I've been in service, it is not working and it's still not working. How do you sleep at night?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: There are occasions I've slept better and because we've been going, as I've described, through a lot of tough times, staff are amazingly and have been amazingly resilient and do some amazing work every day and what keeps me going is that very fact and it's why, actually, I'm determined to continue to do everything I can to support the work that you and colleagues are doing. And important in that I recognise what you're saying which is why the argument for the benchmarking figure's been wrong and moving to that ration of 1:20 rather than 1:30 is massive and I recognise that in getting there we've got more inexperienced staff than I would like, but having inexperienced staff is better than not having the staff. And we've got to work to provide better support for those staff and we've got to have regimes in the way that I've just described, that's why regime management plans are important that actually reflect the staff that we've got and prioritise where an establishment is, and that's the conversation again we were having would governors only last week. And I can't determine what's the right regime here, for Humber, but you, working with your governor have got to be part of that, and it's getting the balance right. It is about and I'm not standing here and saying we shouldn't develop better regimes because better regimes are part of how we get back to having a more stable, less violent establishment, but that's got to be done carefully. And you've got to be part of that from a POA perspective, I engage generally with the National Committee and I want governors and have reinforced to governors to engage with the local committee. One of the reasons I want to engage with your NEC on a local disputes process is so that more of that is dealt with and you're able to get traction at a local level and there's an engagement at a local level.

And there's some risks for us about this, I'll be frank about it, but actually we're being pressed and I've got ministerial approval to engage now with the NEC on that, and along with the stuff we're doing on pay and along with this stuff we're trying to do on safety and on providing staff with more tools to be able to deal with the issues that they're facing, I do believe that will enable us to move forward.

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: But we're still no safer now than we were four, five, six years' ago because of the nature of the new staff coming in. No disrespect to any of the new staff, some of the staff are 18, 19 years old, got no life skills whatsoever and it's a dangerous environment with what's going on around the prisons up and down the estate.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: I'd like to have... we've been recruiting a lot of staff, we're working very hard on improving the type of staff we're now recruiting, that's where the... we're not going to stop recruiting at the end of this year, there's a turnover every year, so we'll still continue to recruit, and we are targeting in the latest campaigns, people above the age of 25. We have to be open to people applying from all age 18 up, that's what the role is, but we're targeting people above 25 for those very reasons and recognising we'd like a larger proportion of our people to come with more life skills. And of course, there's a dilemma, isn't there, and bringing people in to an more stable environment's easier to support staff to gain the experience, to gain it more quickly, and we're doing work in a lot of places, increasing the number of mentors; it's one of the reasons I'm keen on Advanced Prison Officers. Advanced Prison Officers would allow officers to get extra remuneration for being... supporting and mentoring staff, it's a way I absolutely accept, of buying F&S staff into a service, to a career which will stop them potentially going earlier, it's a way of trying to recognise that we want to be able to pay officers without taking management positions more in the future as well. So all those are things that we're trying to do but I'm accepting that's not going to change it overnight and that it is still going to be a very difficult road for the next 12 months, 2 years, etc., as we go through this process.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Humber. Birmingham?

MICK BODY – BRANCH SECRETARY, BIRMINGHAM: Good morning Mr Spurr. Seven years' on from HMP Birmingham being described as a failing prison and being privatised, how does he feel privatisation has given value for money to the public? How would you describe HMP Birmingham now, if seven years' ago we were failing?

<Applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: So in terms of the mixed economy and privatisation, I'm going to say this, there are some private sector prisons that are working very well and some that are not working as well, and there are some public sector prisons working better than other public sector prisons. Birmingham is not working in the way that any of us, that you would want it to work and I want it to work, and I went there not that long ago, well, in the last year. As you probably know, we closed a wing after that because I was concerned about the amount of pressure that you and staff were facing at Birmingham. And Birmingham's been through an interesting journey where things were doing better, we had the riot, you know and everybody in this room knows that recovering from a riot is not easy task and where they've happened before over the time I've been around, it's a bloomin' great big thing to overcome. And I think Birmingham is one of the prisons that I've got most

concern about at the minute, not because of you and staff there, but because of all those circumstances.

So if you ask me what I think about it I'm not going to answer about privatisation and the choice about Birmingham being privatised, there was a whole rationale about why we ended up there with the workforce reforms at the time and then going down a private sector route. Rehashing that 10 years' on probably isn't worth a great deal. Am I happy with Birmingham is at the minute, no; are we working with G4S to improve it, yes; and some of the things that we're doing, like reducing the pressure on you by taking some of the prisoners out is important, because I want Birmingham to work for you and for the people that are there and for the public more generally.

MICK BODY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP BIRMINGHAM: Well in that case then, Mr Spurr, in October I think it's halfway through the contract, do the staff, do the prisoners, do the public a favour, return it to the public sector please.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Birmingham. Preston?

DELEGATE, PRESTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, Mr Spurr, I've just returned to my establishment having just done six months detached duty at Rochester Prison, great respect to all the people that work there, I've met some fantastic friends. I hope you can understand my very broad Lancashire accent –

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: It's easier than Geordy!

DELEGATE, PRESTON: I was born Rochester, known as Jockanese –

<Laughter>

DELEGATE, PRESTON ... by the famous Paul Doors. My question's straightforward, when can we expect an end to detached duty and further, for establishments currently having colleagues out as volunteers or will you undertake that all hours lost through establishments allocating people out will be given back to the establishment, so they face no detriment?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: So on detached duty I'd like to end it as soon as we can. Realistically what we've got at the minute is detached duty to support regimes and order, particularly in prisons, as you know, in the south, where we've got still some issues around that. We will meet the numbers of additional staff that we're committed to by the end of the year, I'm not pretending that we don't have some particular issues, albeit in a small number of prisons, in a smaller number of prisons actually in the southeast and in London, and one of the reasons that we're retaining detached duty is because in order to address that risk we've done were we can a number of things. We've reduced, as I was talking at Birmingham, we reduced the population in a number of places in order to be able to operate, recognising we don't have the staff to run the type of regimes we want, we tried to do that, and we've supplemented and continue to supplement with detached duty. The numbers on detached duty as the recruitment comes with people coming out of training and onto the landings, will reduce through the autumn. I can't give you a date where we're not going to do detached duty, I'd like it to be as soon as possible but we'll use it where it makes sense, primarily with volunteers, to be able to maintain establishments in the South and they've got regimes they can run and that is important.

In terms of your more detailed question about hours, I'm not from this platform, going to answer that, our aim is to make sure that establishments increasingly are in a position... they will be in that position, and if they're sending people on detached duty, of course they'll have additional staff generally that are coming through now and by the end of the year will be broadly, fully staffed. That should mean that we're able to backfill and run full regimes in all the establishments that are supplying detached duty, which we haven't been able to do elsewhere. If that's what you are meaning, that's a general answer, but I'm happy to look at the specific that that you're doing and if you raise that through... I'll talk to colleagues about what that actually means.

DELEGATE PRESTON: We put new profiles in at Preston on the 6th of May, new OMIC profiles, we were 800 hours short on the first week, 230 hours of that were detached duty staff out at Belmarsh and other establishments in the South, that's 25% of a new profile. It makes us and your governors look absolutely *ridiculous* when we're saying here is a new profile and it's not workable. We need the hours back. Establishments sending staff out on detached duty should not be penalised, 200 hours of PP were given to Preston to cover an 800 hour deficit, which was *less* than what we had out on detached, and that was because we weren't delivering key worker.

<Applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: In principle, I don't disagree with you, actually we should give the hours, we've not been able to do that everywhere, we haven't had PP that people want to do everywhere, frankly, to be able to do that. And because

it's been more straightforward to recruit in the North, Midlands, than it has been in the Southeast, those establishments generally are getting staffed more quickly, which is why we've continued to use detached duty to support those that haven't. It will get much better by the autumn and I want establishments to have the hours they need to run their new profiles and that is really important because if we're going to make the key worker and offender management model work, if we're going to get regimes right, you do need the hours to run the profiles. And part of the 1:20 ratio is to recognise that you need more resilience when things happen in a gaol, going out on a bed watch, etc., you need that. So it's a fair point and I can't... I'm accepting it but we'll do our best, it will get better over the next few months.

DELEGATE PRESTON: You have a pot of gold to send me out on detached duty, you're reducing the numbers that are out on detached duty through your voluntary scheme now, therefore the war chest is probably still quite full. You need to give the hours to establishments.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Preston. Wormwood Scrubs?

YASMINE MESSAOUDI – DELEGATE, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Hello, sorry, it's my first time speaking. Chair, Conference, Mr Spurr, I've got two questions, if that's alright, the first one's financial, the other one's academic. Pay increments, I believe, are separate to pay rises, so my question is why have we not had a pay increment to the next pay band this April, why are we waiting for a response from the Pay Review Body when the actual pay increment itself should just be automatic?

<Applause>

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO, HM PRISON & PROBATION SERVICE: Well, if we're talking about pay increments which are large now for Fair & Sustainable staff, that's not actually correct. Pay increments which for Fair & Sustainable staff when they were introduced are not automatic, they are subject to annual review and there is no guarantee of a pay increment. We recommended every year staff get pay increments and we've recommended that this year but technically when we implemented Fair & Sustainable and how it was agreed with Treasury and when it brought in, like all public service now where Treasury are introducing new terms and conditions, they're not automatic pay increments. So whilst we recommend it every year and I want staff to have the pay increments, we have to wait for the outcome of the Pay Review Body because they're not automatic, that actually is the position. That's the position of F&S staff on pay increments and has been since we introduced it in 2012.

YASMINE MESSAOUDI – DELEGATE, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: I think I need to review the job advert that I applied to because it was certainly presented that way when I applied for the job.

<Applause>

ASMINE MESSAOUDI – DELEGATE, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: My second question is just a quick one, we've had an interesting gentleman here speaking yesterday, a Professor Wilson, and his view was that... his academic view after working several years in the prison service and actually at my gaol, Wormwood Scrubs, on my wing, C Wing, and his view was that back in those days when, I think, Duncan Barr was the number one governor, he was absolutely astounded that the Prison Officer training was only 16 weeks, and as you now know it's only 10 plus 2 weeks now. His actual view was that we should be studying towards a degree as being prison officers, that should last about three years, quite similar to nursing, what's your view on that?

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO, HM PRISON & PROBATION SERVICE: I'd love to be able to provide more training for all of our staff at every level actually. David Wilson I know well, I knew him when he was in the prison service, I knew him when he was Head of Training, he, like me, is getting a bit older, so his memory's probably gone, we never had a 16 week training course for prison officers, I can tell you. It was 8 weeks when I was a prison officer and it's never been 16 weeks.

Now there's an issue for us always about how much resource you've got for training, so we are absolute... Increased to 10 weeks, it was 8 weeks, it went up to 10 weeks, I would love to be able to do more. We're working through now, which I hope we'll be able to introduce, linking to the funding that comes from the government for apprenticeships, can we actually convert some of the work we do for prison officers into apprenticeships and extend the training for prison officers coming in new, in the future? And it is, frankly, it always is around how much resource have we got for training and, yes, I'd like to do more, but it is within a resource constraint. So the more money we put into prison officer training and lengthen that training, the less money in the overall budget I've got either for numbers of people or training for other people, so it's a balance, but I would like to have a better, more developed training provision for prison officers and actually I want to invest in training at all levels for band 4s for custodial managers in particular, because I think we do need to invest more in that training area, so we are looking to develop that. We're trying to use the opportunity that comes with an apprenticeship levy, where you

can get some more funding for that, to extend training, but it is always within a financial constraint, that's the reality.

YASMINE MESSAOUDI – DELEGATE, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Thank you very much for your time.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well done Wormwood Scrubs, you will thank me for forcing you to speak. The future's in safe hands, well done! The Verne?

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, Conference, NEC, Michael Spurr, you stated in your speech you care about your staff. Can you explain in detail why you've not been in contact directly to support officer Tim Taylor who needed life-saving emergency brain surgery following a very serious assault at HMP Bedford?

<Applause>

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: His future is uncertain and he is currently suffering severe PTSD. A visit from you could have made a significant difference to him.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: I do care about Tim and when that very serious incident occurred you, quite rightly, had immediate support from the governor of Bedford and indeed from The Verne where he was on detached duty.

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: No, I asked from you directly.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: If you ask me, allow me to answer. He did have, from Phil Copple, who's Head of Prisons, contact, flowers to his wife, there was no issue about not caring. If you say to me have I personally engaged with Tim, no I haven't, but Phil Copple who is Head of the Prisons effectively, within my agency, has done that directly. That's pretty senior engagement and it's not that I wouldn't go and visit Tim but there are... and this was a serious incident, I absolutely get that, but there are, unfortunately, staff across the board and the first response should be and is rightly through governor and then through the line. So I haven't personally engaged with Tim, but senior colleagues in my organisation, including Phil Copple, have done just that. And actually I think that is right and I expect people at every level, I expect governors to engage with their staff and managers to engage with staff, where they suffer incidents and assaults, etc., directly, and I do, on occasions, engage with staff, which again, I'm not going to go into here on a personal level. I haven't done that with Tim, Phil Copple has and I'm not going to say any more on that other than I recognise the importance of trying to work with individuals and I've done that throughout my career. And anybody who knows me would know that that is the case.

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: With respect, Sir, you haven't answered the question, I know you haven't done it, I've asked why you haven't done it directly.

MICHAEL SPURR – CEO: Because Phil Copple did it immediately afterwards, because he did that, Phil Copple is Head of Prisons, and he did that directly. And because Phil had done that, I didn't choose to do that, because Phil had done it. In one sense the point... If you'd have been saying to me nobody has been showing concern for Tim, nobody at my board level had done that, I'd be in the point. It's not that I've chosen not to do that, Phil had *done it* immediately this happened on that weekend. I was actually on leave when it happened on that weekend, Phil was absolutely deputising for me, he *did it* and responded. So, yes, in retrospect maybe I should have written a letter in terms of that but it isn't that he was ignored and that's the most important thing I want to say.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you The Verne, a point well put across.

