

POA Annual Conference 2017

Annual Conference Verbatim Report



Tuesday 9th May 2016

Report of Standing Orders	2
Minute Silence	4
Acting National Chair Opening Address	8
The Worshipful Mayor of Sefton	9
Motions 1-7a	9 - 18
Finance Officers Report	18
Motions 95 - 96	21 - 22
Motion 8 - 30	22 - 45
Address: Fraternal Greetings, Colin Moses, Honorary Life Member	45

Wednesday 10th May 2016

Motion 32	49
Annual General Meeting of the National Secure Hospitals Consultative Committee	53
Address: Danny Angus, Management of Violence & Aggression Lead, Merseycare NHS Trust	54
Motion 96a	57
Address: Chris Swindon, Fundraising Officer, Francis House Foundation	58
Motion 35 - 42	59 - 63
Address: Yvonne Pattison, NAPO National Co-Chair	64
Cronin Clasp Awards	67
Address: Angela Cairns, CEO, Shannon Trust	69
Presentation of Toe by Toe Cup	69
Motions 43 - 70	70 - 82
Address: Tim Roach General Secretary GMB	82
Motion 57 - 84	85 - 99
Address: John Clinton, General Secretary, POA Ireland	100
Motions 85 - 86	102 - 103

Thursday 11th May 2016

Address: Doug Nicholls GFTU	104
Motions 87 - 138	105 - 142
Closing speech Mark Fairhurst Acting National Chair	142
Closing Speech Steve Gillan General Secretary	143
Address: Mike Rolfe	144

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May, 2017

Tuesday 9th May, Morning Session

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference, we're now in session. I'll invite the General Secretary, Steve Gillan, to address Conference with a few announcements.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chairman. Thank you conference and first of all welcome to Conference, first time delegates and those of you that have been before. There's a couple of announcements after an Executive meeting yesterday that I would like to make. First of all you will notice that Pete Chapple isn't on the top table as Finance Officer. That is because Pete had an accident at work some time ago and is now thankfully back at work and is on a phased return, but it will be me that's moving the finance report and indeed the welfare report. It's also great to see Chris Donovan back on the top table, and I'm sure most colleagues at Conference will welcome Chris and wish him all the best for a speedy recovery against the illness that he faces at this moment in time.

<Applause>

And to my great friend Brian Caton, Honorary Life Member, I'm sure most of you will know that Brian hasn't been too well of late as well and is back in this country, in hospital. I visited Brian a couple of weeks ago. He's making steady progress. It will take a while but we hope that Brian makes a full and speedy recovery, a stalwart of this Union.

Conference, I was working it out at the weekend but this is, as a local and national official this is my 23rd Annual Conference, my first one being in 1994 and I never pre-empt anything each year in relation to Conference, and some things arer outwith oue control in relation to this Conference. Mark Fairhurst is the stand-in National Chairman, Acting Chairman. I'm sure you will all wish Mark all the very best chairing this Conference. He will be well looked after by this Executive and full-time officers, and indeed I know from the colleagues up here, if any individual NEC member had to take over the Chair because of their expertise, they would make an excellent job of it, with the experience that they have around them from the Deputy General Secretary, myself, Glyn Travis and the full-time officers, so I wish Mark all the very best during this Conference and I'm sure, knowing Mark, he will rise to that occasion. But in relation to the issues, colleagues, you will know that I put out a timetable for the vacant NEC position. I've made the decision, Conference, to suspend that timetable and issue a new timetable this week which will also include the National Chair election and that NEC vacant position, and we will run the elections together, which will be a saving for the Union of £20,000. And one of the reasons that I will be doing that, we've checked it out legally, within our rule book and with Electoral Reform Commission – there is nothing to stop us from doing that. It makes common sense in actual fact, when you look at our turnout in elections of some 10%, it makes common sense to run the elections together and save this Union money and get a National Chair in place as quickly as possible.

So that timetable I will get out as quickly as possible in the next day or two.

The third item that I would like to raise, there are motions on our order paper that are extremely sensitive. We've got specific legal advice in relation to some of that and I think we need a full, frank debate on where we go as a trade union in relation to some of those motions. So therefore, the National Executive Committee have determined, in your booklets, that the following motions, 24, 25, 54, 56, 61, 66, 91 ... I will repeat it again for you, and 116. Find your booklets and just identify, there's nothing sinister in relation to it. I'm just going to make an announcement that the NEC have determined ... everyone got their booklets out? Motion 24, motion 26 (please put an asterisk next to them), motion 54, motion 56, motion 61, motion 66, motion 91 and motion 116. Is everybody clear on the motions that I've just read out or do you want to hear them again?

Content, Conference?

Due to the sensitivities of these motions and the legal advice that we have, we will be hearing those motions in a closed session in camera for delegates only, because we're not in the habit of handing game, set and match to the employer through a verbatim report or through the media. Thank you. Conference, that's the announcement.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you General Secretary. I'm now going to invite Vice Chair Terry Fullerton to move the Standing Orders report.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, Conference. Good morning colleagues and welcome to Southport. The POA's 78th Annual Conference. As Chair of Standing Orders, it is my intention to set up the Order of Business and I would like to thank the Committee for conducting the business of the Union. There is a lot of information which I need to share with you, and I'm sure that recent communications re the sudden departure of the two most senior elected officials of the Union will have caused some surprise and concern to the delegates. Well, it caused surprise and concern to the rest of the NEC as well 'cause it came out of the blue for us. We were considering at some point changing the strapline from 'Belong to be strong' to 'Never a dull day in the POA' but there we are.

However, the Executive have put in place some measures to ensure Conference runs smoothly and that we get through the business. Firstly, you will note that in Order of Business we have a number of fringe meetings scheduled during the conference. These are being put on to provide extra information and share information for the delegates. Can I urge delegates to support these events wherever possible. Food and refreshment will be offered at each event and space may be limited so please get there early to avoid disappointment.

You should have all registered and been furnished with the appropriate documentation for this year's 78th Annual Conference. Should you need any assistance during the week, do not hesitate to contact the Conference staff in the Conference Office or any of the NEC. All delegates were issued with Conference booklet, Emergency Motions, Conference papers and Report Back booklet, following the promulgation of POA Circular 58 of 2017, and I hope that you've all brought these with you.

Delegates wishing to address Conference should make their way to the front of the hall and take a seat. All 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, will everyone 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.

In moving Standard Orders Committee report to this 78th 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, Dave Cook from Swaleside, Niall McIntosh from Whitemoor and Duncan Williams from Littlehey. Can I call on the Chair to ask Conference to approve the scrutineers and tellers?

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, can you show your permission to approve the scrutineers and tellers? Thank you very much. That's approved.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair. The Standing Orders procedures 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 yourselves of these rules throughout Conference. I remind delegates of the rules governing Conference and procedures and 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 as we are here to help.

For the 78th Annual Conference we received 140 Annual Conference motions within the prescribed time. Two were returned as not meeting the criteria, giving us an agenda for this Conference of 138 motions. One motion was received out of time and returned. Of the motions returned to branches, there are no appeals to Conference this year. The Standing Orders Committee received five emergency motions. Two were returned. We have no appeals to Conference on the emergency motions. I will deal with the placement of emergency motions shortly. I would remind Conference that the section containing proposed rule changes will require a two-thirds majority and the rest of Conference agenda will require a simple majority. Therefore, Conference, we have an agenda of 138 motions as contained in your Conference booklet, four Conference papers and three 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, and paragraph 3, if any member causes a disturbance during the proceedings and refuses to obey the Chair's ruling, they shall be expelled from the Conference and not allowed to return until a suitable apology has been tendered to Conference.

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 during the debate.

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 whilst Conference is in session. In line with custom and practice, Conference, the Chair of Conference may call motions when guest speakers are attending and addressing Conference, with the approval of Conference. The Welfare Committee AGM will take place at the direction of the Chair of Conference and motions 95 and 96 will be heard in this session. The NCSHCS AGM, special hospitals AGM, will take place at some point on Wednesday morning.

Conference, can you please open up your Conference booklets and make the following changes on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee.

Motion 113 will now be heard after motion 7 as 7a, and prior to the Finance Officer's address to Conference. This motion only requires a simple majority and not a two-thirds. Motion 11 will now be heard after motion 8, and that will be at 8a. Motion 46 will now be heard after motion 16, and it will be 16a. Motion 54 will now be heard after motion 66 and will be 66a. Motion 55 will now be heard after motion 52 and will be 52a. Motion 77 will now be heard after motion 66a as 66b. Motion 107 will now be heard after motion 105 at 105a. And motion 116 will now be heard after motion 66b and will be 66c. Is everybody happy that they've got those changes of placement? If you want me to go through it again will you please indicate.

You want me to go through it again? I'll start again then.

Motion 113 will now be heard after motion 7 as 7a, prior to the Finance Officer's address to Conference and this motion only requires a simple majority and not a two-thirds. Motion 11 will now be heard after motion 8 at 8a. Motion 46 will now be heard after motion 16 at 16a. Motion 54 will now be heard after motion 66 at 66a. Motion 55 will now be heard after motion 52 at 52a. Motion 77 will now be heard after motion 66a and will be 66b. Motion 107 will now be heard after motion 105 and now will be 105a. And motion 116 will now be heard after motion 66b at 66c. Everybody happy with that now? Yep.

Turning to the three motions in your emergency motion booklet, and that's the light green booklet, if you all have that open, emergency motion 1, which is in your emergency motions booklet, will be heard during the Special Hospitals AGM but will be placed at 96a in the Conference Agenda. Emergency motion 2, which is again in your emergency motions booklet, will be placed at 53a in the Conference Agenda. And emergency motion 3 in your booklet will be placed at 132a in the Conference Agenda. Has everyone got that? Does anyone need me to go over that again? Yep?

At this point, Conference, there has been an indication from the Swaleside branch who wish to appeal placement of motions. So, at this point I'd like to ask the Chair if he would call Swaleside to the rostrum in order to appeal placement.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Swaleside to the rostrum please.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning Conference, we're asking for a move in the placement of three of our motions, and that is motion 108, 109 and 110. Swaleside believe that these motions would be better heard before Motion 106 that's been proposed by Hewell Closed. They cover the same sort of issues within there, but we feel that those three motions are more powerful and should be heard before 106. We're asking for you to accept that placement.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Swaleside. Conference, the Standing Orders Committee in receipt of the motions considered placement for all of these motions and in considering the order of placement, we looked at the content of the motions and believed that we had placed these motions in the correct order in such a fashion that the 106 asks the NEC for an explanation to Conference. We believe that by placing 106 before the Swaleside motions, gives that NEC an opportunity to explain before Conference then decide whether or not to condemn or not condemn. We believe that that was the correct order of placement. So for that reason, Conference, I ask that the Chair accept the placement on behalf of the Standing Orders.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, you've heard the appeal from Swaleside. We need an indication from Conference. Do we accept that appeal or not? All those who accept the appeal, please show. All those who do not accept the appeal please show. Thank you, Conference. That placement will stay in its original format.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, thank you Conference. I'm almost done now, which is more than I can say for my football team, Sunderland, 'cause they were done quite a few months ago, unfortunately!

<Laughter>

Conference, you'll note that a number of motions refer to NOMS, which was rebranded as HMPPS as of the first of April, 2017. Therefore, Conference accepts these motions will be debated and if accepted progress through the organisation known as HMPPS. Conference, I now ask the Chair of Conference to seek Conference approval for the adoption of the Standing Orders report.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, can I ask you to accept the Standing Orders report?

Thank you, Conference and thank you Vice Chair. They've been accepted.

Conference we're due to hear from the Lord Mayor of Sefton, but he hasn't arrived yet and we need to expedite business, so when he arrives I'll allow him to address Conference but until that time, I think it's relevant that we move on to a minute's silence, and if he's not here after that I will address Conference. A minute's silence gives us the opportunity to remember our fallen comrades. In particular I'd like to mention Nick Medlin from the Isle of Wight, whose funeral I attended. And I'd like to pass on my sincerest thanks and commend the Isle of Wight Committee for the way they organised and conducted themselves at that funeral. Full dress uniform, full parade, it was one of those moments that left a lump in your throat and you were actually proud to be a Prison Officer. And we don't get many opportunities to say that these days. So, I'd like Conference to show their appreciation to the Isle of Wight Committee.

<Applause>

Conference if we could all stand for a minute's silence.

Minute's silence

Thank you, conference.

Acting Chair Opening Address

Conference, National Executive, colleagues, well the saying goes, doesn't it, that a week is a long time in politics. Well let me tell you, a week is an even longer time in the POA. In what's been a turbulent week before Conference I had plans to address you as your new Vice Chair, but here I am as your acting National Chair. I would like to thank those branches that nominated me for the Vice Chair position and those members who voted for me. I would also like to recognise the other two candidates who I have the utmost respect for. Terry Fullerton is a true trade unionist and I welcome the support he continues to give me. It just demonstrates the measure of the man when he was the first person to congratulate me on my success. That was followed swiftly by Matt Clark, who I'm certain at some point in the future I will be working with.