Well Michael, you know, I don't need an audience to speak my mind with you. You know I've always been open and honest with you and after last year's Conference I condemned you on behalf of my Union for your performance and for your performance bonus, which has just been passed at this Conference, and the people in front of you recognise it as nothing more than blood money. But I'm giving you the opportunity to apologise, to apologise to your staff and my members for your ignorance, for your *inaction* and for your *total failure* of this proud service.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: It wouldn't be so bad if you spoke out in the media, like Chief Constables, saying, 'Enough is enough, too many cuts, give us the resources to do our job,' and the excuse that you're a civil servant, a senior civil servant, and you're not allowed to do that, well I'm afraid you are. You can speak out whenever you want, so *do it, support these people in front of you!*

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: You know what, Michael, things will never change as long as you keep promoting failure. You've promoted into a DDC rank somebody who was in charge of your Violence Reduction Strategy for the last two years, which now sees us getting assaulted at a rate of 23 a day. *And they got promoted!* You promoted a governor presiding over a prison where there was an escape and a murder. *Stop promoting failure.* You didn't listen to this Union about staff cuts and the loss of experience, you didn't listen to us about the works contract, you didn't listen to us about budget cuts, you refused to listen to us about increasing the pay scales, you refused to listen to us about incompetent governors, when are you going to start listening to us Michael?

Recruitment, not more than smoke and mirrors, 3,000 extra staff recruited since 2016, yet we've lost, by your own figures, over 3,200, and we're still 3,000 down since 2010. You can't retain staff *because you're not paying us enough!*

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: You're recommending to the Pay Review Body 1%, 1% increase for your staff is nothing more than an insult.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: You said your priority is psychoactive substances coming into gaols, you've got the technology to drop drones; signals, get rid of them. You've got the technology to stop mobile phone signals, implement that, get the resources in at the gate to do searching every day, get dedicated search teams back, get civilians out of security departments, get wall patrols back, that will all help get rid of your psychoactive substances.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And you know when my members deal with people who are high on psychoactive substances and displaying extreme violence, *stop investigating them for using force. You've got an example there!*

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: You've had two staff from Manchester just been cleared in a Crown Court. I'm not asking you to look into it, *I'm demanding that you quash it now, no internal investigation!*

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Your 10 prisons that you're putting extra resources in, I hope they're going to be the most violent prisoners that we face and the PAVA Project, you said it would be a 6 months pilot, it started in November and now you're telling us it won't be finished 'til September. What are we going to be on in September, Michael, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31 staff a day getting assaulted? *Stop dithering, stop pussyfooting around, GIVE US PAVA NOW!*

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: But credit to you, Michael, utmost respect, you've come here, you've faced the music and I think we've got that mutual respect back when we enter into negotiations, you know what you're getting off me, Michael, you always know what I'm like, I speak my mind, and nobody goes away empty-handed from POA Conference. We've got an empty box for you here to keep all your false promises in.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: On a personal level, Michael, credit to you, you've faced up to POA Conference, you've answered questions, you've faced the music, utmost respect and I'd like you to accept this gift on behalf of the POA. Ladies & gentlemen, whether you like it or not, this man deserves a round of applause. Thank you, Michael Spurr.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: I think it's time for a cup of tea!

<Laughter and applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: If you've got a Suzuki motorbike parked outside the headlights are on, so you're probably going to walk home later.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: And Michael Hulse from Haverigg, congratulations on being a granddad for the first time, baby boy born about an hour ago!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, I'd like to introduce our final guest speaker, Professor Keith Ewing, Professor of Public Law at King's College, London and co-author of two of Britain's leading textbooks in constitutional and administrative law and labour law. Keith was educated at Edinburgh University and worked at Cambridge University in England, Monash University in Australia, Osgoode Hall in Canada, before joining the King's College, London Law School in 1992. Please welcome Keith to the stand.

<Applause>

GUEST SPEAKER - PROFESSOR KEITH EWING – PRESIDENT, IER

PROFESSOR KEITH EWING: Conference, thank you very much. I listened to the last debate or contribution, realised this is a very, very tough gig, but I'm ahead, I got that applause already, so I'm doing quite well.

<Laughter>

Sit down while you're ahead! Look, I'd first like to thank the Union for asking me to be here today and for you for coming to this session. I realise that I'm the last of the guest speakers and I'm standing between you and your weekend, so I will try to be as quick as I can, because I've got a train to catch as well. But anyway, the few things I'd like to say is really to pick up on a theme that the General Secretary mentioned this morning, about how we inherit the past and build the future.

I'm going to take that theme in the context of employment rights, which is what I've come here to speak about. And I'd like to begin by saying that I think we're still living in the past and will still be living in the past for the next few years, at least until the next General Election. And in that period I think there are three threats to our employment rights, three continuing threats to employment rights I think we need to be aware of. And the first of these is Brexit. Whatever we think about Brexit, I'm sure that within this room there are very, very different views about the merits and demerits of Brexit but whatever position we adopt on Brexit it remains the case that Brexit presents a threat to employment rights, or at least one version of Brexit presents a threat to employment rights. And I'd just like to give an indication of what that threat is and the three reasons why Brexit will affect employment rights. And the first of these is that there is a danger that it will lead to a gradual erosion of the legacy that we have been bequeathed from the European Union and whether we like it or not the fact is that most of the employment rights that we now have, have a European base, they're there because governments have to put them in place. They are requirements of our membership of the EU. And I think the risk is not that there will be a bonfire of these rights after Brexit but the risk is that there will be a gradual erosion of these rights. Just ask yourself what kind of rights would employers most like to remove and I will give you three examples: one is working time and paid holidays, which is already on the agenda, having been reported in the Murdoch press just before Christmas, as items on the tree that the employers would like to pick; second is the protections such as they are, that we currently have for agency workers, I think there were some employers, recruitment consultancies, who'd like to see these either removed or diluted; and the third will be the TUPE regulations and I'd have thought that again employers, particularly contractors, will have their eyes on these regulations with a view to their amendment and dilution. So that would be one issue I think we need to be concerned about.

The second is that we will lose the right to take cases to the European Court of Justice which allows us to seek a kind of inflation of the rights which are being passed by parliament. People say, 'Well, so what?' But the fact is that by using this process they'll be able to establish a number of victories. I'll give you three examples: one on equal pay, the right to equal pay for work of equal value was a principle established by going to the European Court. In British law at the time equal pay meant the right to equal pay for doing the same work. Under European litigation this was changed and basically the government had to change the law to allow equal pay for work of equal value. Secondly on holiday pay, British law when we implemented the working time directive, we had a number of exceptions and exclusions, the European Court of Justice said, 'No, you can't do this, the right to holiday pay is a fundamental, social right, to which everybody is entitled, regardless of the number of weeks they have worked.' We had a 12-week exclusion, for example, that was removed as a result of an application by a union to the European Court. And the third issue is on discrimination. Now we don't in this country now have a cap on damages that can be awarded by a court in a sex or race discrimination case. Now again, that is as a result of a decision of the European Court of Justice that said that the cap that we had introduced in our legislation when we implemented equal opportunities laws, that cap was in breach of European legal obligations. So just in that opportunity which we have to expand and increase the level of protection which our law provides, that opportunity will be lost as well and we'll have to basically go cap-in-hand to British judges and well... if you've got a good sense of labour history, you will

not be confident of that as a solution or as a replacement to what it is we're about to lose. And the third thing, let it be said, the European Union has not been very favourable to Trade Unions in the recent past but the fact is there are still new initiatives being taken in the European Union and last year, December last year, 2017, they produced something called the European Social Pillar. Now the European Social Pillar is designed to restart the European social agenda after a long period of austerity and some of the things that are coming out of that include a wider definition of who is a worker, so that there is better protection for workers' rights more generally, an attack on zero hours contracts, and better protection for people engaged in precarious types of employment. And these are relevant to our situation because of the nature of employment now in the United Kingdom, but again, these new initiatives which are being pioneered in the EU are not initiatives for which we will benefit post Brexit.

So, I don't know what your position is on Brexit, I'm not going to tell you what mine is. I mean it's a pity we couldn't have voted in the Referendum on a scale of 1-10 rather than on this very binary yes/no, but the fact is whatever we think about the EU we're going to lose, in a sense, we are now vulnerable to the erosion of our rights under a Tory Government between now and an incoming Labour Government, whenever that might be.

So the second threat then, apart from Brexit, is the continued operation of austerity and we heard a bit about that, I think, in the last session. The fact is that since 2010 and the guy's got away with it, Sir George Osborne, I think, was the author of the austerity programme, he announced it, in fairness to him, what was going to happen over the next 10 years, nobody really listened or paid much attention, if they did listen, because what has happened since 2010 is that we've seen a major decline in the levels of government spending as a percentage of GDP. And so government spending as a percentage of GDP has fallen in that 8 year period from 48 to 41% today and that will continue to decline. And that decline, I think, is likely to continue perhaps as a result of Brexit, if we have a Tory Brexit which is based on free trade agreements, then we will see, I think, a further erosion of government spending as the government takes steps to reduce the tax burden in order to attract foreign investments into this country under these free trade agreements. And if we see a continued decline in government spending, a continuing fall in GDP on government spending, what we will... it's bound to have a continued pressure in employment standards, on wages and working conditions.

What I think we face, the danger we face under a continued programme of austerity, is a greater growing casualization of the labour force, which will affect us all. We have already seen the continued rise in the use of zero hours contracts moving into other sectors of the economy, it's not just in the service sector now; a demand on the part of employers to use labour only when they need it, and this, in a sense, is the ultimate commodification of labour, which is all the more ironic because next year will be the centenary of the International Labour Organisation which is built on the principle that labour is not a commodity. Under austerity what we see is the growing commodification of labour through casualization and the increase in precarious work. The government will tell us that we have never had more people in employment in our history, with 30 million people now in work. What the government will *not* tell us at the same time is we also have a crisis of *underemployment*, more people looking for more work and an increase in precarious employment, in the sense people are now very, very vulnerable in terms of hours and conditions, and also an increase in the levels of in-work poverty with an increase in the dependence in food banks at the same time as there is an increase in the levels of employment in our economy. So that is one of the great ironies of the modern age in the sense that there is an increase in employment but an increase also in precarious employment, an increase in the commodification, casualization of employment, and an increase in poverty of those in employment, one of the sectors which has grown most under this government has been the food bank sector, relying on voluntary donations by other working people.

So these I think... I mean austerity is a problem, because austerity will see more cuts which will have an impact on working conditions and at the same time we see the retreat of employment protection, as more and more people are excluded from the protections which the legislation is designed to provide. And the reason for that is because we have this three-tier system of employment rights, kind of segmentation of employment rights. If you're an employee you get everything, if you're a worker you get less, and if you're neither a worker nor an employee you get nothing. And what is happening is that the pyramid is beginning to change and that more and more people are being pushed into this bottom category of people at work who are defined neither as workers nor employees, and who consequently enjoy no employment protection benefits. And this, as you will know, was the subject recently to a government review by Matthew Taylor who was previously Chief of Staff to Tony Blair, appointed by Teresa May, to review the situation. And what they've come up with, I think, is something that will effectively reinforce that three-fold distinction but simply make it clearer, make it clearer into which of these three categories you fall. But what is happening inexorably is that people are being pushed down from one tier to the next and this bottom tier of the wholly excluded is expanding.

So that is the threat of austerity in a sense, austerity leads to less spending, threat to employment standards and the exclusion of employment protection legislation. So my sense is living in the past, we've got two problems, one is Brexit, one is austerity, if it continues and the third, which is not unrelated to either of the other two, is the continuing, ideological assault on Trade Unions. Now this Union knows more than any other about the effect of legislation on Trade Union rights and I'm thinking here of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994, which almost uniquely imposes a ban on industrial action by the members of a Trade Union. And I think throughout the movement people have saluted the

struggle, the fight, the campaigns which this Union has waged against this legislation. And we saw last year in the High Court just how widely that ban extends, to include action which may not necessarily be in breach of contract.

And we've seen also how this Union has led in the International Labour Organisation with a very important and successful complaint to the ILO, the United Nations agency based in Geneva, the ILO said, 'Yes, the current restriction on the right to strike, without any appropriate safeguards is a violation of ILO convention 87, which is an international treaty binding in international law.' The British Government was told that the restrictions currently in place are a violation of your international, legal obligations, but yet of course, the government ignores its legal obligations while employing everyone else to comply with their obligations. And this Union also led a campaign to the European Court of Human Rights to challenge the ban, the European Court of Human Rights in 2013, uniquely said, 'There may well be a breach of your fundamental human rights but because you've gone to the ILO we're not going to intervene in this case,' and basically let the government off the hook. I think the European Court of Human Rights has done in several cases now from the United Kingdom on fundamental Trade Union rights, blinked in the face of pressure, political pressure, from the British Government. But the fact remains that the ban is a violation of the international legal obligations of the British Government and it should be reminded continually of that fact.

But it is not just the POA now which is subject to this ideological assault of which you could say started in the Thatcher years, but has been picked up by the Coalition and now currently the May Government. So what we see under the Trade Union Act of 2016 is an attack on the Check Off and Time Off Facilities for Union officials; we've seen the introduction for those unions which still enjoy their right to strike, new restrictions on industrial action with the 50% participation, and in some cases 40% approval requirements before industrial action can be taken; we seen the steps taken to attack Trade Union political activities, to silence the political voice of Trade Unions so that their campaigning activities, so both Labour party, whatever it is the Union might want to do politically, that these opportunities are restricted by reduced funding; and we've seen also Trade Unions subject to higher levels of state scrutiny through the offices of the government's Certification Officer.

So these are in a sense... as Steve says, we're living... we inherit the past and this is the past that we continue to inherit, this is the past that we continue to live in, it's a past really of threat, continued threat to working conditions and employment standards generally, not just for the POA but for the movement as a whole. And so basically Brexit, austerity, ideology, these continue, despite whatever optimism some people may feel at the moment. And the question then for us, I think, as a movement, is whether we can build another future and what that other future might look like. I think this is why I was asked to come to speak today because in a sense I've come here from the Institute of Employment Rights, which is a think tank for the labour movement, which is supported by Trade Unions, we've been operating since 1989, providing various forms of support for Trade Unions and a wide range of issues, and one of the things in terms of building a new future which we have produced is a manifesto for labour law which basically sets out what a progressive labour law or employment rights framework would look like in the future. Now this document was adopted by the Labour Party at the last General Election, it formed the basis of the Labour Party's proposals for employment rights in the manifesto on which the Labour Party stood at the Election in 2017 and it does offer a very different type of labour law than the one that we have inherited from Thatcher, Major, Blair, Brown, Cameron and May, so basically it's a very, very different future which we'll be tied into, what we would hope would be a very different economic policy and social agenda promoted by a Labour Government.