I'm honoured and I'm privileged to hold such a position, but now I find myself humbled to be acting as your National Chair. I'm more than happy to take on this role and obviously, you will decide who gets it on a permanent basis. So, I get a chance to prove to you that I can take this Union forward and you get the opportunity to try before you buy.

I'm determined to prove to you that I am genuine and I believe my honesty during this opening address will convince you that you have a National Chair, albeit an acting one, that cares passionately about the POA, about the membership, and I'm determined to drive your agenda forward. I have no other ambitions. My ambitions are to improve your working life and keep you safe. All I care about is the membership. And I will continue to give you 100%. I sincerely just want to serve you as best I can and I have no hidden agendas. I will wear my heart on my sleeve and I will fight as long and as hard as I possibly can to represent you.

I would just like to pay a tribute to Mike Rolfe, former National Chair. It was unexpected, his resignation, no one saw it coming. I'd like to thank him for the efforts that he put in during his short time. He had a right good go but he's got political ambitions and he must follow those if he thinks that's the right thing to do. I'm sure one day he will walk the corridors of Westminster and will be a strong ally and a loud voice for this Union. Personally, good luck to him.

I would also like to mention two other important people to this Union. Chris Donovan, it's absolutely fantastic to see you, all the best to you, and you just come and go as you please mate. No pressure. Just come and go as you please. You've got more fight in you than some of those keyboard warriors I can read about.

I'd also like to mention our ex General Secretary Brian Caton. I wish him all the best. He's recovering in hospital after an

illness. I'm sure next year Brian will be back fighting fit.

Conference, I'm going to be totally honest with you and hopefully dispel some of the myths surrounding NEC decisions and where we find ourselves at the moment. I'll just tell you it how it is, warts and all, because I believe at this moment in time we need to be honest with each other. This is the 78th Annual Conference of the POA, the Professional Trade Union for Prison, Correctional and Secure Psychiatric Workers.

We were about to be addressed by the mayor but I'll introduce him when he eventually arrives.

We have got some guest speakers. We've got Tim Roache, General Secretary of the GMB, and Yvonne Patterson, the Chair from NAPO. We were going to hear from Richard Burgon, but unfortunately, he can't make it. Apparently, the Labour Party manifesto is coming out shortly so he's got to be there for that. We also have several fringe meetings. I'd encourage you to attend them. They were very popular last year and we want to build on that success. They're well worth attending.

Obviously, Pete Chapple's not with us. He is back at work after a long absence but we felt it would be unfair for him to rush around a week before Conference trying to get things in order after his long absence, but obviously, we don't feel that is afforded to your Acting National Chair, who's rushed round with four days' notice to prepare for today! So please, in advance, forgive me for my inevitable mistakes during business.

Just to let you know that Michael Spurr is not attending Conference because of purdah, so you can put your tomatoes away. I'm guessing most of them would have been tinned anyway.

We also have the awards section, including the Mabel Hempton award, the Cronin Clasp and the Toe by Toe awards. I look forward to welcoming the worthy winners of these awards.

Conference I just want to address the main issues that we faced during the last 12 months and I want to start by thanking those branches that supported our protest action on November 15th 2016. That has to be one of the proudest days of my service. At a time when the media spotlight was thrust upon us we quite rightly took protest action to protect your health and safety. We received the usual injunction and returned to work. We also had an agreement from Michael Spurr that staff who returned to duty by 1700 hours on that day would only lose half a day's pay. Now we discover that some governors are docking staff a full day's pay. So basically, Spurr is either a liar or his governors have decided to ignore him. Well one thing's for sure, if you're going to lose a full day's pay, you might as well stay out for a full day.

We've got prison disturbances, we saw riots at Erlestoke, for which I was berated by HMP for daring to go on TV, on radio, and have interviews with the media, for daring to call it a riot. In their eyes, it was concerted indiscipline. Well when I spoke to the staff on duty they told me that a dozen prisoners had kicked their way out of their cells, had threatened staff, had accessed the roof and smashed up two wings. HMP said it was concerted indiscipline involving three prisoners. Conference, I will always say things the way they are. In my eyes that's a riot and I will never ever be silenced by the employer to speak my mind on your behalf.

By the way, all this damage has got to be funded by us, the tax payer. Riots at Bedford, at Lewes, at Birmingham, the worst we've seen since Strangeways, riots at Swaleside. All symptoms of a prison service in meltdown and crisis brought on by savage government cuts which have seen operational frontline staff reduced by over 7,000 since 2010, whilst senior managers at Clive House have increased. All these problems presided over by a Chief Operating Officer, Michael Spurr, who for some inexplicable reason is still in employment. If he was a Premier League manager he'd have been sacked seasons ago. But fear not, we're about to employ 2,500 new staff ... on a pittance of a wage and facing atrocious working conditions and intolerable levels of violence. Well HMPPS's workforce statistics can't be hidden and they tell a totally different story, because over the last 12 months we've actually lost more staff than we can retain or recruit. Unfortunately, most of those staff are now experienced staff. We can't afford to lose experienced staff so I say this to Michael Spurr, time to give your closed grades a pay rise.

Violence, violence against our members continues to worsen. The latest statistics prove it. Assaults on staff up by 38%, that's 6,844 assaults on staff, 789 of them classed as serious assaults which require hospital treatment. That's a 26% increase on serious assaults on staff, up a quarter over the last 12 months, working out at 19 staff per day every single day of the year, 19 staff getting assaulted. That's the highest ratio I can recall. And what does our employer tell us about it? Well, they're hanging on the fact that over the past three months, assaults on staff have reduced by 4%. And they think that's good. Well why don't you tell that to the staff who it affects, the staff who are off duty, who were affected by an assault, the families are suffering as well, both physically and psychologically. Tell it to the staff who failed to get support, failed to get the sick excusals, worry about returning to work and worry about going on half pay. There are examples of some governors calling staff in for capability hearings because they dare to go long-term sick after being assaulted at work. Do you believe our employer when they tell you that they care about us? Nothing could be further from the truth.

So, a lot of members are asking, what exactly did we achieve by walking out November 15th? Well, we got the employer to address over 128 health and safety concerns that we placed before them. This has resulted in local committees, that's you, having the power to knock on your governor's door and agree a position in relation to your safety. You've been given the time, if requested, to review every risk assessment and safe system of work you have in your prisons. You have to agree an RMP and you have to agree the alarm bell responses are in place to ensure your regimes are safe.

Now I know many of you don't have RMPs or your governors or managers are refusing to adhere to them or won't adhere to them, but I have to ask, Conference, if that is the case, what are you doing about it? Because over the past couple of weeks we've seen several gaols remove themselves to a place of safety. Most recently Portland and Risley. And it's funny how when they do that their issues all of a sudden get resolved and they come to an agreement. We've got criticism from our members because the issue got spun by the employer and the government. It got spun into a pay issue when we walked out. Colleagues, it was never a pay issue. It was all about our safety in violent workplaces. I'm sorry, but all I saw on the day was news reports about prison officers taking protest action because they'd moved out over the health and safety fears. It wasn't industrial action, we're not allowed to do that, it was protest action. The issue about pay got reported several days later. It was just spin. But we're getting the blame for it. You know what colleagues, our membership need to start turning their anger and frustrations against government and the employer, because it was government and the employer that reduced our staffing levels, increased our pension age, refused to give us a pay rise and have caused the crisis we see ourselves in. It wasn't the POA. So, we've given you the power to react, to challenge, the confidence to go into your governor and demand change. And we're going to equip you, in agreement with HMP, with equipment on a similar level to what the police use. We've got that agreement in place. Initially four gaols have been chosen to trial the equipment but we want every gaol to have this equipment. I can't say too much more but you will be equipped to quell the violence that you face and one of the tools you'll be issued with rhymes with that stuff that flows from volcanoes, for the Scousers in the room that's lava.

And then we move on to prison reform. We had a reform offer that included a derisory pay offer, a pension offer and a dispute resolution procedure. You quite rightly rejected that offer and I personally thank you for that. But you know, we've been criticised for even putting that before you. Yes, we endorsed it. HMP wanted us to recommend it. We could never recommend it. But we think it's right that you should get a vote on issues that affect every member in their own unique way. Who are we to decide, on your behalf –

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE

Point of Order Mr Chair. Conference. We feel that you're moving into motions and you're answering motions before they're actually put towards the Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Point of order accepted.

Conference, I want to retire at 60 as well. And I will fight, as will the NEC fight to get a pension age of 60, but I've got to be honest with you: unless we get rid of a Tory government I don't think that's gonna happen. We'll keep pushing for a reduction in your pension age, and we'll try our best but that's just me being honest with you. And on that point, even our employer agrees that we shouldn't be working past the age of 60 but the issues are with Cabinet Office.

Do we think that pension talks will be revived? Well I hope they will but we won't know anything until after the general election, because we don't know who or what we'll be dealing with, but we'll certainly be asking for those pension talks to be revived.

We were criticised for not taking action over pension changes when they were introduced in 2012. Well I don't know where you were, but I was on the picket line taking protest action as directed by my union, with 80% of the membership. And then we get, 'Well why don't you challenge this legally?' Because the judges have won their case and the FBU are in court. Well you've got the option to change that because there is a motion here at Conference which addresses that.

Just to give you a few facts, the FBU went to court and it cost them over £250,000 to challenge that decision, and they lost. If they go through the appeal it's going to cost them about another half a million. So, if you want us to challenge it we will, but you're gonna have to pay for it. And people mention the judges, isn't it funny how the judges won their case? They presented their case to fellow judges who then decided that they had a case, they won the case, the government gave them an 11% pay rise and then they heard the FBU case and said, 'We're rejecting it.' How, very, very strange that is.

Then we come to pay. Let's be honest, our employer quite simply does not wanna give closed grades a pay rise ever. They want everyone to be on Fair and Sustainable and they will try every trick in the book to get there. The reform pay offer was an insult but the recommendations for this year's pay award by HMPPS are nothing short of a disgrace and the board of HMPPS should hang their heads in shame. I understand we are public servants and I understand we've got a

1% pay cap but we should accept nothing less than 1% for all grades. The 0.6 offer that they've recommended for closed grades as a non-consolidated payment wouldn't even buy you a breakfast in London. You know what colleagues? They can stick it. Seven years without a pay rise. Mr Spurr continues with his false words on the intranet, 'we appreciate the dangers you face, you're all fantastic, you do a great job under difficult circumstances.' Really? Is that why in the recommendations he's recommended that there's a 1.5% increase for con dodging, incompetent governors. I want pay parity. I want all staff on Fair and Sustainable to receive the same consolidated salary as closed grades. I want OSGs to be paid more, so we don't have a recruitment crisis in that area. Let's all be paid for the same job and I will continue to address that issue.

And of course, we have 31 sites that receive an enhanced salary. Difficult to recruit prisons. Difficult to recruit because you don't pay enough and the working conditions are atrocious. It's nothing more than a bribe because they realised that the bonus payments for retention was ending in March this year, so all they've done is extended it by four years. It's divisive and it's unfair to everybody else. We need to look at other issues, we need to bring back a London weighting and an LPA, we need to look at the starting salary for new recruits. We all accept that affluent areas need to be paid more but the starting salary at the moment, it just doesn't cut it.

They've got plans to bribe us even more with the professionalisation of the Prison Service. We're happy to professionalise the Prison Service but it has to apply to all our members. At the moment, it only applies to 2,000 band 3 staff on Fair and Sustainable. We're still in talks over this role and we've already issued a circular telling you to have nothing to do with it until we're in a negotiated position. So, the new band 4 Advanced Prison Officer will be profiled at band 3. They'll wear band 3 epilates but they'll receive additional money to do the voluntary tasks that the majority of closed grades already do for nothing, and will continue to do for nothing, because as I say, it doesn't apply to them yet. But we have been told by the employer that they have future plans to address this issue and they have future plans to address the closed grades. Well I'll tell you this, Conference, until they show us those plans and until they publish them on the intranet for you all to read so there's a commitment that it will actually go ahead, they're not getting no deal from us. We're not approving it.

We have seen changes to our compensation scheme which effect inefficiency payments and voluntary exits. Changes that were forced upon us by government. We weren't even invited into the room unless we were gonna agree with the changes. No gun to our head there then. The POA was one of only two unions that opposed it. To legally challenge it would be expensive but in collaboration with the PCS we are assisting them in their legal challenge. This detrimental change will severely affect all our members because it's being capped now at three weeks' pay for each year of service up to a maximum of 78 weeks' pay, which gives you 18 months.

And then we saw the imposition of the Attendance Management Policy, a policy that we put a national dispute in and that was overridden by Michael Spurr. His own policy he ignored when he imposed that on us. Did you really think we were going to stand for that? Bit of trade union tenacity, bit of team work, and we actually gained some concessions and I can tell you about them today.

Some of the important concessions we gained give staff an immediate sick excusal if they are assaulted at work, no need to wait around for OH reports. One of our colleagues gets assaulted at work, it's an immediate sick excusal.

Sickness warnings will not be automatic. So, managers can and will use their judgement and discretion on a case by case basis. This stops them acting like robots when they get an email off Shared Services telling them that they must issue a warning. Staff with underlying medical conditions classed as a disability will not automatically receive a warning. Reasonable adjustments must be made to accommodate staff and you will be allowed disability leave to attend hospital appointments, treatment or recuperation. That will prevent some jumped up civvy in the detail office saying you can only have two hours to go for a hospital appointment. You will be allowed those concessions.

Further details will be published in next month's Gatelodge. We also have a working group with the employer to ensure that these concessions are applied across the board and nobody wavers from them. So, what I would ask Conference, if you've got any examples of this policy being abused, please let your area rep know and we will take that forward.

We've just had an announcement about extremist units, they're about to come online. The first one at Frankland. Will they work? Only time will tell, but judging by what's going on in Ireland, who knows. We will be keeping a close eye on that, comrades.

We want proper training, we want psychological support, we want proper security procedures in place, and if any of our members receive threats in their personal life, if the employer doesn't react, we will.

We are now in the realms of governor autonomy. Some governors obviously think this is licence to do what the hell they like. I've already got examples of some governors telling band 4 staff in OMU that they're going to pull them out and make them all band 5s. We're still working on the Offender Management Model, we're still in negotiations, we don't know what

it's going to look like. Why they want to start messing around with band 4s I just do not know.

So, if you've got a crackpot governor in your prison who thinks they can carry on with their ridiculous ideas, then please challenge them. If you ask any of the colleagues at autonomous prisons what autonomy means to them, they'll say, 'I don't know' because nothing much has changed. We've got extra finances, we're getting extra staff but apart from that it's just a word. In fact, the flag-bearer of autonomy who loves to write about it in *The Guardian*, Iain Bickers, has now moved on, so much for thinking outside the box and being a maverick. He's no longer there.

And of course, again this year we've had yet more prison closures. At a time where it's severely overcrowded, we close prisons. Can you imagine being in business and having a product that was in more demand than ever before? I would suggest that you would expand your premises, build new premises, employ more staff, increase your budget ... so at a time when we're locking up more people than ever, what do our great leaders decide to do? They decide to close prisons, reduce staff and reduce budgets. Would it not make more sense to keep every prison open while you build the new ones and reduce overcrowding? Because I'll tell you something now, while you've got overcrowding you'll never, ever have reform. So we now have staff at Dover, Haslar, Glen Parva, Rochester, Kennet and Hindley having their lives, or about to have their lives turned upside down. I just hope that they get looked after because the staff at Haslar got treated abysmally.

But we do need those new builds to remain in the public sector. To do that we need to prove that we are successful. We need to prove that Berwyn is a success. Well colleagues, not at any cost. We need to get back to basics. We need to get back discipline, order and control, because it's not gonna happen if we call prisoners men or residents and house them in rooms. They are convicts, prisoners or inmates, they live in cells and they associate on landings. We've now got a ridiculous situation at Berwyn where custodial managers have been given a choice to wear uniform or civilian clothing. It's not a choice, it's a requirement. You're uniformed staff, so wear that uniform with pride and stop trying to be something you're not. If you don't wanna be a CM, then remove all your common sense, get yourself a nice air-conditioned office, and fail to make a decision. In other words, become a governor.

ANDY HAMLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, ELMLEY Point of order Mr Chairman. I'm finding your language, Mr Acting Chairman, quite divisive. I've got members that are governors, I've got members that work in a jumped up detail office and I don't think you're showing them the respect they deserve.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Point accepted. I was generalising and I do apologise if I've offended anyone.

But I've got a solution to that particular problem at Berwyn. I think I should send a circular out in the summer inviting all our 2s, 3s and 4s to go into work wearing flipflops and shorts, because if it's good enough for them, it's good enough for us all. It's not illegal. We're still running a regime. Now that would be interesting.

And then of course we had the publication of the white paper. We've got a vision from our Secretary of State in the recently published white paper that puts safety at the top of the agenda, prison safety is paramount. Well she best starts listening to the POA because prisons aren't safe. And she also says that the Secretary of State will be held accountable – well that's Liz Truss at the moment, so Michael Spurr's going to get away with it again. But it does say in the white paper that governors will be held to account. So I can imagine there's going to be a few scapegoats there. Apparently frontline staff will be given the tools to do their job. Unless of course you work with violent juveniles and you're not allowed to carry a baton. And prisons will not be judged on a one size fits all. So that's benchmark dead, because that did try and fit us all in the same box, and look how that turned out.

We're going to get league tables as well so imagine there'll be even more underreporting and even more cover-ups because it's great when you're top of the league but it's not so great when you're Sunderland. Sorry Terry.

And of course you're gonna become case workers, you're gonna have a caseload of six prisoners, so there's gonna be one-to-one interaction. And it all works great in theory, but in practice what's the first task that'll be under-resourced and dropped to facilitate a regime? You can guarantee it's gonna be the casework

Conference, there are lots of interesting motions on the order paper and the future is up to you. I'm fed up being treated like a second-class citizen, fed up living under the equivalent of a North Korean state strangled by Section 127, fed up being unappreciated and unrecognised by our employer.

Enjoy Conference. Good luck.

<Applause>

Conference I'm pleased to announce that the Mayor Sefton has arrived. Councillor Brodie-Browne who was officially appointed as the mayor in May 2016. He's married to Nicola, a school teacher, and they have three daughters. He was the founder and CEO of Imagine Independence, which is a mental health charity based in Liverpool, which provides services in Merseyside, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cumbria and four London boroughs. He is trustee of the Mental Health Providers Forum, a consortium of the leading mental health charities in England and Wales. He previously worked for Mind and Age Concern. His interest in health and social care has also led him to serve on a family practitioners' committee and health authority. In his spare time Iain has an allotment in Birkdale and along with daughter Mollie has tasted success in the Ainsdale Show as their pumpkin won the best in show prize. He supports Southport FC and is a regular at Hague Avenue. So he's already got something in common with Terry because Southport were relegated as well.

Iain enjoys fell-walking and has completed several long-distance footpaths including the West Highland Way, Offa's Dyke and Wainwright's Coast to Coast Path. He hopes to do part of the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path this year. As befits a parent with two daughters who have studied English at university he also enjoys reading and the theatre. He's honoured to be the mayor and we're honoured to have him here opening our conference, and I'd like to invite the Lord Mayor of Sefton to address Conference and formally open Conference. Thank you.

The Worshipful The Mayor of Sefton Councillor Iain Brodie Brown

IAIN BRODIE-BROWNE – MAYOR OF SEFTON: Well Mr Chairman, thank you for that rather comprehensive introduction all of which was accurate. My job is to welcome you to Southport and I believe you're returners, you've been here before for your conference and I hope that means that you've had a good time in the past. As we've heard from Mark, you have some very important matters to consider at this conference. It's a time of uncertainty and almost certainly a new Secretary of State come June. I hope you'll find our setting here in Southport congenial for those discussions. I hope you'll find outside the conference facilities that you like. I know the people here at the Floral Hall have always worked hard to welcome conferences and I hear very good things from other conferences I've welcomed of the way that they have dealt with delegates. I think you'll find the town at large, we have places to eat, drink, some excellent bars, and I hope as you're here for a few days I hope that you'll make the most of that opportunity. We have the sunshine this week. I'm afraid we don't have the sea – you'll discover that it's a seldom visitor to Southport and we don't seem able to hang onto it once we've got it. So, I wish you every success in your conference and I hope you'll come back and visit us again in Southport. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Short but sweet, but as is the tradition at Conference, colleagues, nobody goes away from Conference empty-handed and we do have a presentation to make to Iain. So Iain, on behalf of the POA.

IAIN BRODIE-BROWNE – MAYOR OF SEFTON: Thank you very much!

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we now move on to Conference motions 1 to 7a, which are about the rules and the constitution. We do need a two-thirds majority vote to approve these motions.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Mr Chairman, point of order. We put an appeal in to Standing Orders Committee reference the amount of motions that the NEC's got in. They've actually got 11 motions in, you're only allowed 12. That's 12.5 of the rules and constitution. You've got 14 in but you're allowed 10] for putting nominations in.

TERRY FULLERTON – CHAIR OF STANDING ORDERS: Conference, we're well within the rules because we've put seven motions forward, three awards and one on behalf of the Welfare Committee, so that satisfies the rules.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I believe it's 11.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference motion 1, Glyn Travis for the NEC.

MOTION 1

Amend Rules and Constitution as per Conference Paper 1.
NEC

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY, NEC: Good morning Conference, NEC. In moving Conference motion 1 on behalf of the National Executive Committee, you will all have received Conference Paper 1, which identifies a number of tidy-up motions which are identified in red. Some of them are mandatory because of the changes to the political fund and they will be dealt with in more detail as we move through other Conference papers. I simply ask Conference to accept these tidy-up motions and changes in Conference paper 1, and these will come in force after Conference in June, as well as any other motions that are adopted. So please support, thank you very much.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour – excuse me Conference, first mistake. Do we have a seconder for that motion? Kirkham. All those in favour, please show. That's carried, thank you.

Conference motion 2, Andy Darken for the NEC. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Channings Wood.

MOTION 2

Amend Rule 2.2 (a)

Remove “including the Trades Union Congress”

NEC

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY, NEC: Thank you. Good morning Conference. Andy Darken speaking on behalf of the NEC. Motion one was a tidy-up motion for a number of rules. In essence, I would argue this next motion is a sort of tidy-up motion and previously when we de-affiliated from EUROFEDOP one of the problems with some of the rules is it restricts us. If you look at rule 2.2a, which is affiliate to relevant bodies including Trade Union Congress. Trade Union Congress is a great organisation which costs this union quite a lot of money each year, round about £90,000. If we keep that in there, that restricts us if ever we decide to make any changes. So we can remain affiliated to the TUC of course but we mustn't tie the hands of this union when we're paying out such a large amount of money. We need to keep making sure as part of the TUC we get value for money and they work on our behalf. This will help us to that end. So please support, Conference, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour please show. Thank you, Conference, that's carried.

Motion 3, I call Feltham. Can we have a seconder for Feltham's motion? Barlinnie.

MOTION 3

POA de-affiliate from the TUC.

FELTHAM

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP FELTHAM: Some of you may see this as a controversial motion, but the reason behind it, we've had seven years of austerity, seven years of attacks on our trade union rights, our working conditions, our pay, pensions, by the Tories. They're some of the examples. And what are the TUC doing? From where I'm standing they're being quite quiet ... they've been doing a lot of online campaigning ... they should be galvanising the trade union movement to be more robust and more effective. Well they're not. I give you one example. I've just done my trade union employment law course at Tottenham College. My tutor was on a seasonal zero hours contract delivering this training. Next year this training has been all but gone because of government funding cuts. Now the TUC are doing all the TUC course online. That's going to make us, as trade unions, be less proactive, less effective. We pay over £90,000 into the TUC, but what do we get back as a union? That's the question I wanna ask. The thing is the TUC has become weak and submissive. The POA are a proactive union within the TUC. We have made a lot of issues but the TUC and other trade unions are not being proactive, so do we need to be in the TUC to progress as a union? Conference, please support the motion.

JIM MCCABE – BRANCH SECRETARY, BARLINNIE: Chair, Conference, in support of this motion. If we go back to the history of the TUC, its inception, it was a fantastic idea. They were at the forefront of many historical events through the history of Britain, supported during the two world wars, supported workers during the 1926 strike, General Strike, and in the depression of the thirties. They fought for a five-day working week and equal rights for all. But this is a long time ago so what have they done for us recently? If you go to their webpage they tell us, 'The TUC is all about working together to draw up common policies on issues that matter to people.' Well, the enterprise bill mattered to civil servants and the six big unions and the TUC voted, rather than fight the Tories, and the enterprise bill came in. So this month we have two members of staff being paid off on capability who have lost between £10,000 and £15,000 because of this bill and because of the TUC's abject refusal to fight.

The TUC will tell us that the gap between the rich and the poor is getting wider. Shocker. In the seventies, the CEO in charge of any major company was paid on average seven times the national average wage. Today these same people are paid 140 times the national average wage. The latest soundbite if you go onto their page is 'a new bargain'. And they're telling us one in ten of the UK workforce is in a precarious position. 3.2 million workers in casual or agency work or zero hours contracts. They go on to say it's just like last century's dockers, standing at the gate waiting for a few hours is how management, employers, treat working class people in Britain. The TUC has lost its way. All we get is soundbites and surveys. Surveys, they're great at surveys! We need action. Austerity is here and austerity is killing the working class in Britain. We're just about to get another five years of Tory rule I would suggest, and I don't really see them doing us any favours. So I don't need a soundbite to tell me that zero hours contracts are a problem. I don't need a soundbite to tell me that workers, predominantly female, can't get full-time work in shops and stores, won't achieve the full government pension. And I don't need soundbites to tell me that payday loans are an attack on workers and the poor, but they're becoming socially acceptable 'cause we're putting them on football strips now and we put them on the radio and give them a wee jingle and it's OK to charge somebody 1,000% interest. Where is the people who should be supporting the poor and the workers in Britain? What is the TUC doing about this? We need action.