So let me just say very briefly because I know that we're anxious to move on, three key aspects of this document. The first of these which Richard Burgon referred to this morning was that if you look at the structure of government in this country there is one thing that is missing and that is the voice of workers, who speaks for workers in government? There are 30 million of us we're told now, but where is our voice in governments? And at the moment our voice in government is represented by the Department for Business, Energy and whatever else it is now called. But there's no government minister who's responsible at the Cabinet table to speak for the interests of labour. In the past, when we lived in more progressive times, we had a government department which was called the Ministry of Labour. The function of the Ministry of Labour was to speak on behalf of and to represent and to promote the interests of workers in government at the Cabinet table. And that ministry was supported by a big civil service, which was responsible for the development of working standards, progressive legislation and ensuring that these standards were adequately enforced by means of a big labour inspectorate, which that department employed. Now we are one of the few countries in the world which no longer has a Ministry of Labour, no longer has a voice in government to speak for the 30 million. Even the United States, even the United States under Trump has a Department of Labor, can't spell it, but they've got a Department of Labor, L-A-B-O-R. So the first thing is we want a Ministry of Labour, Secretary of State for Labour, who in the past has been a senior Trade Union official who has found himself or herself in government at the Cabinet table to speak on our behalf, represent our interests. Secondly, a priority of a Minister of Labour as set out in our manifesto and as adopted by the Labour Party in its manifesto, a priority would be to promote collective bargaining and basically to roll out what is referred to as sectoral collective bargaining, which should be universal, the right to bargain collectively is a fundamental human right. It is a right which every worker should enjoy.

Now the problem with collective bargaining at the moment is neatly captured by a very stark statistic which, in a sense,

represents my experience as a worker. When I started work in 1978 I joined the union and at that time 82%, so just close your eyes, 82%, you take nothing away from this session, 82% of British workers in the lifetime of everyone in this room, 82% were covered by a collective agreement, so that's 4 out of every 5 workers covered, protected by a collective agreement. Today that number has fallen on a good day to less than 20%, and I saw a figure last week that drew me up cold, which was in a student essay, reporting 12%. Now in my lifetime it has fallen from 82% to maybe 20%, I don't think it's my fault that that has happened, but that is the reality in the course of a generation of the decline in the levels of collective bargaining coverage, the levels of protection which workers have by a collective agreement.

Now why is that important? It's important, well... it's not important because it reflects a decline in trade unionism or because, you know, it's good for our machismo, we have massive collective bargaining density. That's part of it. But the real reason why it's important is because the higher the level of collective bargaining, in any society, the higher the level of wages will be which is why employers are so hostile to collective bargaining. Collective bargaining delivers high wages.

Secondly, collective bargaining delivers a fair society because collective bargaining helps in the redistribution of income between rich and poor, which is why in the 1930s governments in this country and elsewhere committed themselves to collective bargaining in order to raise wages to redistribute incomes in order to spend themselves out of a recession. So it raises wages, it helps to redistribute income between classes of people within society. But thirdly, it also helps to close the gender pay gap. And if you want to deal with the question of gender pay you can try with legislation; we have an Equal Pay Act of 1970 so we've had an Equal Pay Act for what, that's about 48/50 years. But the gender pay gap has barely, barely moved under a statutory regime. The evidence suggests that the best way to deal with gender pay and any other form of discrimination in pay is to do it through the process of collective bargaining. The higher the level at which pay is determined the less discretion you give to employers to fix people's pay, the less likely it is that you will have a gender pay gap of the kind that we have in this country. So really, in a sense, it's important for trade unions that we expand the coverage of collective bargaining because basically it means that we're reaching more people, we're touching the lives of more people and that should be our ambition. But also collective bargaining is a way of raising wages, it's a way of redistributing income and it's a way of attacking the scourge of gender pay and inequality generally between groups of workers. So that is, in a sense, the second of the major proposals and only government can do this. Only government can make employers engage in this process and that is why we need a different... we can't do it on our own, we need it with the support of government. We need a sympathetic government to deliver this programme for us.

And in a sense the third major feature of the manifesto is the demand, which as an institute we have made since 1989, is that the government of this country should legislate fully to comply with our international legal obligations. And that would include the obligations which this government, and all governments, owe to this Union. So in a sense that would be part of the deal but not just them, the whole range of issues really since the Thatcher years where governments have been told by the ILO that our domestic legislation is not in full compliance with our international obligations arising under these international treaties. And if we did that, not a panacea, but it would help to empower trade unions in dealing with employers and that in a sense, again, is why we're here. We need a legal framework that will support and sustain us in dealing with employers in the future.

So, these would be three core elements and there is other stuff about employment protecting, access to justice, but really at the core of this really is about restoring collective bargaining in order to reach, touch the lives of as many people as possible. And as I say, when I started the trade union movement touched the lives directly of four out of every five British workers, and that, as active trade unionists, is where we need to get back to. So that is, in a sense, where we are, we've inherited, we're living in the past at the moment, we've got to continue to live in the past and the past is a dangerous place for us where there are continuing threats and where there will continue to be threats to our labour standards, our working conditions and our Trade Union rights. But there is a future and I just hope that we can all work together to help to build that future. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Keith. Let's simplify it Conference, if you want to keep your Trade Union rights and don't want them to be eroded, if you want to keep your employment rights and don't want them to be eroded get the Tories out!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Keith, on behalf of the POA please accept this small token of our appreciation. Keith Ewing.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Keith. Can the finance committee fund a proper photographer next year?

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: I'm only messing, Dave.

Right, on with motions then, let's get through business. We're now up to motion 66 from the NEC and it's Terry Fullerton. Do we have a seconder please? Thank you, Wymott.

MOTION 66

The POA condemn this Government in awarding a facilities management contract to Carillion.

NEC

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, speaking on motion 66 on behalf of the NEC asking Conference to condemn this government in awarding a facilities management contract to Carillion.

I'm not going to rehash over all the stuff that was said in the debate on the prior motion 'cause everything that was said in that debate was absolutely correct. But what I do want to say is to add a bit on about the disgraceful way that HMPPS governed that contract, the governance of that contract which saw 60% of the contract specifications in the south not being delivered, which is an absolutely disgrace. But it doesn't surprise me one little bit because just imagine the Carillion boardroom and all the directors sitting round the Carillion boardroom and the Chief Executive says, 'OK, lads we're just getting a smashing contract to deliver facilities in the Prison Service. We need a bit of background on who we're dealing with so who runs their contracts in the Prison Service, who looks after them?' And a fella sticks his hand up in the boardroom and he says, 'It's a fella called Alan' And he goes, 'Alright, and what's his background?' 'Well, according to this he used to be a chief's clerk'. 'Well, what does a chief's clerk do?' 'Well, he does what the chief tells him to do.' 'Alright then, and then what did he do?' 'Oh, he became a DDC in the Northeast.' 'Well, what's a DDC?' 'Deputy Director of Custody.' 'Oh, so he wasn't managing any contracts?' 'No, no, no he wasn't.' 'So then what did he do?' 'Oh, he became Contracts Manager for HMPPS.' So you can imagine all of those Executive Officers in Carillion's boardroom then falling about like Cadbury's 'cause they're just rubbing their hands and say ka-ching! because they've just won the lottery as far as contracts are concerned.

So it's been an absolute disgrace. And to top it all off, after they've done the investigation into Carillion and looked at what the managers were doing with Carillion and you find out that there were profits warnings issued long before the government awarded that contract to Carillion, and you've got Carillion executives changing the rules just before they go bust so that you can't claw back the bonuses that they've been given, which is another disgrace. But you've also got the man who was ultimately responsible who says in yesterday's newspaper, Richard Adam, 'I reject the unwarranted conclusions the committees have reached concerning my role in the company.' What an absolute joke! Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning Conference, two issues with this one and perhaps when Terry comes back he could explain these points. It's right that we condemn any government for awarding a facilities management contract to any company, any private company. We don't think this goes far enough because it also should include Mitie, G4S and anybody else who's got a facilities contract in our establishments. One issue with this one is if we just say yes to this are we therefore saying G4S, Mitie, whoever else are OK? Absolutely not! And the other one is a technical point on this one, it wasn't actually this government that issued this contract, it was the Condemns that issued the contracts to Carillion, however the spirit of the motion is absolutely correct. We shouldn't have any government awarding facilities management in our establishments. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry to come back.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Yes, thanks Swaleside. Dave, if you just take a squint at motion 67, the one that follows, all that will be addressed in that motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Terry. We'll take that to the vote, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, Conference, that's carried. Onto motion 67, speaking for the NEC is Dave Todd who's just been stitched up by Terry Fullerton.

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Do we have a seconder for this motion? Thank you, Humber. You've got to be quick. Go on, Dave.

MOTION 67

That Conference support the NEC in their political campaign to return facilities management contracts to the public sector.
NEC

DAVE TODD - NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, moving motion 67 on behalf of the National Executive and thank you very much, Terry. That Conference support the NEC in their political campaign to return facility management contracts to the public sector. Conference, this is a request to get you to engage your local MPs to return facility management in its entirety back to the public sector and give the taxpayer value for money. Word from Glen from Wymott lead the debate in 65a, seconded by Steve from Hindley, who both gave examples of what's wrong with the private providers so I'm not going to expand any further, they eloquently said it all.

What I will say though is if you look in the news yesterday MPs accused former Carillion directors of recklessness, hubris and greed which led to the firm's collapse, shaming them for misusing our taxpayers' money. If you look at the headlines again yesterday it was announced that the East Coast Main Line is to be brought back under government control, another example of failed outsourcing. Conference, please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: No speakers so straight to the vote. All those in favour, please show. Against? That's carried. 68 is Steve Gillan for the NEC, this is being seconded by Wandsworth.

MOTION 68

Conference approves the appointment of the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) as accountants to the POA & the POA Welfare Fund Charity from the 1st June 2018 until 31st May 2023.

NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, Conference. Conference, this motion comes before you as a direct result of Conference adoption of motion 129 of 2017 brought by the National Executive Committee where Conference accepted Conference paper 2. In brief Conference paper 2 determined that to obtain best value for money in order to strengthen any contract when paying attention to new legislation that a tendering process is commenced for the appointment of accountants/independent auditors with the new appointment being placed before Conference 2018.

Before I move on to explain the rationale behind the motion, I must state that the proposed change in accountants in no way reflect any dissatisfaction with the service that the Union has received from Wilkins Kennedy over the last 70 years, and if this motion is successful, on behalf of the Union I would like to place on record the POA's thanks to both past and present staff at Wilkins Kennedy for the service and support they have shown this Union. But it would be wrong of me not to single out one retired partner for a special vote of thanks, and that's Bob Butterfield, who worked closely with the POA for over 40 years and since its inception in 2002 right up until last month Bob had given his time and expertise to the POA Welfare Fund helping many of our members, both past and present, who were suffering hardship. So on a personal note, Bob was a great help to me when I was Finance Officer between 2005 and 2010 and I am sure I also speak for Pete Hancox and indeed Peter Chapple.

Conference, as instructed by you a tender process was carried out. A subcommittee of the Union was setup by the Executive to carry out this piece of work. Firms were invited to tender for the work, tender documents were provided by these firms and from those documents the two strongest contenders, Wilkins Kennedy and the General Federation of Trade Unions, GFTU were identified and invited to attend Cronin House for an in-depth interview process with the subcommittee. You have two motions before you today, Conference, and this one relates to the provision of accountancy service and motion 69 in relation to the provision of audit services. The reason you have two separate motions before you is simply this: the subcommittee felt that a major consideration during the bid process had to be whether we retained the accountancy and audit services with the same organisation or the two services were separated. After hearing from both organisations the subcommittee formed the opinion that it was professionally important to separate the accountancy work from the audit work as this principle is recommended by the Financial Reporting Council as best practice and provides for a high quality of corporate governance. The Accounting Practice Board Guideline states that the provision of non-audit services by auditors to the clients is referred to as a self-review threat to their independence and could potentially jeopardise their objectivity.

Although both organisations provided a very professional and cost-effective presentation for the subcommittee, Wilkins Kennedy recommended to retain both services together as is the current position, whereas GFTU recommend that they should be separated. With this consideration in mind the subcommittee felt that the organisation who offered a better understanding of our needs, Trade Union and charity legislation, the needs and challenges facing the POA going forward and who could bring a more comprehensive and beneficial package to the POA was the General Federation of Trade Union. The GFTU is a trade union organisation with the same ethical ethos as the POA, they already have a highly qualified professionalised and experienced accounts team from a trade union background who are already administering the finances

for other trade unions and not-for-profit organisations, along with the constituent parts of their own organisation, a registered charity, a trade union federation, a nursery, a hotel and two limited companies. They currently manage nine complicated payrolls, three General Federation of Trade Union pension schemes and a substantial investment portfolio. Another major added advantage of appointing the GFTU as our accountants is that as an affiliate of the GFTU any monies paid by the POA to the organisation goes directly to the trade union movement and therefore helps to keep affiliation fees down to reduce the POA costs on its future trade union education, training delivery, along with the other support we receive from them.

Conference, although the GFTU finance department has the capacity to take on this work as they already have a highly qualified and professional finance team, which is headed up by Wendy Chang who has over 25 years' experience in managing accounts and finances for public, private and not-for-profit organisations, they have also agreed if appointed that they will employ additional staff to assist in the day-to-day management of the POA account. Conference, by supporting the motion and appointing the GFTU as accountants to the POA for the next five years, you will be bringing on board a professional trade union team of accountants in a cost-effective manner who will assist the POA and the POA finance department to face the challenges of the future. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Steve. No speakers so straight to the vote, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. 69 NEC Steve Gillan, against seconded by Wandsworth.