A few years ago the POA had a motion passed at Conference for a general strike due to the austerity measures in Britain. And to my knowledge the austerity measures are still here. 100 years ago Robert Tressell wrote a book, most of you would have read it, *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists*, considered one of the first books on socialism in Britain. 100 years old. If you read that book you'll think it was written yesterday. The conditions then are the conditions now and the organisation that should be at the forefront to protect workers' rights is the TUC. They're posted missing. I don't need their political debates, I don't need their surveys and I don't need their soundbites. What I need is action. They just will not take action, so I'm asking you to support this motion please.

<Applause>

MATT CLARK – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Than you Chair, Conference. Asking you to reject the motion, not because I revere the work of the TUC in any way, I just feel it's too soon. I thank Feltham for bringing this to Conference because I think the inactivity and lethargy of the TUC does need debating. My grandfather, a Unite member to this day, was a convener on the factory floors of the potteries for many years. He recalls vividly a question posed to him at a branch meeting during the miner's strike of 1972, and Chair, I apologise for the language I'm about to use but I'm quoting verbatim, a member asked him, 'Len, do the TUC continue to sit on their hands even when they take a shit?' This was the general opinion of the TUC 45 years ago and what's changed? Apart from the closure of those pits, factories, steel works, privatisation of BT, British Gas, Royal Mail, prisons and the NHS, very little. Last year the trade union bill became law and the TUC did not even organise a single demonstration in opposition, and yet they sit idly by whilst one of its unions gets dragged through the courts by the government for trying to improve the safety of its members. And let's not forget the recent slow-dance facilitated by the TUC between Southern Rail and ASLEF and I applaud those ASLEF members for continuing to reject that deal, and for all this we pay in excess of £80,000 a year as a union. Nobody needs to explain to me the need for unions to stand and fight together, but will the likes of Community, the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, the Professional Footballers Association, the FDA, or even Unison ever be willing to answer the call to arms if it's made? There are unions out there, I believe, would be keen to talk about coordinated action if the time came, like the RMT, PCS, Bakers Union and NAPO. This could be the beginnings of something new, something to rival the TUC model, something that fighting unions like ours can be proud to belong to and I think the POA could be part of building that. The TUC can keep its red carpet dinners, and the rest, 'cause they've done little for the working man and woman, which we as unions are supposed to represent. I think there is a future for the trade union movement outside of the TUC but I would urge conference not to cut the cord until the appropriate measures are in place, and for that reason alone I ask you to reject the motion.

<Applause>

JOHN DICKSON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SHOTTS: Asking you to reject this motion. Colleagues, to disaffiliate from the TUC to achieve what? What is the end game if we disaffiliate from the TUC? Are we frustrated with the lack of perceived fight? Damn right we are. Are we frustrated with what appears to be any concrete strategy to push our members' rights forward? Again, damn right we are. Toothless, only good at talking, not taking action, and what's the TUC ever done for us? I'll take you back to the *Life of Brian* sketch where the question has arisen there 'What's the Romans ever done for us?' Well the TUC has successfully campaigned on behalf of all affiliated unions to achieve the creation of the NHS, 1948, the Equal Pay Act in 1970, minimum wage in 1999, eight hours work, eight hours rest and eight hours play. Minimum holiday entitlement. Apart from that though, what has the TUC ever done for us? It's there, right in front of you, colleagues. We can relate to that in our own branches when our members come by in anger and say to us, 'What's the POA doing for us? You sit in there, drink coffee and do nothing.' Is walking away without having a say within the Council the best thing that we can do for our members? I think not colleagues. The very thing that this current government wants unions to do is to isolate themselves, to be alone and then pick us off. If you look up there the now, there's a jigsaw piece, belong to be strong. That's what we're doing in the TUC. The TUC has constituent-affiliated unions numbering in their

millions. Currently we're one of those unions with numbers of circa 30 to 40,000. We're a small fish in a big pond colleagues, as a trade union. My understanding is that all these unions put forward their memberships, constitutionally agreed mandates, and Steve's role within this group is to influence our members' mandate within the TUC, it's to influence it and direct them. And we need to stay in the TUC in order to influence this. We need to be able to influence the Council to vote in a firebrand if that's what we want, somebody who will fight and fight and fight and stand up for us, but we have to be in it, in order for us to push them to do it. In unity there is strength. It's the exact same within the TUC and what we should be doing is encouraging more unions to affiliate with the TUC in order to gain strength and a united front colleagues. Not walking away. TUC learning courses that we've all been on, political lobbying from a united standpoint and an influence in Europe all were the principles of the TUC at the forefront. We as trade unions are the custodians, right here, right now, as the trade union movement has to move itself forward. There's a Tory government out there as we speak right now who's hell-bent on taking everything away from us. Stay in the TUC and fight them within the TUC colleagues.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: A lot of it's already been said. There's only a couple of things that I would like to address on this point. It's right that this motion comes to this Conference because it's right that we question what do we get from the TUC. So it's right that we bring this to here and hopefully the TUC will get to hear about this, but yet again, wrong time. Just as the time we're coming out of Europe and everything else, and now we're going to isolate ourselves as a very small union and we are a small union, we're hanging on to the coattails of the big unions and everything else. And there's lots of small unions there. I've had the honour of being a delegate at TUC Conference and observer on some occasions and what I've seen and witnessed in there has actually shocked me and has been very disappointing. To see how the top six unions in this country actually dictate what happens at the TUC Conference. And yes, we did pass a motion not so long ago, taken by the POA, taken forward for a national day of strike, and we are a very small union, we are punching well above our weight. So should we actually cut ourselves away from it at this moment? It would be absolutely suicidal for us to do this. The one thing I would want to know is will we ever get our trade union rights back without an organisation like the TUC? Maybe we should be doing some more work with them and demanding that they start putting more motions and stuff in place to bring back our trade union rights, so the rights that every single worker should have. Get rid of the TUC, you're actually tearing that up right from the outset.

The other aspect of this is we've taken action, illegal action, over the last few years. Perhaps when Steve replies on this he will actually tell us what protection the TUC will give us in the event that we're actually asked to do it again, and as Mark said, if we are called out to do it again, we may at one point be ignoring the solicitors' advice, 'cause the solicitors' advice will always be to return to work, because we are breaking the law. At one point or another we are going to have to stand up and we're going to have to ignore that advice. We need an organisation like the TUC to apply political pressure to protect our leaders, the people in this room and our members, in the event that we have to ignore that advice. Please reject this motion.

<Applause>

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Much has already been said about the TUC but from my perspective, I sit on the Equalities Committee of the POA and we attend the TUC Conferences Women's Conference, Black Workers' Conference, Disability Workers' Conference, LGBT. It's a great forum where we can take those members who don't necessarily get the best representation or the most widely recognised representation in the workplace and we do come away with the latest policies and the latest advice we can give to our members out there having attended these conferences. If we do not affiliate to the TUC, we do not get at a seat at this conference table. Training, yes, they provide training for health and safety reps, who would deliver that training once we don't affiliate to the TUC? And that's got to be accredited training. But lastly, think of other unions in the criminal justice system who are affiliated to the TUC and the ones that are not. There's only one, the Prison Governors' Association, so do we go to them for help and advice as a non-TUC-affiliated union? Probably not. Please reject.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY, NEC: Thank you very much Chairman. Thank you Conference. The National Executive Committee asks you to reject. I would imagine all our respective employers are sitting there at this minute in time rubbing their hands, hoping that we do come out of the TUC and go into the wilderness. Someone mentioned, I've got to say I thought it was an excellent debate actually, the pros and cons of the TUC ... is the TUC perfect? Of course it isn't. Do we fight from within in the TUC? Of course we do. Previous General Secretaries such as David Evans, Brian Caton and myself, and people were right to mention that it was this small union that actually rocked the trade union movement by taking a motion to the General Council to look at the practicalities and consideration of a general strike. And let me tell you we had a fight on our hands to get it through. A tiny little union like the POA punched above its weight, because we had Bob Crow of the RMT, God rest his soul, on side in relation to that. But still we had to convince some of

the more reluctant unions to get onside and without going into all the politics of what happens within the halls of the TUC and the politics, we got it through. And it was the best debate, people tell me, that's been at the TUC for years. Yes, OK, it's been kicked into the long grass, but the reality is it's for me, who represents you on the General Council, to keep chipping away, and of course there is fear out there from the trade union movement, from the bigger unions that can't perhaps galvanise their membership. So for example I would hate to think ... it's difficult enough in our special hospitals dealing with many recognised unions that the employer has within the NHS setting. So for example, if you're at Ashworth, Broadmoor, Rampton and Carstairs you've got various trade unions who the NHS recognise. Now if the POA came out of the TUC, those unions would be swamped all over the POA membership, poaching and taking them in. We would be so isolated, our employers would be loving every single minute of it. So I urge Conference, yes it's better to fight from within, yes we pay affiliation fees, yes, we have our rows within the TUC, but you know I'm not in the habit of union-bashing other unions. There's plenty of that that goes on in the right-wing media without us fighting between ourselves. I've got some great relationships with other trade unions. I was out with Mick Cash, General Secretary of the RMT, discussing only last week. I'm due to meet Unison General Secretary soon. We've got the GMB General Secretary addressing this Conference. That's how you build reputations. I don't want to go back to the dark old days where our slogan appeared to be 'Nobody likes us but we don't care. We can do it by ourselves.'

Conference, we cannot do it by ourselves. We're a small union with a big reputation that punches and fights above our weight, restricted by anti-trade-union legislation. But to come out as an affiliate to the TUC would leave us vulnerable and isolated even more. Someone mentioned, I think it was MATT CLARK mentioned the Bakers Union. Yeah, Bakers Union, fighting union. The Bakers Union had to come out of the TUC some years ago because they couldn't afford the affiliation fees, and they told me it was a lonely place to be because you find that other trade unions stop speaking to you, stop supporting you and stop assisting you. Now I'm not gonna go into every single detail and give out details of where our allies are within the trade union movement, but let me tell you one thing: Frances O'Grady is a good leader, as was Brendan Barber, and I remember the days where we had troubles in Northern Ireland and let me tell you, Colin Moses, myself, Brian Caton, Finlay Spratt and others met for days at Northern Ireland Millbank with Brendan Barber assisting us in that major dispute where we were going to go literally, nationally walkouts unless our people in Northern Ireland were protected. Brendan Barber fully understood that process. Brendan Barber assisted. When we were getting taken in the last time on contempt of court, Brendan Barber assisted us with the then Labour government and Gerry Sutcliffe was the Prisons Minister that eventually got us in a dialogue through the Ed Sweeney discussions on a proper industrial relations procedural agreement.

It is a complex issue and I hear people talking about what will the TUC do if we're in contempt of court and things like that. Well I'd rather them on our side than not coming to our assistance if we ever find that. I'm not gonna mention anything about the contempt of court and ignoring legal advice and so forth, apart from to say there isn't one trade union in the land, including the RMT and all those fighting unions, that would ignore their legal advice and put themselves in the difficulties of a contempt of court because there's only one way back from that, and that's either you purge your contempt or you find yourself not having a trade union. But we'll say more on that later. But I urge you to reject this motion wholeheartedly. Join together, fight together, fight within the TUC for a better future, and I've got to say I welcome the debate. It's been healthy, it's been good, and that's the way it should be, but reject the motion. Thank you Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour? All those against? That motion is lost.

MOTION 4

Qualification

Amend Rule 4.1 to add:

“at any workplace which the NEC determine as being within scope of membership or as a paid Officer of the Union”

And Remove

4.1 (a) (b) and (c)

NEC

Conference, motion 4, the NEC seek your permission to withdraw this motion. It requires a simple majority. Do we have permission to withdraw motion 4? All those show. All those against. That's withdrawn. Thank you Conference. I now call Dave Todd for the NEC, motion 5.

MOTION 5

Preparations

Rule 12.5 remove

“(d) each branch will be limited to a maximum of 10 motions to Annual Conference; and

(e) the National Executive will also be limited to a maximum of 10 motions with the exception of motions dealing with awards.

NEC

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, go easy, it's my first NEC motion. The motion reads to remove rule 12.5(d) and (e). (d) – each branch will be limited to a maximum of ten motions to Annual Conference. (e) – the National Executive will also be limited to a maximum of 10 motions with the exception of motions dealing with awards.

Colleagues, you remember the rule was revised in 2015 with the adoption of Conference paper 1, the reasoning for the paper was set out as follows: The purpose of this Conference paper is to set out new revised rules and policies. Rules and procedures to ensure that the administration of all Conference agendas is achievable, that all affected branches have the opportunity to propose, consider in line with the rules specifically 12.4, 12.5, 12.6 and 12.7. And to minimise the risk of litigation and/or challenges to the Union, branches will be limited to 10 Conference motions unless the rules provided differently, to ensure that a manageable agenda can be produced. The NEC mover of Annual Conference motion 3 of 2015 suggested that this would allow a more manageable agenda to be produced. It was also stated in the verbatim report that the NEC, as could any other branch, review and bring changes. The National Executive now feels that those changes should be brought at this Conference. Most of the delegates in here now are in their own time. Brian Clarke's not on the floor anymore. The NEC feels that we don't any longer need to restrict any branch to the ruling of ten motions as we feel this is restrictive. If a member proposes a motion at a duly convened branch meeting, is it acceptable to them that their proposed motion may not be heard if there are ten motions in place from that branch? the NEC feel that it is somewhat stifling not to allow members to have proposed motions to go into the order paper. Conference, in closing, the main reason for this appears to have been included in the Conference paper of 2015 was that of time. The NEC feel now it is time that it was taken out of the rules altogether as we all give up our time for this great union. Conference, thank you and please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have a seconder for that motion before we go to the vote? Swaleside, thank you.

Conference, all those in favour of this motion? All those against? That motion is carried.

Motion 6, Wormwood Scrubs. Do we have a seconder for Wormwood Scrubs? Garth/Lancaster Farms.

MOTION 6

That Rule 12.13 is amended to read:

Voting on all motions at Conference will be by a show of voting cards (one per branch), but a card vote based on branch membership may be demanded by at least 10 branches, this to include any appeals of motions to Conference. Votes from branches in favour, opposed and abstaining will be called for by the Chair in both voting card and card votes on all Conference motions.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

MATT CLARK - BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: The motion reads that the rule 12.13 is amended to read: voting on all measures at Conference will be by show of voting cards, one per branch, but card votes based on branch membership may be demanded by at least ten branches. This is to include appeals of motions to Conference and votes from branches in favour, opposed and abstaining will be called for by the chair in both voting cards and card votes on all Conference motions. Conference, this has not been written to be divisive or controversial, merely practical. Most democratic organisations around the world allow members to abstain from voting on any particular motions or resolutions if they wish, all the way from the Commons chamber probably down to your own POA branch meetings. Maybe the arguments for or against those motions have not steered you either way, or perhaps the particular motion in question bears no relevance to your particular branch and you wish to remove yourself from that decision-making process. However, this motion is not designed to discourage anybody from voting on what they feel is right. It merely gives you an option to abstain from the voting process if you wish. Surely anything we can do to further democratise the proceedings of this Conference should be welcomed. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Do the Farms wish to speak on that motion? Jackie Marshall for the NEC.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. Conference, most of this motion is currently met by the rules, as votes for and against are already asked for, if it's the will of Conference then the rules change in that those abstaining from the vote will be asked for a show of hands. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour? Those against? That motion is carried.

Motion 7, Glyn Travis on behalf of the NEC. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Leicester to second.

MOTION 7

Conference supports an amendment to Rule 26.1 to read:

“Subject to any statutory restrictions in force at the time, any member or Branch may be disciplined who:

*(j) Branches who fail to abide by any NEC directive will have their annual grant as per Rule 17.4, removed for the next financial year subject to a full explanation of their actions and pending a decision from the National Executive Committee
NEC*

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: Morning Conference. Once again. Conference, motion 7 calls on you to support an issue that will allow the NEC to seek an explanation from you and your branches when you fail to follow the directive of the NEC. All too often we are guilty of keyboard warriors and individuals saying, 'What are the NEC doing, why aren't we doing this?' We've been to Conference on many occasions where branches have asked for disclosure of how people voted as a branch, whether they voted or whether they didn't, and we have always tried to protect the integrity of ballots of action for those individuals. The Executive believe it is time, colleagues, for you to determine whether you want yourselves to be held accountable should you not follow the directive of the NEC. And that directive might simply be to conduct a workplace ballot, to take action of any description and if you don't, you'll be held to account by the Executive. The Executive will seek an explanation from you as to why you didn't follow that directive, and if that explanation is not sufficient your branch funds, the money that you deal with your branches and support your members, will be withheld for one year. Very strong persuasive method that the Executive feel is right and proper to hold branches to account. It's a matter for you, Conference, whether you think it's the right course of action or not. The Executive firmly believe that it is the right course of action because we believe if we're gonna belong to be strong, we have to united. We do not want individuals who can't deliver and won't deliver and we've had those branches who've been up to this rostrum on many occasions and said, 'It's no good me supporting this, 'cause I can't deliver it.' That's honesty and democracy.

But if the Executive, following your directive and following the directive, believe we should be taking some form of action, irrespective of what it is, we should all abide by it, irrespective of where we work, whether that's in the special hospitals, the private sector, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Isle of Wight, wherever you are, it's irrelevant. If the Executive want us to do something, we should do it together, we should be strong enough to do it together and we should support each other, and that's what this motion calls for. Please support, thank you.

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chairman, NEC, Conference, I agree with the motion, Glyn. Point of clarification. You've put there, 'any member or branch may be disciplined' so are you saying if there's something nationally going on and one of our members goes against the action, the branch get penalised.

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: The clarification is that you, as a branch committee, would explain to the Executive why your individuals and why you as a committee didn't do something, so the clarity is no, it wouldn't be one member who failed to queue at the gate at half-past-seven, at your start time, as you should do 'cause it's good will. The clarification is it's for you as a directive and where you are. If everybody else is doing it, one member wouldn't preclude you from this rule. It's about the collective, it's about everybody.

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: How many members would swing it?

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: The issue is the fact that we're saying that if you have got a directive to do something, and your members follow that then you've followed the directive. You can't be held accountable for everybody. We know there are restrictions as a certification officer, it's about when a branch fail to comply.

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIRMAN, GARTH: OK, thank you.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Just one thing. Is there an appeal process for this?

JACKIE BATES – BRANCH CHAIR, BUCKLEY HALL: Chair, Conference, speaking against this motion. First of all I don't know what you're all feeling but I'm struggling, me, to get people on the committee as it is. To put that amount of pressure with facility time as it is that we can't always get, is absolutely, in my opinion, wrong. And the NEC, I'm sorry about this, but you need to send your things out a bit sooner. I were on nights, me, and then rest week, and I've had to go in to pick up those Conference papers because they weren't sent out soon enough. Ballots often we're not given the amount of time that we'd like, and if I'm honest, each and every one of us in this room I'm sure will try to endeavour to do what you ask, but on occasion it's impossible.

<Applause>

I think it's unfair of you, when it's all in our own time, and I personally go in and do it in my own time, but other people don't see why they should. And I think it's wrong, I think it's unfair and I think you're punishing us ...well, I've said it, haven't I? Please reject.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: NEC, Conference, speaking against the motion. We are, as somebody said this morning, none of us perfect, and there are times when people may not follow an NEC directive but why not? Sometimes it's because we don't hear them in time, sometimes it's because we don't believe they fit the particular situation we have at our gaol, sometimes because the wording's wrong, we don't know. What really concerns me in this one is that the amendment says, 'Will have their annual grant removed subject to a full explanation pending a decision from the NEC'. Now to me that reads the money's going to be taken away from that branch, thereby that branch cannot carry out its business, and that's all the members in that branch, not just the committee, who are the people we're talking about being responsibility. All that branch! We take our support away from them, they cannot carry on their business. Pending a decision. So they've got to wait. Now that's happening out there in the real world to people, outside of our union. It's happening to the disabled and the poor out there in the real world. It's called sanctioning. Why is this punishment before finding out what the situation is? By all means, let us look at some kind of disciplinary action, how we can address branch committees who may not be acting in the best interests of the Union, but don't make it punish the members and don't bring the punishment in before you've made the decision. Please reject this motion.

<Applause>

JOHN DICKSON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SHOTTS: Chair, NEC, Conference, you have to reject this motion. You simply have to reject this motion. My colleague just very eloquently put all the points there. If we don't take industrial action for whatever reason, your members don't wanna do it, they're taking our funds off us. That cannot be right. Cannot be right at all. We are the leaders, we are the activists, we are the people who get our members to do what we got to do. We don't need this threat hanging over our heads colleagues. Please reject this motion.

<Applause>

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR, ASHWORTH: Chair, NEC, speaking against this motion. Garth asked for clarification as to how many members. We didn't get it. One member, two members, five members, ten members, how many does it take before we get sanctioned? And the other thing is, who decides whether our explanation's suitable as to why something hasn't ... well, the NEC, but do you know what? They might accept one thing from one branch and another thing from another, or not. Please reject this motion. This is just, I think, a ridiculous pressure to place on committees and branches.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference, speaking against the motion. Do you know what? When we took the action, the day of action and we heard that there were branches up and down the country who failed to take action as directed by the NEC, our members were disappointed and they were angry and I've also had members come to me and asking what are we gonna do about them? And I suppose to a degree it is correct and right that we had some form of punishment or some sort of sanctions against those branches or individuals who go against us, but even on the day of action at Swaleside I still had members walk past me. They walked past our picket line and there's nothing I can do about it. And this doesn't address that, or maybe it does ... because I've had members walk past me and go into work and walk past all their colleagues, you're now going to take all my funds away from us. The other aspect of this is look at what these branch funds are for. They are there for you to conduct the business of your branch and of this union for the benefit of your members. That is going to be taken away. Our ability to conduct our business and everything else will severely restricted. We've got to find a different way of doing this. It's right that we challenge branches and members who

don't abide by the rules of this union, but however it's not a dictatorship, it's a democracy, and democracy means that unfortunately some people will have a different viewpoint to us. I'm currently aware at the moment there are some branches who are not here this week because they refused to give up their annual leave. That was forced upon us by the employer. Are we now going to take their branch funds away because they will not voluntarily use their annual leave to come to this Conference? Please reject this motion.

<Applause>

PAUL MCLENNAN – BRANCH CHAIR, MOORLAND: If we go back to motion 3, POA de-affiliate from TUC, they've just spoken against breaking the Union apart. Are we not in danger of doing exactly the same thing by passing this motion? Please reject this, it's mad.

<Applause>

MATT CLARK - BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Speaking against the motion. There's no terms of reference about what is deemed reasonable or not, kangaroo courts, are you for real? Squeezing our necks with their boots is the work of the employer. I didn't expect this from our Union. Please reject.

<Applause>

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: Conference, the motion was brought to allow you to make a decision. Firstly, rule 26.1 says currently 'subject to any statutory restrictions in force at any time, any member may be disciplined who acts against' all of these, and you've accepted Conference paper 1 and all of the typographical changes that needed to go in there because of that. This is a new element of the rule to try and encourage people to belong and to do together. It's not a kangaroo court Matt. It's about giving people an opportunity to try and encourage everybody. How often do you say out there, be honest with yourselves, 'Why are we doing this when colleagues across the road aren't doing it?' Is that a fact? Is that the reality of where we are? What this is trying to do is encourage us all to do it. If you don't want to have this restriction there, so that you can explain to the Executive ... come along and say, 'The reason that Garth didn't do this was because my members said no' that's fine, that's democracy. You give an explanation, nothing happens. If you come along and say, 'Do you know what, colleagues, we just didn't and we couldn't be bothered to do it because we thought we'll just leave it to somebody else' ... Jackie you're absolutely right, sometimes the Executive sends stuff out late and you couldn't act on it. That would be a perfectly legitimate reason for you to come and simply say, 'Yes, this is why we didn't do that, Chair.' It's acceptable.

Conference, the NEC believe that this is the right thing to do. If you don't believe it's the right thing to do, please reject, but don't think that the Executive are trying to be punitive. We're trying to be inclusive. The rule is about making sure that we all do things together and to try and put some persuasive measures in place. Not like the employer, we're not gonna sack people, we're not going to disembowel people, we're not going to tell you to stand down as a volunteer. We're just trying to say this is something that may encourage everybody, every branch and every member, that when your members walk past you, you say, 'Do you know what? By you not following this mandate, we may not get branch funds,' because you'll tell us to do something that's illegal and say, 'Go and spend £60,000 worth of the unions money on a case and you don't even bat an eyelid. This is about trying to make sure that all branches understand when the Executive follow your directive and say, 'We're all gonna do this' the consequences and financial restrictions are massive and we want you all to do it, and if you don't wanna do it, explain to the Executive; otherwise there will be a financial penalty on your branch. Please support the motion colleagues, it's not a kangaroo court. It's about encouraging democracy across the whole of the POA, no matter where you work. Thanks Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour of the motion please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

Conference, we now have 7a, Parkhurst. This is an explanation so there's no seconder or vote required. Dave indicated they don't wish to speak on it, so Andy Darken on behalf of the NEC.

MOTION 7A

That the NEC informs the membership of how many advances have been given to NEC members over the past 5 years. How many of those advances were not paid back within 12 months which would then deem them to be interest free loans and ask for an explanation why this facility is not open to all members.