MOTION 69

Conference approves the appointment of Sturgess Hutchinson as auditors & assurers to the POA & auditors to the POA Welfare Fund Charity from the 1st June 2018 until 31st May 2023. NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, thank you Conference. Conference, once again this motion comes before you as a direct result of Conference adoption of motion 129 of 2017 brought by the NEC where Conference accepted Conference paper 2. I explained during the moving of motion 68 that a major consideration of the subcommittee, when dealing with the tender process for accountancy and audit service, was whether we retained the accountancy and audit services with the same organisation or the two services were separated. I also set out why we concluded that these services must be separated and provided by an external organisation to that of the accountants. Sturgess Hutchinson are in independent firm of auditors and assurers who already do audit work for the GFTU and affiliates of the GFTU and come highly recommended by them as part of the tender process. The subcommittee and Executive believe Sturgess Hutchison have a good understanding of the POA and our service requirements. We believe they have the credentials to respond to our current and future needs and have the right approach to deliver a robust, efficient, cost effective and timely audit and assurance service. Since we believe it of paramount importance to separate the accountancy and audit services it makes absolute sense, both logistically and economically, to use the services of a firm of tried and tested auditors already familiar and working alongside the GFTU team, whilst still maintaining their independence. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Steve. We'll take that to the vote, all those in favour please show. Any against? Thank you, that's carried. Motion 70, Feltham; seconder for Feltham please? Thank you, Wandsworth.

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, FELTHAM: Conference, NEC, Chair, we'd like to withdraw this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Lak. Do we have permission for Feltham to withdraw this motion? Thank you, that's withdrawn. 71, Dave Todd for the NEC, do we have a seconder? Thank you.

MOTION 71

Conference instruct the POA to re-start the trades dispute fund.
NEC

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, moving motion 71 on behalf of the National Executive. Conference, the Executive asks you to support the reintroduction of the levy to boost the trade disputes fund, particularly after yesterday with the motions that we accepted to put on the order paper. The trade disputes fund was established by Conference following the submission from Ashworth to support all members. The levy of 30p a month for 12 months ceased but the need remains, therefore we seek Conference approval to restart the levy of 30p a month for 12 months, starting in June 2018. The simple answer, colleagues, that some of our members can take legal and lawful industrial action, these members are not restricted by the provisions of 1994 Criminal and Justice Public Order Act. If these members are balloted and determined that they want to take action to protect their health and safety or to fight for improved terms and conditions which in turn may improve all of the terms or health and safety. Conference, it's a no-brainer, if we do get the indication from colleagues, we need to support them potentially financially. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Gary.

GARY LYONS – BRANCH CHAIR, ASHWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, the NEC are moving this because 76 of 2016 was flawed. We did ask for it to be for a year. A year's not long enough, the money that was raised in that time is a drop in the ocean. If you look back at the verbatim for that, when I spoke on that, I said we've been on strike and one day you'll be where we are, this is your future. You're talking about balloting OSGs, if we don't have this fund we can't support those people when they go out. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Take it to the vote, all those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? Thank you, that's carried. 72, The Verne. Do we have a seconder for The Verne? Thank you.

MOTION 72

Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate another 'Fresh Start' which benefits all staff at no detriment to the working practices of Bulletin 8.

THE VERNE

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion reads: Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate another 'Fresh Start' which benefits all staff at no detriment to the working practices of Bulletin 8. Colleagues, that's the most important bit, is to ask the NEC to try on this and at no detriment to Bulletin 8. The current several different pay scales and different weekly hours caused by Fair & Sustainable, etc., are demotivating and as per NEC speeches throughout the year another Fresh Start is needed. If indeed, for example, they require all staff to complete a fitness test or health screening, then we will expect members to be balloted on this. If they want to scrap Bulletin 8, then I would suggest the NEC walk out. Several different pay scales, different pension ages and some doing fitness tests, some not, is completely fragmented and needs sorting. Please support.

<Applause>

MICK HILLIAM – DELEGATE, LEYHILL: Speaking against the motion. I've been interpreting Bulletin 8 for thirty years and I interpret it differently depending on the argument that's in front of me. We're better at interpreting it than what they are, don't open that can of worms.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy Baxter for the NEC:

ANDY BAXTER – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, asking you to reject the motion. HMPPS are desperate to do away with Bulletin 8. In negotiations last year they wanted to remove Bulletin 8. The NEC believe we would never be able to negotiate another Fresh Start without the detriment to Bulletin 8. The NEC ask you to reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: The Verne to come back?

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: NEC, Conference, Chair, and that reason is why we worded it as such, at no detriment to the working practices of Bulletin 8. They might not say it, we don't know unless we try. If they say we want to redo Bulletin 8, the NEC just walk out, and that's what the motion says.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Simon, take it to the vote, all those in favour, please show? Against? That's lost. I've got indication from The Verne that 73 is being withdrawn? No? Wrong information! 73, the Verne, do we have a seconder? Thank you.

MOTION 73

That Conference instruct the POA NEC takes whatever steps necessary to remove the current CEO from post due to the large rise in death in custody's, large rise in violence towards staff and prisoners and damning Inspectorate Reports all caused by failed project's and Policy's which he has created and implemented such as Benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable.

THE VERNE

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: NEC, Conference, Chair, the motion reads: That Conference instruct the POA, NEC to take whatever steps are necessary to remove the current CEO from post due to the large rise in death in custody, large rise in violence towards staff and prisoners and damning Inspectorate Reports all caused by failed projects and policies which he has created and implemented such as Benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable. Colleagues, we were going to reject this on the wording... we were going to ask to withdraw this on the wording of this motion, which we didn't put down quite correctly, but I don't want you to miss out on another speech from Martin who wants to use this as a forum! I'll read out my speech though.

Staff morale has never been so low with spiralling staff assaults, suicides, self-harm and violence. This is down to fail policies which the current CEO has championed and implemented. Unfair and unsustainable has created a disillusioned workforce with several different pay grades all doing the same jobs, demotivating the workforce with staff being able to earn more in unskilled jobs. Too many experienced staff being allowed to retire on VEDS has created huge problems and a lack of control. An enforced management of attendance PSI without consultation shows a lack of care and understanding to an already battered workforce. Bullying and callous managers who are bullet-proof under the current code of conduct who find themselves not guilty. Benchmarking has also put staff in a vulnerable position, totally unsafe and destroyed the service. And I also told you on the 3rd of March what happened to our member and you heard Michael Spurr earlier, I don't think there's any care there. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, BEDFORD: Mr Chair, the NEC, colleagues, yesterday when I spoke about Mr Spurr I did not include into that discussion deaths in custody because I did not want anybody to misconstrue that we take that as a trivial matter, unlike Mr Spurr this morning, who gloated when he told us how magnificent they had been in that there were only 69 deaths in custody last year, and how brilliant we are at getting better at it. Let me tell you what that really means. That means that there are 69 groups of staff out there somewhere who've had to cut somebody down, plod through pools of blood, and carry a dead person somewhere on the day, and then talk about it in a few days' time when someone comes to interview them and then we'll get the coroner's people coming in and then ultimately there will be the coroner's court.

Before the riot when we were living in Beirut, Bedford was top of the Premier League in deaths in custody, we were having them at unprecedented levels. Then we had the riot, which Mr Spurr acknowledged this morning when answering a question from Birmingham that, yes, there are difficulties for staff after a riot. Yes, Mr Spurr, there are many difficulties, but you don't have to face them like I do, every day I have to look at those men and women coming through the gate, *broken*. I can see it in their eyes, they can probably see it in mine. They are suffering Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome like you'll never believe, that small slither of staff that we have holding it together, that have got more than three years' service, they are broken. Why are they broken? Because of the policies that *you*, Mr Spurr, have introduced and pushed down.

It sounded really credible this morning when he was telling us about how they're changing everything but unfortunately when that paper leaves his desk, it's like paper plane you made at school, it goes whoosh and then it's down on the ground and the impact of it never gets to the governors on the ground, who then run dangerous regimes. What do you think our governor said the morning after our colleagues' man got stamped on? I bet you can guess, 'Get 'em all out on association, that is the best thing for it.' You can imagine what I had to say about that.

So colleagues, whilst it has been identified that potentially the wording in this motion is not quite right, the intent is absolutely correct, and I would urge you to do what I have done, engage the services of the TUC, your local MP, get yourself on the radio, on the tele, wherever you can get to publicise the downfall of the prison service and the man who is running it into the ground. If he was *serious* about fixing the problems he would fix the problem, which is very simply, start by sacking a few number one governors who are running our prisons into the ground, making them death traps for where we enter every single day, because me, I've had enough of it! I don't care if we get a new person who, allegedly, might be worse in his own words, 'Be careful what you wish for.' Well, I'm wishing for a change and please get out there and do what you can to bring that change about *now*.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Duncan Keys for the NEC.

DUNCAN KEYS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY, NEC: Good afternoon Conference, Chair, NEC, the NEC has a tremendous amount of empathy for the obvious sentiments expressed within this motion and indeed, at every possible opportunity, the National Chair, the General Secretary, every member of the NEC, every full-time officer, raises in the strongest, possible terms the abysmal performance of not only the CEO, Michael Spurr, but the entire Prisons Board. They raise these concerns at meetings with politicians of all persuasions, from the Secretary of State down. They raise them with every media outlet that will listen. They raise the dramatic increases in assaults on staff and inmate on inmate. They raise the spiralling number of death in custodies and self-harm. They all raise the corrosive impact of NPS and all those living and working in our prisons and the terrible consequences on health and safety for staff and prisoners. But Conference, unfortunately as has already been stated by the moving and seconding branch, unfortunately the NEC have to oppose this motion purely on its wording.

Benchmarking and Fair & Sustainable were accepted by the POA and not imposed by Mr Spurr. Benchmarking was

ultimately accepted by the Union following an SDC. Fair & Sustainable was accepted by the Union following a ballot of the affected membership. Michael Spurr may well have had a role to play in the concepts of both matters, however, the decision to accept the eventual proposals was taken by the POA and its members. There is absolutely no doubt that the performance of Mr Spurr and his board of directors should mean that they all deserve summary dismissal for their abject failure to manage a prison system which borders, at times, on totally dysfunctional. No doubt at all that if they had any sense of their own failures and value that they would have refused any so-called performance bonus. Indeed, you also have to wonder at the mental capacity of whoever thought that their performance in presiding over the rapid decline of a once proud organisation and workforce deserved anything other than the sack. They clearly need to be picking their P45 up as well. But the reality of how benchmarking and Fair & Sustainable were ultimately accepted mean that the NEC must, very regretfully, ask Conference to reject this motion.

We must not place the Executive in a position where the Union could be exposed to the rebuttal of this motion by Mr Spurr and the Prisons Board. The capital that HMPPS would make from the Union making erroneous claims against their CEO could damage the POA at a time when its political currency is high value. The NEC as a body will continue to call for the removal of Mr Spurr and his acolytes at every possible opportunity to anyone and everyone who will listen and, of course, also to those who don't want to hear. And much as it will disappoint the moving branch, and much as it pains the Executive, I must ask Conference to reject this particular motion purely on its wording. Please reject the motion. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Duncan.

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, the point of order is that on motion 66 where it was identified we were actually condemning the wrong government for introducing the Facilities Agreement, it went through. I think it's a bit unfair for this motion to be rejected on the wrong wording. Do we have a ruling on that, Mr Chair?

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well, that motion when through because Conference decided it was going to go through, despite the explanation you've just highlighted and they'll do the same for this motion. We give advice on the wording to branches, if they choose not to change and it's accepted, it's for them to explain at Conference, so thanks for your point of order, the ruling is it goes ahead.

Verne, would you like to come back?

SIMON JOSLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, the Standing Orders Committee did suggest that wording.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll see what Conference has to say then, won't we?

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, over to you. All those in favour, please show? All those against? That's lost. 74, Swaleside. Elmley to second, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Simon, take it to the vote, all those in favour, please show? Against? That's lost. I've got indication from The Verne that 73 is being withdrawn? No? Wrong information! 73, the Verne, do we have a seconder? Thank you.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Chair, Conference, still Dave Cook, still Branch Chair, Swaleside for a few more hours.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: A few more hours, you best be quick!

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Get on with it!

<Laughter>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I'd just like to say it would be fantastic if we could get through this quickly because I do need the loo. If you will just indulge me one minute, the fact is I'd like to give my personal thanks to the nominating branches and also all the membership that voted and has elevated me to the National Executive Committee and I give you my absolute personal thanks for that and my utmost promise that I will do everything I can to improve the

benefits of our membership. Thank you.

<Applause>

MOTION 74

That Conference recognise the need to acknowledge long term membership to the POA, in the form of awarding a long term membership recognition badge/ brooch, i.e.

A bronze badge for 10 years membership.

A silver badge for 15 years membership

A gold badge for 20 years membership

Or an award in a similar vein.

If agreed by Conference, then the design of the badge or adornment to be opened up to the membership for suggestions and then to be agreed by the NEC.

This motion to be achieved by Conference 2019.

SWALESIDE

Swaleside brought this motion forward because we feel that sometimes we have unsung people in our branches up and down this country who we fail to recognise. And that is the fact is we have members in our branches throughout this country who have no desire to become representatives, who have no desire to become National Executives or representatives but still turn up at all our branch meetings, have been members since the day they joined this service, paid their dues and have done everything that this Union has asked for them to do on the three occasions or more when we've actually stood outside our gates, and there seems to be very little recognition of these people.

Now in putting this motion forward we're aware that the Union do provide a certificate for 25 years membership of this Union. A certificate. It will go on the wall, it will go in the toilet or it may even go in an attic. What we're asking for is something that is visible that somebody can wear with pride and actually show that they have been long-term members of this Union and that may actually increase or keep our membership and increase it in the future, where somebody wears something like and adornment, it could be a badge with 10 years, 15 or 25 years, whatever it is, written on it, to show that they've been stalwart members of this Union. At the moment they have no visible way of demonstrating that.