PARKHURST

ANDY DARKEN – NEC: Hello again Conference, it's nice to have a motion with no winner or loser. The motion asks for an explanation of advances given to the NEC in the last five years. Personally I think this should have been a finance

question but nonetheless we've got it on the order paper and I will try and give a brief explanation. In the past five years there have been five advances paid to members of the NEC. These are advances from the annual grant that is paid to the NEC members as agreed previously at Conference and in this was in order to avoid financial hardship. Conference can recall, those that were here, back in 2013, the provision of cars to lay officials of the NEC was taken away. In order to carry on with their work they needed to purchase cars. This would have been a significant financial cost. So it was agreed that we would allow them to have an advance of the annual grant. The details of the payment back of that grant would be agreed between that individual and the NEC and the Finance Officer. So there were five advances paid, and they were all paid back, two within three years and one within two years, and one within 18 months, and one still outstanding that will be paid back within three years. So none of them were paid back within the 12 months. And they were also, Conference this wasn't asked but we also gave advances to five members to purchase fuel with, all paid back within weeks of that purchase. That was in order to get the cars and to get the fuel in those cars to get them back on the road. Conference, that's the explanation. Thank you.

Conference I now call Steve Gillan to move the Finance Officer's Report.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Must have been something that I said, Conference, but this is one of the most important issues of Conference actually, the Finance Report, and it does need your undivided attention because I think sometimes people forget what has been agreed in Finance Reports over the years.

So I've received one financial question which was from the Durham branch on 11th April and I would ask the Durham branch if it's ... obviously it's been covered in that motion of 7a, or does he want me to elaborate further? Thank you Craig.

The Finance Report 2016. Colleagues, it is now my duty to present the Union's accounts for the year ending 31st December 2016. The draconian new legislation by this government in relation to the Trade Union Act 2016 will bring new challenges, not just for this trade union but all trade unions in how we operate our political funds, balloting thresholds and indeed new powers for the certification officer with membership certificates now a requirement along with scrutiny and declaration of industrial action now how accounts, political funds and in particular the annual return AR21 is produced. In the Trade Union Consolidation Relations Act 1992, which is anti-trade union legislation, make no mistake about it, already has very strict criteria of which trade unions have to comply, and we have complied with that since its inception in relation to producing annual accounts. If you look back at the member statement which is on the certification officer's website and indeed on our own, you will also find POA circulars identifying the group total of NEC officials. The General Secretary has always been a standalone and identified as per the legislation, so by law my salary, terms and conditions, must be produced each year underneath the anti-trade-union legislation, and we know that happens 'cause every year *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail* publish them as well. Our legal advisors have told us that we should identify every individual who is elected the same as the General Secretary. We have done that this year, even though the Certification Officer has accepted every annual return as being correct since the legislation came into being. I suppose it is better to be safe than sorry, bearing in mind this government have introduced more restrictions on how trade unions should operate. We have always been transparent with our members and every single penny is accounted for and spent accordingly in relation to the finance manual. Even though the legislation does not require full-time employees to give details of their salaries and terms and conditions, many of my full-time officials have asked to be included and identified, not just in the AR21 but also the *Gatelodge* magazine and the membership statement where any member can challenge, through the courts or the police, if they believe wrongdoing has taken place.

As I've always done, when I was Finance Officer, and indeed as Pete Chapple has done, all NEC and full-time officer monthly claim forms have been brought to Conference. If anyone wishes to scrutinise those forms they will be made available during the course of the week. Our accountants are also present and can be asked any question in relation to the audit accounts which they are signed off as accurate. The reason for the full-time officers wanting to have the details available is they believe over the last one or two years there has been a lot of innuendo on social media and indeed at Conference over the terms, conditions and pay. I will deal with that after the Finance Report has concluded, to remind Conference of what this Conference have actually passed over the years. The NEC did consider holding that part in camera, as it is dealing with employees and could be a breach of the Data Protection Act, but the employees have persuaded me to have it in the verbatim report as everything has been advertised in the past to every POA member for every full-time officer post. NEC minutes, where changes have taken place, have outlined changes.

I will also outline our legal scheme and costs over the years as well, so that everyone is clear in relation to that as well.

Conference, commencing with the income of the Union, there was a small fall in membership during the year of 2016 by 500 members. However, with the 30p subscription increase, income actually increased by £25,000. Contributions from the relief fund of £135,000 accounted for an overall increase in the income of the Union for the year of £156,000. Despite this income, we still generated a slight loss for the year of £47,000, and I will now highlight the areas where those cost increases arose. The cost of the diary increased by £7,000 due to an increase in the number of diaries printed.

Discussions are continuing with Warners, our provider, as the diary should have been a fixed cost. Salaries and superannuation costs increased by £7,000 predominantly because of a 1% increase in salaries. Expenses to delegates for Annual Conference increased by £16,000 which included payments to the Special Delegates Conference in January 2016. Travelling and meetings, under that subheading, expenses, increased by £63,000. This is partly due to a £23,000 increase in NEC expenses, £6,000 on cost of cars for repairs at end of lease period and £25,000 for Special Delegates Conference. In other areas there was an increase of £33,000 for new computers, the introduction of the POA app at £10,000, last year the refund on advertising showed a negative £10,000 and this should rise this year back to £20,000. Repairs and renewals increased by £15,000 due to replacement of equipment, carpets, a new ramp installed at Cronin House, and architect fees for review of potential changes to Cronin House. The contribution to the Provident Benefit Fund to cover the cost of industrial injury claims increased by £37,000. Legal and professional fees have increased by £80,000 partly due to taking on cases out of principle and below 50% and paying for an external accountant to assist with training on new processes for our support staff in the finance department. Further, we did not take as much drawdown on the self-insured fund and cap cost as in previous years. On a more positive note, we were able to reduce training and course fees by £17,000 due to reducing the amount of branch officials training held in the year. Having our own in-house lawyer has also assisted in stopping our legal bill in England and Wales being higher and will produce further savings in the future.

Turning now to the balance sheet, our net current assets only fell by £56,000, principally due to the increase in the self-insured fund and cap surplus held by Thompsons, which stood at £834,000 in December 2016. The overall net assets of the Union fell by £47,000, being the loss for the year, and which now stands at £4,408,000. Last year also saw the new fund which was the Trades Dispute Fund, brought by Ashworth, representing the 30p per member now collected as agreed at last year's Conference. That will now cease in June 2017 and subscriptions will be amended accordingly.

Conference, I mentioned about expenditure in relation to new IT provision for the Union earlier. This of course is a major expense for the Union and we have gone through an internal review of our provider at this minute in time and we have gone out to tender and the tendering process has been exhausted. We used a TUC expert in Ascort because none of us on the top table had the business acumen to deal with the IT internally for the needs of our union. We will be appointing a new provider. The reality is we believe that the new provider will give us more cost savings but increase the benefits of our IT in the new modern era. Conference, last year was a challenging year financially and the expenditure was fully justified. There will always be unforeseen expenditure in our turbulent world such as the 15th November 2016, our day of protest in relation to health and safety. The government of course have hit us with costs in relation to that. Of course we delayed it by way of challenging their costs. The real cost for their side was £42,000 but we have got away with paying £30,000 and that has been paid out of our ring-fenced fund which stood at £215,000 for restoration of our trade union rights and fight to get rid of section 127 of the Criminal Justice Act 1994, since amended. By the very nature of the anti-union legislation against us. It is very difficult to forecast expenditure for the coming years in the turbulent landscape that we operate, but for a small union with the expertise of this executive, our legal advisors, our accountants and our full-time officers and support staff, we will continue to operate within our means without affecting the legal representation and membership representation which is carried out to a high standard both locally and nationally. We have had challenges in the past and got over them, and I am optimistic if we stick together and work together, we can become stronger both financially and indeed as a trade union. That, Conference, concludes this aspect of the 2016 report.

MARK FAIRHURST – acting national chair: Conference, I now need to ask you to accept the Finance Officer's report. Do we have permission to accept that report? Thank you Conference.

I call on the General Secretary to continue with the Annual Report of the Welfare Committee and Welfare Fund Report, which includes motions 95 and 96.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chair, just before we do, I did say to Conference within my Finance Report that there will be other areas such as legal and employment matters that I'll give a very quick overview on, so as they can fully understand where we've come from and where we've gone to.

So in relation to legal matters, the POA pay Thompsons £100,000 per month under the retainer providing a cap of £1.2 million for all agreed union work in England and Wales. This will be the 7th consecutive year the legal bill has been under the cap. The total for 2016 was £680,000, a saving of £520,000. The Union's self-insured funds with Thompsons, introduced when we moved to them and covering PI claims under the CCFA, stands at around half a million pounds. Like all unions we have potential liabilities outstanding for pursuing members' PI claims. Currently we are waiting the premium from the Cox case which Thompsons set at just under £100,000 if we won, which we did. Because our liability was half a million if we lost. But this was a massive principle case which this NEC had no hesitation supporting all the way to the supreme court. We have continued to pay employment tribunal fees for members in most cases under the loan agreement system and recovered about 90% of those. To date this has cost the trade union just under £96,000 but thankfully we have recovered most of that. We continue to pay Crown Court contributions for members based on merits assessments on a case by case basis. Again these can vary from £4,500 to £35,000 depending on members' financial circumstances. Again we have recovered the vast majority of these costs but the liability to the POA to date was in excess

of £90,000. In addition we also pay for work not covered under the current representation at police station provisions, but colleagues, all of these liabilities have to be paid and the union must consistently monitor this, which we do under our legal aid system and we continue to make sure that our legal representation is one of the best in the country. I think Thompsons and our in-house lawyer and the barristers that we seek advice on your behalf are second to none. I remember a situation, a history in moving this part of the report I wanted to give some closure on the liability the union faced following the separation from our previous legal providers, Lees Lloyd Whitley, and incidentally this is no reflection on some individuals within Lees Lloyd Whitley, because there were some excellent lawyers there, but the reality was they had gone into liquidation and we have had to wait the full six years before bringing closure to this because during that period individuals could always revisit issues and claim losses. Lees Lloyd Whitley claimed the Union owed them a year's cap, which was over £1 million as a result of moving from them even though they're no longer traded. This was a potential liability of £1.4 million. Thompsons also had to take over all the outstanding claims and then protect the Union. This was done through the introduction of the CCFAs and establishing the POA's self-insured fund which I've already outlined. Myself and Glyn Travis at the time were negotiating the transfer to Thompsons, made it absolutely clear Lees Lloyd Whitley would not receive a penny in compensation for us moving away from them when in actual fact we believed that they owed our members money in relation to PI claims etc. And of course over that period of time we had to show on the accounts that potential liability, and yes, it was difficult, and yes, I had many sleepless nights as Finance Officer and General Secretary, because when you're dealing with other people's money then the reality is that that's even more frightening. But you know, instead of facing a £1.4 million liability we gained £135,000 out of Lees Lloyd Whitley's insurers, which we reported previously. We have also dealt with conflict cases where we were stumping up money with the employer. Again myself and Glyn had detailed negotiations with the employer and now they fund most conflict cases, the majority of them. Another massive saving to this trade union, bearing in mind I reported last year that this Union from 2010 effectively to last year had lost between 7,000 and 10,000 members due to redundancies and so forth, at a cost of £1 million to this Union in revenue.

So we have cut our cloth accordingly and I want to now touch on the employment issues, because if you actually look at from 2010, the employee costings for salaries and superannuation in 2010 was £1,494,000. In 2011 it was £1,566,000. In 2012 it was £1,489,000. In 2013 it was £1,510,000. In 2014 it was £1,503,000. In 2015 it was £1,412,000. In 2016 it was the lowest it has been, £1,419,000. Colleagues, we have taken a raft of measures to look after the security and the financial aspects of this trade union. I am not going to read out all the pension negotiations that took place previously in 2008, but it was all reported to Conference, it's all minuted in NEC meetings. I have the report here which changed the defined benefit pension scheme from existing employees to a defined contribution. So to put that in context, and I'm not going to read out what some employees were getting but I can safely do it with the previous General Secretary because I know my good friend Brian Caton had his published just like mine every single year, and Brian, to bring him in on the promise that he had in the civil service pension scheme that he was promised by the Union when he became General Secretary, we were paying back then £33,000 per year to ensure that promise came in, and then latterly, because there was a black hole, we had to up that to 144% of salary which in his final year was £73,680. You will find nobody gets anywhere near that in relation ... we do not have defined benefit pension schemes, we don't have what you have in the prison service with a defined contribution scheme. I'm more than happy to show anybody these working papers about those negotiations.

Thank you Chairman. That now concludes the finance report.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you General Secretary. Now move on to the Annual Report of the Welfare Committee and Welfare Fund Report.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Chair, I'm delighted to move the Annual report for the POA Welfare Fund of 2016. The surplus for the year of £12,700 was £4,900 higher than the surplus in 2015 of £7,800. Total income in 2016 was £1,700 lower than 2015, purely as a result of a 400 fall in our membership. This fall in membership has now stopped with monthly contributions remaining constant for the last 6 months. Grants and donations paid out in 2016 were £6,600 lower than the same expenditure in 2015. Within grants and donations is our commitment to the Fire Fighters Charity to weekly rehabilitate our members in need. Our annual cost is now over £81,000 and 45 members received treatment in the year. This cost was almost £20,000 higher than in 2015 and the upward trend appears to be continuing for the first 3 months of 2017 saw 20 members being treated at a cost of £36,000. Similar other grants and donations paid out in the three months to 31st March 2017 totalled almost £30,000 with income for the three months being only £45,00 inclusive of gift aid, a distributable bank balance at the 31st March was down £21,000 compared to the position at 31st December 2016.

Conference, that concludes the welfare report.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, can we show to accept the report from the Welfare? Thank you Conference, that's been accepted. We now move on to motion 95 and I call Barlinnie.

MOTION 95

That Conference acknowledge the exceptional work done by the Welfare Committee and all the office staff who support our members in their hour of need.

BARLINNIE

Do we have a seconder for Barlinnie?

JOHN DICKSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, SHOTTS: Shotts.

JIM MCCABE – BRANCH SECRETARY, BARLINNIE: Chair, Conference, it's quite a simple motion. The Conference acknowledge exceptional work done by the Welfare Committee and all the office staff who support our times and our hours of need. We're often quick to criticise our own so I think these people should be acknowledge for the great work they do. They support the members and indeed their families and sometimes it's in desperate times. And apart from the money side of it and the recovery side of it, it shows the families and the members that somebody actually cares about them when sometimes the employers just move on their backside. So want to thank the Committee for all their hard work that they do, and all the background staff for having all the paperwork and everything ready and getting it dealt with as swiftly as possible. I ask for you to support the motion.

JOHN DICKSON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SHOTTS: Steve, could I ask you to come down here for a second seeing you're doing the finance? It would have been Pete Chapple obviously but obviously Pete's not here ... Colleagues I'm more than happy to second the Barlinnie motion and I'd like to put special thanks here to Nicola, Paula and Carol for all the hard work they do in the background, it's unbelievable what they do in the background and they've helped me out phenomenally when I'm trying to do my job.

<Applause>

My members, they wanted it placed on record at Conference, just to put forward that the support shown over the last few years has been appreciated far beyond what anyone really understands unless you're actually on the Conference floor, 'cause you know what it means to everybody when we're supporting people at their lowest ebb. We also wanted the Welfare Committee to be recognised at this Conference for just being there when everything else is falling down around the local branches, going through a sometimes traumatic time. You are the shining light at the end of a very dark tunnel and you're a beacon of hope and humanity when it's most needed, and the support you give helps immensely.

Personally I cannot thank you enough for all your support when I've had to deal with some very harrowing situations. I honestly wish you could see the staff's faces as they're going through their darkest hour, 'cause you actually transform them into humble and appreciative and not as despairing human beings, due to this unwavering support. You have not only helped these individuals but my whole branch, because the people who are supported, they're not just colleagues, they're friends and it can be heart-breaking at times when it seems that there's no-one else to turn to. So HMP Shotts and all its members wanted to say a heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you, and in order to show you how much we mean it, we had a small token of appreciation made of a glass star with those very words etched into it. So from HMP Shotts to the Welfare Committee, it's a heartfelt thanks. Steve, could you accept that on behalf of the Welfare Committee?

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you.

Thank you very much, Shotts branch, on behalf of all the support staff, the Welfare Committee and the National Executive Committee, and indeed you Conference, because we're one team. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR:: And when Steve gets back up there he's gonna reply on behalf of the NEC.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, there's nothing much more to say because I think Barlinnie and Shotts have said it. I think since the inception of the Welfare Committee, it's served its time in assisting our members in their time of need and I'm very proud of the staff that work for me and this Executive, who show a massive commitment and indeed those individuals on the Welfare Committee who go that extra mile in order to help you and your members. So thank you very much for this motion and we'll obviously leave that to Conference for you to determine the outcome. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those for this motion please show? Any against? Thank you Conference, that's carried.

Motion 96, Steve Gillan on behalf of the NEC. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Parkhurst, thank you.

MOTION 96

Conference endorse an increase to the Welfare Fund of 50p per month
NEC – ON BEHALF OF THE WELFARE COMMITTEE

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: And this is the bit where we become unpopular, because we're asking for an endorsement, Conference, to the Welfare Fund, of 50p per month. And we recognise the financial difficulties that our members have faced since 2010 with pay cuts, but in order to have a successful Welfare Fund, which you will accept has charity status, and that money is ring-fenced and can't be used for anything else, we've got to ensure that we have the right funds in there to make sure, 'cause we're trying to enhance the Fire Fighters Charity to do additional work, and you've already heard my Welfare Report to say that already this year we've sent in excess of 20 members already to the Fire Fighters Charity and we believe that that will only increase with the stresses and strains upon our members in their time of need. And of course I suppose it's offset a little bit because the 30p increase from last year actually ceases, so in effect instead of it really being a 50p increase, you could argue that it'll be a 20p increase because the 30p goes down but of course is this is carried then it goes up to 50p.

Let me just say a little bit about the Fire Fighters Charity. We are actually in the coming months going to take some delegates, once again, to the different places that the Fire Fighters Charity have because when we've taken a cross-section of delegates there before they have been immensely impressed at some of the work that's going on and we, as a trade union, our members pay for that for our members in their time of need to go to those places of respite at the cost of £18,000 per week. That's what it costs. Yes, it's expensive, but you know what? It's worth it to see our members get better from an uncaring employer who sometimes give up on them. This trade union will never give up on its members, so I endorse this motion to you, Conference, and hope that you endorse it and explain it to your members why it was necessary. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Parkhurst, do you wish to speak on this motion? Anyone else? Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show. All those against? Thank you Conference, that's carried.

I'm now going to ask the General Secretary to ask for the adoption of the Annual Report 2016.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Yes, thank you Conference, as is normal practice you will have your Annual Report of 2016, which is used as a reference document for the work that the Executive have carried out throughout the year, including parliamentary work. It is a good reference document, please use it to assist you in your research etc. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, can I ask you to adopt that Annual Report? All those show? Thank you Conference, that report has now been adopted.

Conference, we're gonna continue with Annual Conference motions under prison reform and autonomy. We're moving on to Conference motion number 8, and I call Holme House. Do we have a seconder for Holme House? Thank you.

Conference this is a debate so please feel free to join in.

MOTION 8

That Conference debate the issues of branch level engagement within the Autonomy/Reform pilot prisons.
HOLME HOUSE

ANDY BAXTER - BRANCH CHAIR, HMP HOLME HOUSE: Chair, NEC, Conference, the motion reads that Conference debate the issues of branch level engagement within the Autonomy/Reform pilot prisons. If you cast your mind back to last year the rumours were rife in Conference about who was gonna be a pilot prison, who was gonna be the trial sites for the autonomous regimes. One of the reasons we'd hoped to try and encourage a debate is it's been very unclear throughout the year on what level of engagement local committees should have with executive governors and executive governors' teams. Throughout this year we've had a new whole different level of hierarchy of managers. You've still got your governor, you've still got your SMT, but you've got executive governors, you've got contract managers, you've got everything, and it's been quite unclear as a branch chair how far we can go in engaging.

The NEC instructed us when we were announced as pilot sites, to carry out a listening brief. That was good. We listened. We reported back. We went for monthly meetings. We shared our experiences through video link with other autonomous prisons and we listened. But we're at a position now where we feel as though we're not really representing our members on local issues and we really are looking for Conference's blessing at the end of these motions to give us some clarification on the type of engagement.

The executive governor and his team have replaced the former DDC structure but they work amongst us. We get invitations to meetings from the executive team and we get the invitations to the traditional SMTs. Our executive team hold a monthly change meeting. We were invited to take up a seat on that change meeting and to have voting rights. We didn't take that opportunity because at that point we were still engaged in the listening brief.

If I can explain to you what the change meeting is, it's a bit like the Dragon's Den. People who have ideas that require finance turn up, they make a written presentation to the Change Committee and the Change Committee either agree to release the money or point them in another direction for the money. In the time that we were maintaining our listening brief, through the Change Committee there was a request for £140,000 to lower the ceiling in the visits hall. That was granted and the reason for that was to improve the ambiance in the visits hall. I'm sure you can appreciate ...sat there with a listening brief, that it stuck in our throats. We have had some improvements, we've had improvements in staff rest areas, staff showering facilities, staff recruitment's up, we've had 6 new starters, 17 currently training with another 8 forecast to come on. Other things that have gone through the Change Committee ... again it causes issues, are they want to put a fridge in every cell. They want to give every prisoner a fridge. They've commissioned reports that say if a prisoner has somewhere to keep his milk cold and his drink cold, he'll be less violent, so that has gone through the Change Committee and again we haven't had time, or we haven't really be able to bring any influence to it.

Another ideas that's going through is that they believe that every prisoner should be able to see a tree from his cell. You can imagine our farms and gardens manager, he's gone into meltdown. Where's he gonna get these trees from, where's he gonna plant them? I think hopefully other prisons that are involved in the autonomy pilots will get up and give you some examples of the strange things that are happening within their gaols. It's not all bad, there is some good stuff, but we need to engage with them and we want Conference's blessing to be engaged with them. Please join the debate.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Sorry, I'd love to have been able to debate this but not being one of the pilot prisons I've got absolutely no idea what is happening in the prisons that are the pilot ones. I've got no feedback at all, I've absolutely no knowledge of what the governors are thinking or planning on other than what my governor now thinks he's going to be doing, when he gets to be autonomous. And the only other reference I have for the way the prison reform is going is of course the Prison Reform Agreement of 2016 which we threw out, and in there, there is an area of they'll tell us what is in and what is out of local agreement and national agreement and that sort of stuff. So I mean we have got a debate later, which I mentioned, which has now been moved, and I don't wanna talk about that now, because at the end of the day that's going to address that motion, but it is in there. It's difficult to debate something when you've absolutely no idea what the hell is going on. Now I don't know where the fault of that lies, and I imagine it lies very much with our employers and our governors, but I certainly know this much. Our governor seems to think that he's gonna have a free hand in literally everything and dictate to us what can and cannot happen, so I see some glorious times between us and him. Thank you.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: We are in the same boat as Andy. We've had no funding, we haven't got a clue what's going on. We haven't been invited to meet the executive governor. He was at our place the other week and he spoke to the staff. Didn't enlighten us, don't know what's gonna happen. The only thing we know is that we were recruiting staff without the funding. The governor's recruiting staff and he's been told we haven't got the funding. We were supposed to get money from Holme House because they're changing to a Cat C. Holme House are keeping that money now 'cause the executive governor says they're keeping it, so we've recruited eight staff and we've lost eight staff, so we're still the same. We're being told by the end of the year from our benchmark were 145 staff we were going to 200 staff, but where's the funding coming from? And what are they gonna be doing? We don't know. So I was at the video link at Leeds the other week and every branch that was there said the same thing. They haven't got a clue what's going on. We're not being invited, we're not being told, as Swaleside said, I think when it comes down to it your governor's just gonna hit you with something, without any preparation, and that's gonna be bad for everybody. We need to have insight into what's going on so we can plan, and without that there's gonna be major problems and we could have disputes with individual governors.

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

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: Conference, NEC, Craig, in answer to your question what's the additional 100 staff gonna be doing, well clearly it's pruning trees and stocking fridges! 'cause if that's what we're gonna be doing, under autonomy and empowerment, clearly we're in a sad state of affairs. But on a more serious note, colleagues, empowerment as it's now called, it's not autonomy, Liz Truss wanted to call it empowerment, empower governors to make change, to bring in new,

innovative ideas, and to engage with local committees as and when they saw fit. Last year at Conference we talked about this issue and we weren't sure where to go. Do we engage in empowerment/autonomy, do we disengage in it, is it coming in, where are we going?

And as an Executive we determined that the best way was to try and get all of the autonomy prison committees together on a regular basis to talk about issues, because what we quickly found is the fact that each autonomy governor, the DDC, you get rid of a role but make sure you find them a job on more money, that seems to be the power of HMPPS as it is now, was they've all got their own thoughts. What can they and can't they change? Well, we're currently in the process of Annex A, and I'd like to thank Dave Todd along with the rest of the Executive on the work that we've done in trying to defeat that, because when you ask NOMS what they can do and what they can't do, they're not quite sure. So we sent them a whole list of issues that we felt that there should be exclusions or protections on board, because when we met with the Ministry of Justice, the bigwigs, now NOMS but the real people who are looking at the civil service, they clearly had concerns about what governors were looking to do, and they had concerns about the autonomy and what they were looking to do because clearly one of the DDCs decided that he would go outside of the pay manual and introduce a new structure that was completely outside the remit. We haven't got a result of the Annex A. We've set out our non-exhaustive list. Francis Stuart has written back to the Executive and said, well, we've got this nice form of words now which mean nothing, and the only people who are gonna be able to steer this is you. Because this is coming to all of you. And if you don't think that, we'll be back in Conference in maybe 2018 or 2019 and the people who were involved in this now, and Dave's right, you don't know anything about it Dave, the branches who are now involved in this as part of the pilot and the clusters that are now coming on, the fear factor in the unknown is massive. So we all need to get our fingers out. We need to understand where this is coming and if we don't like it, what are we gonna do about it, and if we do like it, 'cause it's got some benefits, we need to share those with everybody else, because good practice is what we want.