Now we've actually put down some examples and I stress the point is that these are just examples, 10, 15 or 20 years, it could be whatever's decided, whether 10 years is sufficient, 15 years is sufficient, or 20 or more, but we're asking for the fact is that we should be proud in our membership of this Union and just give us something that we could give to our members to show that they are recognised. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Dave, responding for the NEC, Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR, NEC: Chair, Conference, responding to motion 74 on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to accept this proposed motion from Swaleside. We will look at this as it says, to be achieved by Conference 19, the NEC will try their utmost to achieve this motion, but let's hope that going forward in the future that the attrition rate changes or we may end up with boxes full of badges and adornments at Cronin House because we've got to stop the attrition rate to be able to hand some of these badges out. But, yes, we'll accept this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks Terry, happy to go to the vote, Dave? To the vote then, all those in favour? Any against? That's carried, thank you. 75, Sudbury, seconder for Sudbury? Nottingham.

MOTION 75

Can Conference confirm its support for the Retired Members Committee.

SUDBURY

GEOFF WILLETTS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, we're asking Conference to support this motion, can Conference confirm its support for the Retired Members Committee? This motion is quite simple but means a lot to the Retired Members Committee, that is why Sudbury has recognised their concerns. The Retired Members

Committee is made up of a committee of volunteers that are passionate and believe in our Union. These friends, ex-colleagues, volunteers, don't have facility time, dropped tasks or ways of obtaining time from the employer, they support the 3,500 retired members in their own time, they don't even have branch funds to do this. They are the foundation of our Union who have paid their subs for many years, not to mention the sacrifice of endless personal time, relationships and supportive partners that we all know bolster our Union. It quite clearly states in our rules and constitution under 5.2 that retired members are not entitled to any of the rights or benefits of the membership apart from (a) the Union's official journal, which is shrinking; (b) the Union's diary; (c) the death benefit, an amount which is fixed from time to time by Conference; (d) any other commercial benefit as approved from time to time by the NEC. This committee wants to enhance the welfare of past and present members but are no further forward than two years' ago, so lift the barriers on the Retired Members Committee so they can support their members. If you haven't noticed that the Retied Members Committee should have had a stall in the other room, but they have no funds to decorate it, no money for cheap pens or cheap gifts, and I'm sure I've seen a few sleeping rough outside Conference hall, as they have no branch funds. But we can supply accommodation, meals, expensive gifts for visitors of our Conference, it's disgusting and despicable that we as a Union treat the Retired Members Committee like this. We should be supporting them so they can support the people that founded our Union. Their knowledge, experience she be utilised to promote and protect all of our members, it feels like once our colleagues, friends and brothers and sisters, once retired, we kick them to the kerbside with minimal access to our benefits once we've taken their money for all them years.

At the moment the name Retired Members Committee is namesake only. I guarantee everyone in this Conference will retire at some point, so on that note, support the Retired Members Committee so they can support their members. Support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Chris Donovan for the NEC.

CHRIS DONOVAN – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, Chris Donovan responding in behalf of the NEC. The NEC fully supports this motion, Pete Hancox spoke yesterday and explained in detail the Retired Members Branch and their aims. As Geoff just said it comes under Rule 5 and there's also a flyer in your packs, I hope you've read it. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Chris. Go to the vote, all those in favour, please show? Any against? That's carried. 76, Sudbury, do we have a seconder for Sudbury? Guys Marsh. This is an update so it doesn't need a vote.

MOTION 76

Conference be given an update of any progress that the Retired Members Committee have achieved in the enhancements of the benefits to retire members.

SUDBURY

ROGER MOORE – DELEGATE SUDBURY: Conference, NEC, can Conference be given an update of any progress that the Retired Members Committee have achieved in their announcements of the benefits to retired members? We've not got a clear understanding of what's available to members that have either retired or coming up to retirement. As my colleague said earlier, Rule 5.2 definitely states death benefits of an amount, fixed time to time by Conference, (d) any commercial benefit as approved from time to time by Conference and the NEC, and it also covers it in rule 18.2, it covers part (c) as well. It is not clear and open to interpretation and semantics, so clarity is needed to some of the points mentioned in Rule 5.2.

Other Unions embrace the Retired Members Branch, so what have we done to improve finance our retired members? Over to you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Duncan Keys on behalf of the NEC.

DUNCAN KEYS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY, NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, the update that I can give would just be a complete reproduction of the advice that was given by Pete Hancox yesterday to Conference on behalf of the Retired Members Committee. During that presentation to Conference he informed us that by December 2018 the Retired Members Committee hoped to be in a position to have given a report to the National Executive which contained their recommendations for improvements and enhancements to the benefits that are going to be enjoyed by, hopefully, the retired members section. I think I would throw in as well that the POA doesn't just rely on these enhancements that are coming. We are currently looking after people that retired from the service and in fact became retired members many years' ago in the historic abuse cases that are going on. So there's a whole variety of ways that the POA are currently assisting people who have retired from the service or whichever organisation they work for and are in the retired members section.

So, like yourself, Sudbury, and everyone else in the room, including the National Executive, we'll be looking forward to the report that's put forward by the Retired Members Committee and hopefully at Conference next year those enhancements will be put forward to Conference. And Chair, that is the update, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Duncan, do you wish to reply, Sudbury?

ROGER MOORE – DELEGATE, SUDBURY: No, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. That's an explanation, Conference, so we're on to 77, Sudbury. Do we have a seconder for Sudbury? Thorn Cross. This is a debate.

MOTION 77

Conference debate the problems that are particular to the Open Estate.

SUDBURY

GEOFF WILLETTS - BRANCH CHAIR, SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, here again. This motion reads: Conference debate the problems that are particular to the open estate. I'm not sure if Conference, NEC or HMPPS understand the problems that are particular to the open estate. Being a poor relation to the prison service it has always been perceived that the open estate is the easy part of the service, sleepy Cat D, dead man's shoes, quotes like that that I've heard whilst returning prisons to closed estates. I won't disagree that the conditions surroundings are somewhat better than a closed estate but things are changing for the worse, the overflowing, wrong categorisation of prisoners being allocated to open conditions, the drugs, phones and the new trend we have, is intruders. Yes, we've had intruders, carrying holdalls, entering our establishments at night, on numerous occasions.

The recent public media concerning escalating violence only highlights the problems around the estates and in society, but not forgetting the open estates who have no physical barriers to put between staff and prisoners, and prisoners move freely 24/7, if they wish. We do not have alarm bells or staff to come running, and depending on the understaffed regimes as we have not had any extra staff, as we've been left out of the OMIC model that has given you all extra resources and staff under key worker, left out again. We have always been a distant thought when policies and processes have been developed, open-ended PSOs and PSIs, that have no bearing or fit for purpose for the open estate, leave maverick governors making up their own rules as they go along.

But we like to take this opportunity to thank the NEC for taking our motion last year concerning batons in the open estate. We have been issued batons on nights, it's a start but we need more. PAVA spray, rigid cuffs, search teams, drug dogs, etc. But Conference, we are a rehabilitative prison that lets prisoners out of our establishment daily, working in the community, with contact with the public. If we can't monitor or restrict drug use in prisons, how can we do that when these prisoners are in the community mixing with the public? We have a duty to protect the public, we're failing.

I would like to open this debate up for everybody to share their views. Thank you.

<Applause>

PAT McLAREN – BRANCH SECRETARY, THORN CROSS: National Chair, Executive, Conference, I'd like to thank Geoff for bringing this debate to the table, because it's actually quite important. He's covered most of the stuff that I was going to talk about. On the issue with intruders on more than one occasion during a walk around the prison, I've had to pick up pizza boxes, kebab wrappers, empty Jack Daniel bottles. The Northwest area search team was in Thorn Cross only about two months' ago doing their job, targeting a particular unit in the prison which was easy access to intruders for delivering all of this kind of stuff. They were doing a cracking job, the Deputy Governor turned up, decided they were doing too good a job and instructed them to stop and put everything back where it belonged. The Northwest Area Team obviously didn't really like that, we haven't seen them back in the establishment since because they refused to come in and work under those conditions.

We receive, at Thorn Cross, prisoners who still have three years left of their sentence, it's *totally* inappropriate. We're up against the Parole Boards who are sending these prisoners to us and re-categorising them as Cat D prisoners. They shouldn't be doing that but we need to do a bit of work around that, I feel.

Please join the debate. What I would encourage you to do is actually have your area meetings at open establishments, if you're not already doing that, because actually you might get a bit of insight as to what's going on here as well. But finally, I would like to acknowledge the work that the closed estate are doing, because whilst we're working in these open conditions, we actually do realise the high levels of violence, the high levels of stress and the high levels of mismanagement which is going on in the closed establishments. I myself have been there, I've done that. I was in Liverpool for 20 years,

Brixton for 5, before I went to Thorn Cross, so it's not as if we don't understand what you're actually going through. So I applaud you for the work that you do in your closed establishments and carry on the good work.

<Applause>

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates, I think I've got a sad life, but Sudbury have got a sadder life than me. I got a text message this morning, 'You've made the news, we've actually won something, we come top of the league! 80 out of 100 prisoners have all got mobile phones, we're the top of the list.' Intruders. Last week I spent about half-an-hour chasing one, just before roll check. He was throwing over Xboxes, four of them! We got two of them, we got the prisoner, we got the van. Well, we didn't get the prisoner, we got the visitor, he's been identified, so hopefully the police will take him forward.

We've now got three officers on nights, not because we need it because we're at risk, the fact they're going round hooded-up at night, trying to get parcels but we got the third officer because of the fire risk, so we've now got a third officer. So we got an SO, 3 officers and 3 OSGs for 541 prisoners that maybe locked up, but could be elsewhere, who this week we shipped out 5 because they've decided that the new mobile phone detectors are too good, we're finding too many mobile phones, as I've just said. So they've now started a WhatsApp group, so they actually WhatsApp each other to tell where the staff have gone. 11 were identified the week prior to Conference, 5 were transferred out on Tuesday. We sent out another 4 yesterday, I believe, because they were pissed, they'd had a party the night before. We have 6 members of staff on nights, 3 officers and like I said, 3 OSGs. And during the day at weekends we're down to MSL. We virtually work on MSL of 6, MSL of 6 and maybe of duty.

We've got prisoners running the open estate. If they're not stoned and assaulting staff, which we had in November, one's only just come back on phased return, three were assaulted at five o'clock in the morning when they're doing receptions. He was stoned out of head. They put him in a block, so he decided to run up and down the cells smashing his head on the wall, because he was so stoned, he can't remember a thing. Like I said, one's just come back. The open estate is definitely the poor estate, we get the crap, and I mean the crap, and that's politely. We saw what happened in 2010 when we had a riot, they burnt half the gaol down. Sooner or later that is going to happen again. The prison service need to look at categorisation of prisoners. Give us Cat D so we can actually do what we're designed for, as a resettlement gaol.

Please join the debate.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Chair, Conference, NEC, for those that don't know, Hewell branch also includes a 217 capacity Cat D, formerly known as Hewell Grange. The issues we experience at Hewell Grange are excess of drugs readily available, Cannabis has made a real, big comeback, the ability to use mobile phones, because we don't block the signals and we don't have a sufficient resource to catch mobile phones, the amount of alcohol that comes in is easy to drop. The Hewell Grange is a great, big stately home covered by parkland and it's easy to access. And on that point the public are able to access the grounds without challenge.

Also we've got the lack of medical services in support for our prisoners, poor maintenance. The Chair and the General Secretary have been to Hewell Grange recently and I pointed out all the shoddy maintenance and the stuff that gets put in there which is for domestic use, but you're having 200 prisoners using the washrooms and the toilets and stuff like that. It's embarrassing when we've only got 2 showers for 200 people on a regular basis, that actually work. There's also violence towards staff, when we try and catch a prisoner with a mobile phone, he's going to fight you for it or he's going to try and leg it. One way or another we are under pressure. Also because we're aligned to a Cat B local and we all know what the staffing levels are at, we're constantly working under profile in order to support the shortage down in the closed sites, so they can unlock prisoners but what you have to realise is we don't have the option of simply not unlocking and when we are below staff, we are not out on the grounds, we're not stopping, we're not searching, and prisoners are getting a free reign to walk in with what they like because there's just no staff around to do the necessary.

Hewell Grange and also all of the open estate should be proud of what is achieved there, prisoners at the end of their sentences leave with reasonably well-paid jobs, as a result of new skills gained in custody, that's *exactly* what prison should be all about, we should be proud of that. However, Hewell is a smaller gaol and under constant talk of it's not worth running, it needs to close, but it's proof, when compared to our 1,000 bed Cat B local sites that smaller prisons are far more effective in achieving the aims of the prison service than larger warehouse prisons. However, for Hewell the hardworking staff should be thanked for all the their efforts in challenging conditions, but all we've had in the past 6 months is to be given a verbal

beating from our governor for not working hard enough.

Please join the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, Ian Carson responding on behalf of the NEC, thinking Sudbury for bringing this debate. And I would like to start by shining a light on Sudbury because when I was elected to the NEC Sudbury was one of the goals I looked after, the old guard had retired and things started to go downhill. Well, let me tell you things have changed and in the last few years Sudbury have almost doubled their membership. Now why are people flocking to the POA in an open prison? Well, it's because of the success they're having. Even the Imam is a member of the POA at Sudbury and I hear that the governor's cat has just put in application to join the Union as well. They clearly have many of the problems and issues that we face without the resources and the move to carry batons during night state is a small step in the right direction, but we've got more to do. And one of the aims of the Executive at this moment is to have PAVA rolled out across the estate and this must include the open estate.

Conference, thank you very much for the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Ian, thank you for that debate, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Sudbury, motion 78, Conference motion 63 was carried, therefore this falls as it would be incorporated into Union policy. We've now got 79, Sudbury. Do we have a seconder for Sudbury?

PAUL MALLIBAND – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRESTON: Point of order, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Point of order.

PAUL MALLIBAND – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRESTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, given the ruling that we've just had there on Conference motion 77, I would argue that motions 78, 79, 80 and 81 all fall in the same remit of that motion of 63.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Well, 79's a debate.

PAUL MALLIBAND – BRANCH SECRETARY, PRESTON: ...effectiveness and it's all about reviewing.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah, 79's a debate and the other motions, I'm happy with the decision of the Standing Orders Committee, so Sudbury, when you're ready, you're very welcome to address motion 79.

MOTION 79

Conference to debate the effectiveness of the disputes procedure and the role of the National Disputes Committee.

SUDBURY

GEOFF WILLETTS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion reads: Conference to debate the effectiveness of the disputes procedure and the role of the National Disputes Committee. Conference, this motion is one that is close to our branch, but speaking to other branches it has been relevant concerns about the national disputes process. We as in the branch after 2015 Conference, as directed by motion 16 from Garth concerning Personal Officer no longer exists, we went back to our establishment and disputed this fact, as directed by Conference. As per the PSO 85/25, we negotiated by every means at local level. We're in the process, we even involved NOMS industrial relations team, a couple of NEC officials and a local SMT. After exhausting every avenue we've escalated the national disputes to the National Disputes Committee where it was pushed back to local level. This was then escalated back but seemed to be a long game of tennis.

In the meantime our members and in particular, myself, are being reprimanded, bullied, victimised and harassed through the SPDR process, causing stress, worry and illness, nearly three years' on my members have been let down by the previous Disputes Committee and the current Disputes Committee. No further forward but I'm sure you're thinking to yourself, keyworker is the answer, but not in the open estate, as the OMIC model is on the horizon. As we are all aware that

85/25 – I even read that falling into bed, I don't know how I mistook that – the flaws but fundamental basics are written in stone and need to be followed. I've heard that pending them arbitration is close by, will that process work? Not too sure. Is there a need for a National Disputes Committee? Can't answer that one *but* I can tell you we have not had good experience and it's not been very effective for all at HMP Sudbury. What I can tell you the National Disputes Committee past and present has let my members down. But there is always a positive that outweighs a negative as we as a branch have united locally and stood by, side by side, supporting our members. I've double the membership since taking up the post of Chair.

I ask Conference to debate this motion as I'm sure you all have relevant stories and opinions. Thank you.

<Applause>

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, I'm back up here again about improving communication between the NEC and local branch officials and this is one area that really needs improvement. Our powers, branch officials at local level, is the threat that if Committee cannot agree with the SMT we can take our dispute outside the prison and have it decided by our NEC and our employer's national managers. That threat in itself is often enough to do the trick as most local governors don't want disputes escalating outside their prison, usually because as we all know, governors are always in the wrong. However, once our dispute gets escalated upwards it seems to disappear and trying to find out how it is progressing often proves very hard and very vague, with little feedback at all.

I've only ever had one dispute progressed to a point where our branch won and our governor was instructed by her bosses to back down, so on that occasion it had clearly been dealt with properly. However, all the rest have not been like that, every one of them ended up getting sorted out at local level because time went by and there was no feedback whatsoever. All my emails to Cronin House just got passed back and forth and no one could give me any clarity on the progress of any of my disputes. Only recently I had two emails from Cronin House asking me if specific motions were still ongoing. These were for well over 18 months' ago and by now they'd been resolved locally. This proves to me that the system clearly isn't working properly. How could the NEC still think they were live if are supposed to be decided on a national level and the outcomes communicated properly back to my committee? I again volunteered to work with any NEC member on coming up with a better system of communication in regard to live disputes and maybe Sudbury's next motion will go some way to improve things.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, Dave Todd for the National Executive, joining the debate. I think there are points that have been raised that are levelled correctly, communication is a difficult thing, the biggest firms in the world cannot get it right; you wouldn't expect the NEC to get it right all the time. However, what I will say is a lot of disputes are better managed at a local level, do you want somebody sitting up in an ivory tower deciding what's best for you in your establishment? That ain't right. If you can sort it out locally, it's a lot better for you. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Dave. That was a debate so no need for a vote. 80, Sudbury, which has been seconded by Garth.

MOTION 80

Conference support a process that brings a restructure to the National Disputes Committee to include the Local Branch Official's attendance within meetings regarding their dispute/disputes.

SUDBURY

GEOFF WILLETTS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion reads: Conference support a process that brings a restructure to the National Disputes Committee to include Local Branch Official's attendance within meetings regarding their dispute/disputes.

Conference, we have heard the previous debate, we as a branch feel that there are meetings regarding local disputes that have reached the National Disputes Committee and the best input to voice these disputes are the branch officials that have been part of the process from the start. Working with the NEC officials at a level and advising them on local procedures would benefit the National Disputes Committee in obtaining the full picture and resolving the issues quicker. This would also allow branch officials to get the knowledge of the National Disputes procedures and educate committees working together to protect our members. Support this motion.

<Applause>

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Garth are happy to second this motion for the reasons I spoke of in the previous debate on the issues surrounding the disputes process. We would like to see the Branch Chair or Sec work closer with the NEC rep regarding local disputes and be invited along with the area rep to the Disputes Committee meeting and at any

further hearing or official discussions with the employer. This would mean the dispute is properly and clearly communicated because branch officials know more about their own dispute than the area rep and Dave Todd's just acknowledged that in his last speech. It's then very clear to the branch how the dispute is progressed, what discussions have taken place and what and why any outcome would be reached.

We need to improve how we communicate and this motion will benefit every branch official here today and empower you, locally, when negotiating with your governors. Conference, please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Speaking for the last time on behalf of the NEC, Terry Fullerton.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR, NEC: Thank you Chair. Conference, replying to motion 80, from Sudbury, on behalf of the NEC.

What can I say about the disputes process? It is an absolute mess because it frustrates our own NEC officials to go to a disputes meeting with a list of disputes that seem to get longer every time we get there because you sit opposite people from employer relations group and you have possibly Phil Copple sitting there and we go through the evidence that we've got from the dispute, sometimes it's not a lot of evidence, but we go through the evidence that we've got from that dispute and we get the answer back from the Chief Operating Officer and we ask, 'How are we going to progress this dispute?' and his answer is, 'Well, I'm going to write back to the governor to get an update from the governor to see what's happening about that dispute.' And then we get no further forward with it because then we have to wait for the next disputes meeting to see what that information comes back from the governor. That happens time and time again and I take Garth's point that sometimes the communication is pretty poor on this issues. And, Conference, we have no problem with accepting this motion from the NEC.

We've heard from our own National Chair that hopefully they'll be a new disputes procedure coming and Michael Spurr made reference to it as well and hopefully what Sudbury are asking for can be incorporated into that new disputes resolution agreement. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Terry. Conference, all those in favour, please show? Any against? That's carried. Motion 81 Oakwood, seconder for Oakwood? Thank you.

MOTION 81

Conference accept the recommendation in line with Rule 22.2(a) of the National Committee for Private Sector Services (NCPSS) and agree to the employment of two officers to oversee the interests of members in the private sector, the management of the NCPSS and ensure progression, development and recruitment within that sector for the union.

OAKWOOD

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP OAKWOOD: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 81 reads: Conference accepts the recommendations in line with Rule 22.2(a) of the National Committee for Private Sector Services and agree to the employment of two officers to oversee the interests of members in the private sector, the management of the National Committee for Private Sector Services, and to ensure progression, development and recruitment within the sector of the Union.

Colleagues, this is a motion that our colleagues in the private sector should never have brought to Conference. Disappointingly our NEC have twice rejected the recommendations from the National Committee for Private Sector Services, despite support from the Committee Chair, our Deputy Secretary General, Andy Darken, and we therefore need your support, Conference, to ensure that our colleagues in the private sector finally get the representation and support from the POA that we need, which is long overdue. This matter was first raised in the Abnormal Meeting of the National Committee for Private Sector Services on the 25th of October, 2016, in line with Union rules and the constitution, which states: The National Committee for the Private Sector Services *will* recommend the manner in which members of the Union employed in the private sector services further their aims, objectives and professional aspirations. At that meeting the following motion was passed: that two officers were to be appointed to oversee the progression and representation in the private sector. It was perceived by the committee that two positions would fulfil the roles of Chair and Secretary to the Committee and further detail in the rules and constitution. Our committee believed that the appointments of the two officers was necessary in order to subject the aims, the aspirations of members of the private sector, and we naively, as it seems now, expected our NEC to support the recommendations in line with our rules.

The committee need two appointed officers to oversee the management of members in the private sector, the management of the NCPSS and to ensure progression, development and recruitment within the sector for this Union. Currently no officer of our Union is tasked with such a role currently in the contract. Although we accept the role, we'd also include other work and duties as directed by the General Secretary and detailed in their contracts. Conference, if we are going to grow the membership of our Union within the private sector and indeed, ensure that our members within the private sector receive a good service as the service they do in the public sector, then it is vital that we take the bold and necessary move to recruiting officers to specifically oversee this work. It is clear that our members within the private sector, particularly those members that work in establishments without branch committees on site or any recognition between the POA and the employer need and deserve a full-time union official employed by the Union. These officers would support and progress their aims, aspirations and workplace issues and, in short, improve terms and conditions. Even where the recognition within the employer in place, such as ICE, the country escorting, within the company of Mitie. The nature of their business makes it impossible to have a local branch structure as defined within our rules and support the members in the workplace. In these circumstances it requires officials employed by the Union to represent and support members. Currently the POA structure means that our area representatives are given a maximum of 50% for facility time by HMPPS. But this is only to support members who are employed in the public sector. No facility time has been granted to represent members within the private sector who are employed by our employers. It is accepted that over the years area representatives of the POA have represented members in the private sector, but this is with HMPPS turning a blind eye, and it's a practice it's no longer prepared to do. The current position is that the POA facility time within the public sector is subject to ever-increasing scrutiny and the POA representatives employed in the public sector will only be given the time to represent the members within the sector, which is likely to be more restricted in the future. It is with all these issues in the private sector in mind that the employment of two full-time officers specifically to represent and manage our private-sector membership is now a necessity for the POA. The light's flashing so I'm going to ask you to support this motion. It's very important that we progress membership throughout the POA to make us stronger.

<Applause>

PAUL FOSTER – BRANCH CHAIR, NORTHUMBERLAND: Chair, NEC, Conference, first-time speaker so please be a little bit gentle with us, especially being private sector. I want to speak on behalf of this motion. Five years ago Northumberland went through a merger, joining Castington and Acklington which you probably still know better than Northumberland. During the merger we experienced benchmarking followed by privatisation. The staff codes were absolutely horrendous. The entire Prison Service suffered with the government saying, 'Look what the private company can do.' The committee that was in place at that time all left the establishment. As an inexperienced group, the new committee had to undertake all the usual pay way rolls locally as well as TUPE transfers, pay negotiations, multiple staff Ts and Cs, different HR policies that on occasions even baffled the solicitors at Thompsons. This was all done in glorious isolation and with minimal input from the NEC. The employment of these two officers will assist private sector branches moving forward and be invaluable to any establishment that has to go through what we had to go through. One of the hardest tasks that we have locally is keeping the POA relevant to our membership. We receive numerous calls from branch meetings and votes which are completely irrelevant to us in the position we're in. Everyone in this hall wants exactly the same thing: a strong POA to challenge management and government on all levels to create a safe workplace environment with its members' rights protected. I am, and always will be, opposed to the principle of privatisation but the reality is that it's here to stay and the sector is only going to grow bigger. I don't believe the political rhetoric that was up there this morning. We had the letter read by Steve Gillan. Tony Blair. We've all been there. I don't believe it. It's not going back. These contracts are signed, it's not going to happen. At Northumberland, just like Birmingham, we were sold off with the fixtures and fittings to the lowest bidder, like it or not, and let's be honest, everyone sitting in this hall thought thank god it's not us. Our committee has over 200 years' service as public sector prison officers, but had adjusted to working for a private company and believe it or not, it's not all bad. We have good industrial relations with management at all levels. The POA is welcomed at the decision making that would never happen in the public sector. The simple fact is there is still no representation of the private sector on the top table, following the recent elections. The private sector badly needs the support of these two officers, so branches and committees all over the country have the same support as the public sector. Thank you for your listening and I implore you to support this motion.

<Applause>

MICK BODY – BRANCH CHAIR, WINSON GREEN (BIRMINGHAM): Mr Chair, NEC, Conference, Winson Green (also known as HMP Birmingham). First time at Conference, first time speaker on a motion, and I'm on facility time, thank you!

<Laughter>

MICK BODY – BRANCH CHAIR, WINSON GREEN (BIRMINGHAM): My predecessor, Brian Clarke, started at Conference the National Committee for Private Sector Services. This has been well chaired and supported by Andy Darken. We wish him well for the future and we will miss his advice and guidance. We look forward to Joe Simpson to carry on this work. The private sector members are now starting to make up a significant proportion of this Union. It's not the fault of G4S, Serco,

Sodexo, other private companies are available if you wish, for running these contracts. It's the fault of the consecutive governments, both Tory and Labour, that have let this membership down. With the different policies and rules in the private sector, it's time for Conference to accept the recommendation from the National Committee for Private Sector Services and agree the employment of two officers to oversee the interests of the private sector members until all services are returned to the public sector. I ask Conference to accept this motion.

<Applause>

RAY SOMERS – BRANCH SECRETARY, ICE IMMIGRATION BRANCH: Chair, NEC, Conference, guests at the back there, life-long members, it isn't my first time here! I've been here for years, too many, not many times at the rostrum though.

Have we progressed? We've got a committee, we meet. Apart from that, have we got any further here? No. I don't feel so. Why? Because you, Prison Service, work within four walls and you all do the same job and you know your jobs and you're all together. You haven't got a clue what we do. Or about our way we operate. Guys up there have had to learn it, the way we do, but we need dedicated people that is there to look after our interests. Brian at the back, when they went private, the next year he came to Conference and every time he got to this rostrum he rubbed it in that he was here on full facility time. G4S, full facility time. And that hurt you, Conference, because you'd just had all your facility time cut. Sat over there, listening to him, I was smiling to a certain degree 'cause I'd also had my facility time cut as well. I've just gone over on my fourth TUPE, 13 companies that I've worked for now. I've got to find out how generous this company's going to be to us, but through the years I've lost my facility time, like you have, and I cannot go up and down the country and look after my branch, and I'm not giving them value for money. And we need the two people up there dedicated to help us. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, supporting this motion from our colleagues in the private sector. You only have to look at the delegates list in front of you and wonder where's Bronzefield, still in our diary as a branch, Doncaster, that's still in our diary as a branch, Peterborough, that's in the diary as a branch, Thameside in London doesn't appear anywhere in the diary or in your delegates list. So there's a few places that any future officer of the Association could look to drumming up support and getting them organised, but I think it also comes down to the measure of us as a Trade Union and how we are representing our members. Public sector prisons, locally elected committees, we're there for our members, we do lots of work in our own time. You've just heard from the private sector, some of them are scattered all over the place. It was a great shame that this Union took a stance many years ago of not wanting to recruit in the private sector, but they are workers in a custodial setting like all of us. No difference at all. They do need the same equal representation as we enjoy so it's very important that when the NEC speaker comes back, and again the motion itself doesn't say what type of officers, do they have to be on fulltime officer contracts? I think the recent Assistant Secretary post of £53,000 a year. No, if you look at other trade unions where they have to organise and move around, you can trim the contract down to what's needed as opposed to what's always gone before. But like they say, I think this is really down to the measure of us as a Trade Union representing all our members. So please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Speaking for the last time on behalf of the NEC, Andy Darken.

<Applause>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you for that Conference. Maybe they'll let me speak again in a few minutes, I ain't quite sure. I've been coming to Conference for 20 years or so and over the years, you know, I've had difficulties with delegates, I've had difficulties with the NEC, with the employer, and I've always been a bit mischievous in what I have to say sometimes, and I can sometimes be a bit rebellious but I try to be honest with the membership and as a member of the NEC, three times, on and off three times, I try to toe the line and one of the lines the NEC have given me, and when you heard the speakers talk there and I did get a little bit of praise and the first speaker said that twice I'd brought this issue and supported this issue to the NEC ... you would have thought when you've seen me standing up here from the NEC, oh well, NEC are going to support this motion. NEC have asked me to speak against it, which I sometimes find incredible! And honestly I can't really stand here and say what the reason was the NEC were against it 'cause I don't know, and I say at NEC meetings ... you've seen the minutes, if you read the minutes from NEC meetings, where the NEC took the motion, they don't actually say why it was rejected, just said it was rejected. And so, I can be mischievous... and I can sometimes not toe the line, but I would say, Conference, is over the years when I came and I was a delegate from Feltham or Latchmere House, it was quite normal for me to speak on motions and lose. And over a period of time, as hard as it was, I kept going and eventually some of the motions I brought started to win, and I enjoyed myself. But a bit of me harks back to those old days. I had a lot of fun when I spoke on a motion and it lost. So maybe, as a goodbye present for me ...

<Laughter>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: I could speak against the motion and actually lose it. Conference it's a matter for you. Thank you!

<Applause>

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, OAKWOOD: Chair NEC, colleagues, thank you very much Andy for the support you've given me especially at Oakwood for the last couple of years. You've been an absolute godsend and the support that you've given the private sector through the committee. It is imperative that we have these officers, and not only that, it's actually policy that we agreed on at Conference. The Union agreed that they would give us our recommendations, they would go to our recommendations. Furthermore, colleagues, we have a potential 10,000-12,000 new members out there. How much is that going to bring into the Union? £1.8-2 million a year. Can we really afford not to harness this and can we really afford not to bring in these two officers that we need to support the members that we all support every day? Would you, in the public sector, support someone in the private sector? If I phoned you tomorrow and said, 'I need you to support someone in the private sector,' would you? Ask yourself that because I look upon everyone in this room as a member and if you phoned me, I would be there to support your member, and that's what we need to be, is members for our Union, to support our Union equally, to have the same voice, to have the same things done for us. So let us not let this opportunity to go waste, and let's not the NEC reject this motion for the third time. Let's support the members that need the support on an equal level that we all believe in. I urge you to support this motion. Thank you, colleagues.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, it's a matter for you, always the rebel Andy, well done! We are going to restructure this Union. We've got an independent advisor to look at it, and this will be incorporated into that restructure review, but as I say, it's a matter for you. You know our view, you know what Andy's just said, over to Conference. All those in favour of this motion please show. Against? That motion is carried.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: 82 Dumfries. Secunder for Dumfries? ... Who was the seconder? Thank you.

MOTION 82

That Conference instruct the NEC that if they have not got one already, that the POA have a social media strategy for the union, it's employees and anyone with access to upload or publish information on behalf of the membership.

DUMFRIES

ANDY MACKINNON – BRANCH CHAIR, DUMFRIES: Chair, NEC, Conference, first time speaker at this Conference. I'll keep it short and sweet because it's a bitter journey to get back over that wall. Motion 82 reads that this Conference instruct NEC that if they've not got one already, that the POA have a social media strategy for the Union, its employees and anyone with access to upload or publish information on behalf of the membership. Colleagues, this week we've heard a lot about social media and how great a tool it could be for this Union. We've also heard a speaker earlier on in the week talking about and how that could change. We've also heard the General Secretary speak about the drivel that's been on social media and I agree with him at times, there is a bit of drivel in there. If you get a strategy going forward from the POA to use this useful tool, I feel this will be a benefit to this Union and it will also protect employees and uphold the integrity of the POA in all areas of the country. Thank you, Conference. I hope you support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, Joe Simpson responding on behalf of the National Executive. We haven't got a social media strategy, but you've seen the National Chair, he tweets, there's people on Facebook, everything like that, but the National Chair and General Secretary between them have asked myself and Dave Todd, 'cause we speak the Queen's English, to come up with a strategy for social media and also for going forward, communications. But what we will say, Conference, is communications is a two-way thing. When we ask you for something, we expect to get it and when you ask for something you expect to get it. So with that, Conference, please support the motion and we'll do the work ready for Conference next year. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour? Any against? That's carried. 83 is a report back

requested by Elmley. Duncan Keys will be speaking on this.

MOTION 83

A report back from the NEC regarding any legal action against the injunction imposed upon the POA in 2017.

ELMLEY

DUNCAN KEYS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, giving the report back on behalf of the NEC. It's a very simple one, this, Conference. The POA were refused leave to appeal against the judgement. Therefore no legal action against the injunction was, or is currently, possible. That's the report back there.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Duncan. 84 is a report back from Elmley, Glyn Travis.

MOTION 84

A report back from the NEC regarding issues surrounding the Prison Officer 2's contract.

ELMLEY

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair if I could ask your indulgence for a few moments to try and give a full report back on the factual position regarding prison officer 2s. I recognise the passion and feeling out there from our fellow colleagues who, following the introduction of Fair & Sustainable, were brought onto new terms and conditions. I was quite surprised actually that it wasn't a question that the employer posed when Michael Spurr was up here, to ask him why he felt that it was right and proper in 2012 and 2018 to have prison officers doing exactly the same job for £6,000 a year less. But the prison officer 2 contract had started before that colleagues, and the history is important. On the 27th April 2009 Jack Straw announced in the House the closure of the prison officer rank and the principle officer rank. In 2010 we got a Tory government. They determined that austerity measures were necessary and they introduced a new prison officer grade, not a prison officer 2, a new prison officer grade that would not do all of the role of the prison officer. That was on less money and they found it almost impossible to determine the work that that person would do compared to a prison officer working on the landings alongside. The POA challenged that decision because Robin Wilkinson, who was the HR Director at the time, did not issue the notice to staff setting out the terms and conditions, and we successfully overturned the decision to employ 174 prison officers back to prison officers on all terms and conditions pre the closure of the grade. Once the notice to staff came out those staff were ring-fenced into an area of work they couldn't do. It was the subject of Conference debate and challenges by the Executive. Fair & Sustainable was brought in because, as you know, government threatened to change the terms and conditions and reduce the pay and conditions of many, many public servants, across the estate. You saw cleaners, dustmen, workers losing salary and losing hours as part of the austerity drive. This Union accepted Fair & Sustainable on the basis that there would be new terms and conditions in relation that we would have a band 2, band 3, band 4, band 5, non-operational band 6, governors grading from band 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. We'd also have a spot rate which was the lowest paid person, which in my old days when I joined the job used to be called an SGV2, which is a cleaner.

So ... Fair & Sustainable was brought in. Contracts were issued by the Prison Service and those contracts were appalling written. They talked about 37-hour base pay plus 2 hours ACH, 2 hours ACHP. They also talked about working meal breaks and 37-hours plus 5 hours giving a 42-hour inclusive issue. Those issues were challenged and we told the membership that the right for equality and fairness and fair pay as they've been brought by many branches here, would be dealt with. An equal pay claim would take many years because whilst you look at the European Courts where we go, it would always be a difficult argument to win. Those of you who've been there a long time may remember the Bailey case, when the wonderful Mr Whitley, when he was Director General, said that prison officers were the equivalent of a nursing auxiliary and the PCS jumped over it like a rash and issued an equal pay claim which cost the employer a fortune and the Union to run the case. They were successful in getting a settlement, not winning the litigation. So, where are we with prison officer 2s? What does their contract say and what do individual contracts say? And that's the difficulty of where we face. The Union has challenged the employer on numerous occasions over the issues. We have asked individuals to raise grievances if they believe that they were forced to work lunchtimes and were not paid for those hours because they are absolutely entitled to payment for additional hours worked that they've not already been paid for. Just the same as everybody else in this room, whether that's in the means of TOIL because they've got Bulletin 8 as part of their contract, whether that's in the process of PP because the governor wants to deal with it, or any other means that falls within that remit.

However, we have had a number of legal challenges that have come from the field where members have said, and I'm sure that you've seen on the social media bandwagon, that 'I'm owed five hours for every week that I've worked for my meal breaks because I'm not and wasn't paid for them.' I was a prison officer under these terms from 2010, those that weren't included in the original challenge, and that I have been forced, *forced* to do the work from 2010 right the way through to the current date of doing the full range of jobs under the job description of a prison officer' and we have looked at that. Other question would be, if they'd done that would it be a cover payment because in 2008 the membership, when the department imposed the change of cover payments from temporary promotion, those of you who remember temporary promotion, where you got the full salary, you now get 5% of base pay. And you get 5% of base pay even if you're closed grade on 37 hours and not 39, 'cause that's where the NOMS issue is, and the discriminatory elements that come with that.

So, where are we with prison officer 2 contracts? The contracts that we've stated and seen and have supplied to our Union talk about, 'Your member is a PO2, statements on their terms and conditions clearly state that the 42-hour working week is made up of 2 element, 37 hours of net, 5 hours of meal breaks, equally clear it says that a) that the whole 42 hours each week necessary already covered the meal breaks, your member also provided the first page of the contractual variation from the 13th of May 2014 which repeats that basic position.' It also goes on to say that anything that's contained with Bulletin 8, because Bulletin 8 clearly says that meal breaks are not paid unless it's for the breakfast period, which is a 30-minute paid period, if you work before 7 o'clock under Bulletin 8, all other meal breaks are unpaid, but it also goes further and says within that contract that the terms are also set out and overrule Bulletin 8, within the employee handbook that every person has access to. That is the factual report of where we are.

We have been waiting for over 2.5 years as an Executive to get one person or any person to appeal the decision on whether meal breaks should or shouldn't be paid, whether there is a challenge to the contractual position of that, and we have successfully got one, got a meeting with the individual and the lawyers on Monday 21st as to where we go, and with that we will give a further report in relation to the progression and challenges to the issue of pay for PO2s. We'd just like to finish off and say this, colleagues. That in 2017, July, we wrote to Martin Beecroft and we set out the position that we felt would resolve to an internal disciplinary resolution, in the fact that he may cough up and say well actually, to get rid of this, we'll give everybody some money. But he said no and you could raise a grievance, and he responded to Steve Gillan, your General Secretary: Consequences of Fair & Sustainable of band 2s set out there. This is the documentation from the Prison Service, which says, 'Attrition rate currently for bands 3-5 is at 9%. Bands 3-5 leaving rate, voluntarily' that's not those that are sacked, not those that leave on medical inefficiency, volunteers within the first 12 months, they are all prison officer 2s, is 16%. At £20,000 per person who leaves, if we're recruiting 1,000 Michael Spurr knew and knows, 160 will leave in a year. At £20,000 per person do the maths, pay the right money, otherwise this Union will consider all challenges to bring equal pay for everybody who does the same job. That's the factual report. Thank you very much Chair.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Glyn. Report back 85 from Elmley, Steve Gillan speaking on behalf of the NEC.

MOTION 85

A report back from the NEC regarding issuing a ballot to OSG's to take strike action.

ELMLEY

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thanking you Chair. Conference, the report back is that we've already done a consultative ballot and obviously we need to ensure we are TULRCA compliant and that you passed motion 62c so it now becomes policy. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Steve. Thank you, Conference. That brings us to the end of the motions. It's only right that I should allow the two retirees to say their farewell to you. They've served this NEC well, served the membership well and been a credit to the POA, so first, Andy Darken.

<Applause>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Do you know, sometimes I've felt a lot more comfortable as a delegate 'cause I could attack the NEC a lot easier from down here. I think I might have ... annoyed some of them, I don't know what it was I said. Must have been motion 81.

Conference, I've been in the POA since January 1988, a long, long time. I've been a Union Rep from when I was first elected as apprentice shop steward in 1972 in Chatham Dockyard. So I've been representing people on and off for a very, very, very long time and I think it's now time for me to have a rest. But I've enjoyed the POA, I've enjoyed being a prison officer, but every time I've had challenges. I was National Chair for a little while, come off, got over that, come back on the NEC as a lay official, had some other challenges and difficulties then and come off, and come back. So, the membership, and you always elected me back on when I wanted to come there. Maybe there was something I was doing that was right. I was speaking to Feltham earlier, Feltham was my branch for many years, I loved Feltham and I loved being a prison officer, and I said to Laura, 'Don't worry, you will start winning motions at some stage. I went through the same problems!'

<Laughter>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: You probably won't have the difficulties I had, being booed and hissed coming up to Conference and speaking, but I think I was booed and hissed because I liked to tell the truth as it was, and that's sometimes was hard to hear. And I got a reputation at Latchmere, when I was called 'Never Wrong Darken' and do you know, I never was!

<Laughter>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: But there are some people I must thank before I go. The girls in the office have been great. I've had Debbie Davis and Angela Sinclair particularly over the last year or so as my secretaries. The one good thing is now I'm going to have one nagging woman after me and that's my wife, who's put up with me for a lot longer than you lot have, over 40 years I think! So think how difficult it must be for her to challenge me every day!

I've had difficulties and challenges. I could stand here and say a lot of nasty things about a lot of people within this Union and the way I was treated over the years, but I won't do that, much as I'd love to sometimes, but we'll leave that where it is. But there is one other person I must thank that's sitting near the front. Stewart. I went through some difficult times. Wandsworth's one of the branches that supported me in those times, so thank you, Stewart, for that, and thank you branch. Feltham also supported me through difficult times. I know it's a new committee and different people now, but some people at Feltham still remember the difficult times I had. And this Union, in certain places, supported me. Strangely, you know, I also had support from senior managers in the Prison Service over the years, when they knew what was going on. But my time's come to an end here. I've enjoyed some of it. I've enjoyed the challenges. I think I sometimes, as I said, get a kick out of losing things and being difficult, but I done it for the right reasons. I done it for the best for these members. And the last few years I've worked damn hard at a lot of cost to try and bring the private sector forward. Like it or not, they're here to stay for a long while yet, you know so I was pleased that I lost motion 81 for the NEC. It's about time we done more for the private sector and so I thank the members of the private sector for the work they've supported me over the last couple of years with the Private Sector Committee. I need to thank Brian from Birmingham, at the back, for bringing that committee on and the work we've done. That will go from strength to strength thanks to you, Conference. It's been a long time, 1988, I've been here, but it's time to go. I'm not going to get emotional because I want to go, I want to get on with life, and I want you to enjoy making this Union stronger as it goes forward. You can do it. Challenge the NEC, challenge all the employers, and make sure, at the heart of it, that it's the best for the members that you want to do. Conference, thanks for everything. I'm going to go off very soon. I'm not sure I'm welcome back there, am I?

<Laughter>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: And good luck to.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Andy and all the best for a long, happy, healthy and hopefully stress-free retirement. Good luck to you, mate. Terry Fullerton.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: I'll do it from up here Andy. I'm older than you. I'm not going up and down those stairs if I don't have to!

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: I want to thank Mark and the NEC for giving me this opportunity now just to say my fond farewells. 28 years, it's gone by in the blink of an eye, colleagues, but it's been a bit of a journey from being an in 1990 and now to the NEC in 2010, and now as having had honorary life membership bestowed on me by you. I'm humbled by that honour and I thank you very much for giving that to me. It means a great, great deal.

During that journey throughout the years I've met some wonderful people, I've met some strange people, I've met some idiots!

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Most of the idiots, though, thankfully, have been behind the door with the governors front of it.

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: I wanted to thank some people who have influenced my Union career since I became a committee member at Holme House, 'cause I haven't had a career in the Prison Service ... still a prison officer. I want to start by thanking, and I know he's gone but I want to start by thanking Colin Moses, who, as branch chair at HMP Holme House persuaded me, or bullied me, one of the two, to stand for the committee at Holme House in 1994. And from that point, I served as a committee member, branch official/whatever, chair, secretary, for 15 years and in what I believe was

a wonderful branch with wonderful people working in that branch. So I want to thank Holme House for their support that I've had from them over the years I've been up here and as a committee member at Holme House.

I also want to thank, well, pay special thanks to one person, and that's Nicola Hubert from Cronin House, because ... I first met Nicola when I got onto the discipline committee many, many years ago and we became friends when I was on that discipline committee, but after two disastrous attempts to get onto the NEC I thought I'd give it up as a bad job, and when the vacancy came up in 2010 I really didn't think I was going to go for that vacancy, but I had a phone call and an email in the POA office at Holme House, from Nicola, who said, 'Give it one last shot. I'm sure it'll be your turn'. And she persuaded me to give it one last shot, and low and behold, history speaks for itself, I was successful, and I've been there since 2010. Since that time she's been a confidant, a drinking partner and she's been my go-to person to fix telephones and laptops, 'cause I haven't got a clue about IT, so she's been my go-to person to try and put all of that right. And I thank her very much for all her help and support over the years that she's given me and she'll always have a very special place in my heart.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: And I want to thank all of the girls at Cronin House who've given me support over the years. They've all been fantastic, and nothing's too difficult when you ask them to do it. They've been wonderful. And also Helen and Steve Lewis at Linden House. I don't want to forget them 'cause they've been superb in offering their help to me over these last eight years. And I want to thank NEC, colleagues, past and present, for their support and their help, particularly in the last 18 months where I've been Acting Vice Chair and whilst I've been also covering my area. And I do want to say a little bit on that, right. Over the years, you know, while I've been on here ... and I don't do social media, but a lot of social media is very critical at times and some of the stuff that goes on there from NEC members is a little bit vindictive and a little bit unnecessary. Let me tell you, when you get onto the NEC you get elected as a branch official, you come on as an NEC member, nobody gives you a chip with all the information you need and plugs it into the back of your head and says, 'There you go. You've got all the information. You shouldn't make any mistakes.' Of course people do make mistakes but nobody that I have worked with on this NEC, past or present, hasn't tried their best to improve the terms and conditions of you, the membership. You all work hard to try and do that, but making mistakes is just human, so sometimes think about that before you pick up that mouse ... I'm not saying anybody here does it, but some people do, and when you pick up that mouse after you've had six glasses of red wine and you're looking at a circular and you're start to bang off there and make some unnecessary comments. So just think about that.

I want to thank Steve Gillan, who has always been a voice of calm around the NEC table when some have wanted to press the panic button, and he's been, for the eight years I've been on, a mentor that you could go to and that would encourage and offer advice. 'cause even us, as NEC officers, need advice from some people.

I also want to thank all of the FTOs because without their knowledge accrued over all these years, life as an NEC member would be extremely difficult. So I want to thank them for their support and help over the last four years. But I've served as an NEC member under four National Chairmen, all of whom have brought their own unique way of being a chair. I think this week we've seen the green shoots of a possible really, really fantastic National Chair, and he's chaired this Conference with confidence, with humour, and he's managed to get his point across. I'll go back to his point he made about Michael Spurr's SPDR. If I was writing something on your SPDR, Mark, I would say it's a brilliant start. Keep up the good work.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thanks mate!

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Now I want to say something about one of my best mates, Joe Simpson. What can I say about him? He's put some weight on, I can say that about him.

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Joe used to go down the gym when we were at Holme House. He'd go down the gym and pick a skipping rope up, skip for 10 or 15 minutes, keep yourself fit. Unfortunately since he got up here, he swapped his skipping rope for a knife and fork and it hasn't done him any good at all really!

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: But Joe has been a mate of mine for 23 years. I've had some troubled times in personal life and I knew that all I had to do was pick up a phone up, it didn't matter where he was or what he was doing, he would come, turn up to support me if I needed that support. And he's done exactly the same while I've been on this top table. He's been there to help me and support me and help me do my job for you on this top table. And I want to thank you, Joe, for all the help you've been and you'll always be a mate.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: I also have to mention my partner, Shirley, who's had to put up with me not being at home hardly ever. I think that probably suited her for a bit like ...

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: But Shirley is, although she's a member of a trade union, has got no interest whatsoever in trade unionism, she's just a member of a trade union, so conversations in the house are not that clever at times if I mention anything!

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: And when I asked her if she wanted to come here for this week, for it being my last week, she said, 'No, no, Terry, you go away, you have a good week. I'd rather give birth to a porcupine than sit through that!'

<Laughter>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: But I was asked what I'll take away from being here all this time, when I leave. And I'll take away three things. One is the honour of being elected as a committee member and from that being elected as an NEC member by you, the membership. That's the first thing I'll take away. And the two proudest things I will also take away from being on the NEC is I'm proud to have managed to deliver smoke-free workplaces for the membership since we were challenging this from 2007. Eventually we managed to push the employer to provide a smoke-free workplace for you, so that, I'm proud of that.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: And I'm also proud of one other thing, as a delegate from Holme House I came to the rostrum a number of years ago and I asked Conference to accept the motion or support the motion to look at the feasibility study of providing respite for officers, our members, who were injured or made ill at work through no fault of their own. And the person who answered that motion was the Finance Officer at the time, Steve Gillan. And that motion went away and I really didn't think we would get that motion passed, but the NEC supported that motion and from that we've got a fantastic, two fantastic facilities that we share with the Fire Fighters Charity that provide our members much needed care or aftercare, should they need it, if they've suffered injury, assault, stress, whatever. So I'm extremely proud that that legacy started from a motion from that platform.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: And last I want to thank you all. You, branch officials, who are the glue that keeps this Union together. Without you the NEC couldn't function. I want to thank the wider membership for being members of this proud Trade Union, because without them obviously we wouldn't have a proud Trade Union. So after 28 years, I just want to say thank you very much, I've had a blast! God bless you all.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. I just want to reiterate what I said previously. Andy and Terry, all the best for your future, and let's not forget Chris Donovan, who will be going back into the establishment. You know, Chris, he's a fighter, he'll never give up. He's faced adversity and he's never let any of you down. He's an absolute credit to this Union and this membership. Chris Donovan.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: I just want to mention some people, and we really are thankful to a whole host of people including the hotel staff and the Conference staff who've looked after us all week, the admin girls, who without we wouldn't function at all; they're absolutely amazing, each and every one of them. The security staff, thanks for your hard work this week. The invited guests and honorary life members, the photographers, for trying ...

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Technical staff, who make all this possible. The stall holders, our sponsors, and the National Executive Committee who work tirelessly on your behalf. If you work a 60-hour week on the NEC you haven't been busy, because that's the reality of what we do. Weekends off, you play catch-up. So don't ever think that we're lazing round posh hotels with a gold card. We're working tirelessly on your behalf and we're proud to do so and that will continue. Most of all, I'd like to thank each and every one of you, the delegates, you and your members. You are the POA. You should be proud to be the POA. And now is the time to start taking back control in our prisons. We've listened to you, we've listened

to you about communication. Well communication is a two-way street. You look in your brochures, there's information there about how you can follow us on Twitter and Facebook, where we put regular updates on what's happening. But unless you follow us, and unless you read those updates, it's a pointless task. A few years ago we set up a dedicated email address where you could report serious incidents in your gaol, so the employer couldn't fudge the issue. 'cause all they're interested in is statistics and each and every one of you in this hall know that they under-report absolutely everything. That dedicated email was hardly ever used, so it's a two-way street. We're trying our best to improve communication. We've got new IT providers who, once they've updated our systems, will allow us to do webinars and blogs, so we are trying and that will improve. But I just want to end by touching on safety.

This is the time, here and now, after this Conference, for you to all go back to your gaols and together, as one, in solidarity and unity, that we take back control of our prisons. Because it's clear that the employer is refusing to do so. Broken observation panels, if you've got landings full of broken observation panels, get yourself to a safe place till they're repaired. And if you get an order to unlock, give the shield to the governor and tell them to walk along them landings, because let them face the dangers that you face every day. Don't accept it. RMPs, get your RMP in place, get it agreed, and make your regime safe for your members. MSLs, decide on what's an MSL for your gaol and insist that your management team stick to it. Assaults on staff, unacceptable. When there's an incident on your wing, whether it's an assault prisoner on prisoner or assault on staff, lock that wing down, make sure everybody's safe and then when you're ready to unlock after the commotion, that's when you unlock; not when the governors are telling us, 'Unlock immediately' after a major incident for the sake of getting prisoners out of their cells. Comrades, in solidarity together we can make your life better. Let's start taking our prisons back. All the best. See you next year.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, I'm not going to repeat what Mark said because he's done the overall thank you and so forth but there are a couple of things to say and it's really about well, first of all we will implement the policies that you have passed this week, and thank you for the tremendous debates and motions that we've had. You've done it once again in a very professional and thorough manner and we thank you for that. I want to pay tribute to the Chair, to be honest with you, because I've enjoyed working with Mark, as have the Executive. I'm sure you agree that he has chaired Conference with passion, humour and fairness. I certainly hope he's here for the long term and I'm sure he will be, and I'm sure we will go from strength to strength, not just with Mark as Chair but with those who are coming onto our Executive as well, Sarah and indeed Dave, and obviously we will miss Terry, Andy and Chris, who have been good servants for this Trade Union.

Let me talk about the Assistant Secretaries now, because it's great to have Joe Simpson on as Deputy General Secretary, I think Joe has put some tremendous work in, and thoroughly deserves your endorsement and the membership's endorsement, and I really do look forward to working with Joe Simpson as Deputy General Secretary. Duncan Keys, Glyn Travis, Andy Hogg and June Robinson do tremendous work on behalf of this Union. You don't know how lucky you are Scotland, in having a great Assistant Secretary such as Andy Hogg, and of course June Robinson in Northern Ireland. The support staff, well, I've got a wonderful support staff, but I won't single anyone out in particular because they're all very, very good and I've got absolute respect and value for each and every one of them. There is one person though, that ... she won't thank me for saying it, and it's Angela Sinclair. Because Angela has struggled with health issues, she's been brave over the last year (I won't go into detail 'cause it's not my business, not anyone else's business) but I have been here to support her. That's what a trade union family is about, supporting each other, and she has been absolutely fantastic, so I'll pay tribute to Angela Sinclair, who makes this Conference tick as well with the organisation that goes into it and so forth.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: And you know what Conference? We're not deaf when it comes to our honorary life members. It gives us no pleasure in asking them to leave during in camera sessions and it's something that I think we're going to have to sort out, but I pay, again, tribute to our Chair, because Conference, they're your rules, they're your Standing Orders and you pass Standing Orders and it was all included in there that certain individuals would be asked to leave including honorary life members. And at that time there was no challenge and I've got to stay, the Chair was 100% right. He dealt with it very, very well, a very sensitive, delicate issue. But as I say, we're not deaf to this and I think we will discuss it as an Executive and perhaps come back with something ... let's hope there's not too many issues that we have to hold in camera, but you never know in the POA. I've been coming to POA Conference now as a local and national official for the last 25 years and you always prepare for the unexpected, because the unexpected can happen at Conference. But the reality is that's the nature of what we do and where we go from and where we go to next. But the reality is, this is a wonderful trade union, you're wonderful delegates and the reality is you are the POA, this is your parliament, this is your Conference, you tell us what to do. I'm absolutely delighted on one issue as well: that Tom Robson got honorary life membership. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, it calls upon me now to officially close Conference and safe journey home. See you all next year. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

END OF CONFERENCE 2018