Now I don't know whether it's therapeutic, a good idea for prisoners to see a tree from their cell ... not quite sure about that, and in your establishment it might be that they already see trees, I'm not sure if it's a good idea to give everybody a fridge. What I do know is if you give a prisoner a fridge the likelihood is when he gets a bit naffed off or when she gets naffed off, they'll probably pick the fridge up and assault a member of staff with it. So we need to look at how all those issues are gonna impact on you at your establishment and the consequences that that will bring. If empowerment means more staff, safer prisons and more decency, great. If empowerment means that governors who are barking mad and haven't got a clue just wanna go off and do what they think is right and proper, then that has to be challenged. And the only people who'll be able to challenge that are you, the volunteers who run each establishment. So as part of this debate colleagues, what I wanna say is this, we need to network between each other, we need to contact Wandsworth, Holme House, Kirkham, all of the establishments that's in this, we need to understand, and what we will do is start to promulgate the minutes of what has been talked about at these meetings, we'll get the information out to you. But you need to manage change. You have to manage what they are trying to do and this debate is talking about how do we do that? The world is their oyster, and if we allow them to, the only thing that's gonna happen to you and to your members is you are gonna get lots of the brown stuff that you don't like because governors want to get patted on the head by introducing the niceties of the world at the expense of your safety. So empowerment has got to be there, we've got to look at this seriously, we've got to understand what it means and we have to share the knowledge. I thank Holme House for bringing the debate and the other motions will now give a steer as we move through the agenda to support those branches and you because it's coming your way colleagues. Thanks very much, cheers.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, I now call motion 11, Holme House, which has been placed at 8a. Do we have a seconder for Holme House? Wandsworth, thank you.

MOTION 8A

That Conference give the Autonomy/Reform Pilot Prison Branch Committees the immediate authority to engage with the Executive Governors on local issues that have a direct impact on the membership of the Autonomy Pilot Prisons. However, issues that remain part of National Prison Officer terms and conditions remain within the NEC remit.

HOLME HOUSE

ANDY BAXTER - BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: The motion reads that Conference give the autonomy reform pilot prison branch committees the immediate authority to engage with the executive governors on local issues that have a direct impact on the membership of the autonomy/pilot prison. However issues that remain part of the prison officer terms and conditions remain within the NEC remit. Colleagues, this motion's about clarity. When the reform pilot sites were announced last year there was very little meat on the bone. The situation hasn't changed much. Our executive team have not to date made any moves to change terms and conditions of staff. They affirm that they want to keep the staff within the current terms and conditions and confirm they have no plans to remove civil service status. Holme House, along with other pilot reform sites attended a monthly reform prisons meeting. At that meeting we were then advised to adopt the listening brief. We're asking for Conference to give authority to engage with the executive governors over local issues, shift patterns, profiles, RMPs, the bread and butter, the day in, day out stuff all committees have the freedom to engage

in. the motion is clear. Any issues that come to the table that we believe are national issues should and will remain within the remit of the NEC. There will be times where local committees will have to take advice as what appears to be a local issue could encroach into issues that clearly should remain national. It's a simple motion designed to untie the hands of local committees. Please support the motion.

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, we were part of the reform prison process for about twelve months and then a result of area matters, we were brought back into the London area. Having been part of the listening brief during the process, and this has already been said, this is probably going to be rolled out to all branches and establishments in any case. Given the opportunity for those branches currently engaged in the process will give us a heads up as to the likely outcome of that process. If we don't allow this motion to go through and Ministry of Justice, HMPPS, pick a date next year when it's gonna get rolled out wholeheartedly, without the knowledge and experience of the branches currently in the process it could catch us unawares. So on that I would say please support this motion.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR, NEC: Thank you Chair, Conference. The NEC are in support of this motion and just to give a brief outline of where the NEC were with this prison autonomy, Michael Gove brought this to parliament, had the wonderful idea of prison autonomy. His big idea was to have academy status for prisons, similar to what academy school status was and we all know what a disaster that's been in the education department. So on the departure of Michael Gove, and then we got Liz in as the Justice Minister, there was a change of tack, so everything was up in the air again. So at the beginning of it all there was no information coming forward other than what Liz Truss kept getting up one day, having a great idea, going on the television and saying something that we'd never heard of and causing confusion right across the piece. So we decided to call the branches together on a monthly basis because the only information we were getting as an NEC was from those branches, but it was clear that nothing was particularly happening in those branches either. And the initial reason for giving those branches a listening brief and a listening brief only was just to put a hold on what was going on in those branches so that we could take some sort of National Executive control over anything that was gonna be decided within those branches. However, having seen what's going on, there's confusion right across the piece, governors really don't know what they're gonna be doing under autonomy and if you go into one of the prisons that is under the autonomous model and you ask the governor what does it mean to them, they can't tell you exactly what it is either. So at this moment in time Holme House are asking for something that the NEC think is only right and proper. It's only right and proper that they'll be able to sit down round the table with their governors, as we've done for decades and decades, and negotiate on behalf of their members around local agreements and so on and so forth, as long as those local agreements don't impact on national issues which the NEC would be responsible for. So bearing that in mind we ask Conference to support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those for this motion please show? Any against? That motion is carried.

Conference, I'm aware of the time. Just to remind you that we do have a fringe meeting from the European Public Sector Union, that's in room 1 at the Waterfront Suite. And we will be holding a session in camera when we come back after lunch, so please only delegates attend the conference hall. If we can adjourn there and reconvene at quarter-to-two that should give you enough time to attend meetings. Thank you.

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May, 2017

Tuesday 9th May 2017, Afternoon Session

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference, we're now on motion number 9, I call Wymott to the rostrum. Do we have a seconder for Wymott? Feltham. Oh sorry, my apologies, it's a debate. Debate away, Glen.

MOTION 9

That Conference with forthcoming Governor "autonomy" in mind, debates the proper oversight of services from third parties who provide these services (e.g. prisoners canteen, healthcare etc.) and if needed, mandate the NEC to raise any concerns highlighted in this debate with NOMS.

WYMOTT

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WYMOTT: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference. Motion 9 – That Conference with forthcoming governor autonomy in mind, debates the proper oversight of services from third parties who provide these services, for example, prisoners canteen, healthcare, etc. and if needed, mandate the NEC to raise any concerns highlighted in this debate with NOMS.

We heard a discussion before lunch regarding the autonomy sites, the pilot sites, Wymott isn't one of these sites, but what we've found is that the provision of healthcare at our place, which is contracted out to a third party, has just been nothing short of absolute chaos for the last four or five years and we can't be alone in this. Briefly, the contract stated that the contractor was gonna supply 14 nurses, the most we've ever had is 8 and the knock-on effect from this has been the extending of staff to cover medication, doors being open during a patrol state, etc. etc.

It got us thinking at Wymott that with autonomy what's this actually going to mean? We can look at the bigger picture but if we move on down the line and we picture ourselves sat in front of a governor in two or three years' time when they've all got this autonomy, who has oversight over these contracts that they're gonna be signing? We can't find out the information of our healthcare contract; we made Freedom of Information applications, myself and Ian, the branch secretary, and it came back that they wouldn't disclose it because it was commercially sensitive. That means that every single contract that is signed by your autonomous governor in the future with a third party will come back as commercially sensitive. So what's to stop your governor employing his brother and his brother's company to supply things? Who's gonna have oversight over that, who's gonna ensure that these things are fit for purpose, are costed correctly, that there's no corruption within there? Not only that, but if we move a little bit further down the line, what's to stop your governing governor turning round and saying, 'You know something, I've had a little bit of a think over this weekend and I'm gonna contract out the services in the gym, so all your gym offices are going and we're gonna get Virgin in to run the gym, starting in six months' time', or whatever.

There needs to be oversight, we need to be 100% sure that 1) the governor is competent enough to sign these contracts, but we need to have an external body that looks at this and there is a roll for the NEC in this, a member of the NEC on a committee perhaps, that has oversight over contracts and third party suppliers etc. That's about it, that's all I've got to say.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis on behalf of the NEC. Oh have we got one? Mark, they nearly caught you out again. Carry on my mate.

MARTIN FIELD – HMP BEDFORD: Mr Chairman, the NEC, esteemed colleagues, and for this one, our friends at the back from NOMS. Last evening when I was having a chat with some colleagues we were talking about things which were affecting the safety of staff, and one person put forward about people being let of the seg and put back on the same landing, another one talked about spice, but I said, 'I can trump all of that', and I put Carillion on the table. I said, 'They are more dangerous than both of those put together.'

<Laughter>

In our establishment wall-facing cells, which are less than 10 meters from the road where a blind man could throw a parcel through some of the grills that we've got there because the holes are so big, that have been there for weeks and

weeks; where fire doors, which are exits from wings are now covered with Perspex because they can't bother to get the proper glass; where out of an 8-man seg last week we had two cells, one of which has been out of action since January. How do we expect to get good order and discipline in our gaol when such type of people are running the services that we are relying on?

Earlier Glyn Travis spoke about empowerment, well here's the challenge for NOMS, why have you given autonomous governors autonomy but not given them the authority to change the things that really matter? Why can they not get rid of Carillion or are you afraid that maybe the scenario that has been painted by Wymott is something that's going to come along readily? Is it that you trust your governors so little that you have no faith in them that you have to bind their hands? What is the point of changing the healthcare provider when the only thing that changes is the t-shirt they wear or the lapel on their shirts, yet the service is so *poor* because the same managers that have been running it into the ground are still entrenched in their positions; why have we not got rid of them? Why can we not turn the clock back and run our own canteen in the manner that we would want to do it? The list, colleagues, is endless. And I'm sure PGA and other people would want to discuss this, but for us what we want is a position where we, as the members that work in these establishments, can have an influence on the decision that is ultimately going to be made, because it is our safety, our decency and our security which will be affected by this issue of autonomous governors. The fact that they can fiddle around a few minutes either way with a core day, and maybe it's a little bit easier to get rid of people, is of no consequence at all. If you want empowerment, if you want change put that authority in the governors and put proper checks and balances in place of which we will be part of that check and balance and that way maybe what could be a good idea can move forward with some amount of usefulness.

Thank you, colleagues, please join the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis, POA.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference. Thank you for this worthwhile debate, because as I said in moving the debate on empowerment earlier, this is coming your way, it's not gonna stop, there's gonna be some big changes and it will impact on you. Martin turned round and talked about Carillion and the farcical contract that we have with them, and I think every governor who's been given empowerment, the first contract they wanted to get rid of was Carillion, and unfortunately the Director of Public Sector Prisons, Phil Copple, said that they couldn't. When we spoke to him and said, 'How are we gonna deal with empowerment and procurement in contracting out?' Because we all know that prison canteens can generate significant money that could be reinvested in an establishment to recruit staff, buy more facilities, in fact probably buy more fridges for prisoners if they wanted to, that seems to be the theme. And Phil wasn't sure, he didn't know whether governors would be allowed to do certain issues, i.e. the fact that national contracts would need to be evaluated to see whether it would actually be more costly to allow governors to have the empowerment.

So we seem to have one situation where the Secretary of State only wants to hear nice things, so if you ever meet Liz, if she comes back as the Secretary of State, tell her everything's really nice, OK? She doesn't want to hear nasty things, she doesn't want to think that anything's bad because she wants to say, 'Here, there you go governor, you've got all this empowerment and you can do anything you want, with these exceptions.' But they don't even know what the exceptions are. So, Wymott, you're right to bring this debate. We need to have oversight, we need to understand what level of autonomy is gonna be given to governors to make sure that we can oversee, and we don't have (INAUDIBLE) commercial in confidence and have an input into where we go to avoid the nepotism, but also to regenerate some of the work. And, Martin, you're spot on, one of the worst things in the service is definitely Carillion's ability to dodge the bullet in relation to a contract that's supposed to provide a service to the members.

So on that, thank you for the debate and we will keep you abreast of what goes on. Thank you, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Motion 10 – Holme House. Do we have a seconder to Holme House? Durham, thank you.

MOTION 10

Conference mandates the NEC to resist any plans to transform single or groups of current state controlled establishments into separate independent legal entities and in doing so actively resists any attempts to remove members current status as civil servants.

HOLME HOUSE

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, NEC, Conference. The motion reads Conference mandates the NEC to resist any plans to transform single or groups of current state controlled establishments into

separate legal entities and in doing so actively resists any attempt to remove members' current status as civil servants.

In 2013, Conference, Conference as a body voted to engage with benchmarking. We found ourselves between a rock and a hard place. On one hand we had a Tory government ready to push a further 12 establishments into the hands of the privateers. It was a difficult call for Conference but we chose to reduce costs under benchmarking. BDG rolled into town, the rest's history. We all still bear the scars of that decision. Fast forward four years. Our leaders have admitted they cut too hard, too fast. Prisons ministers have admitted the same and we're faced with lifting our service out of the black hole we find ourselves in. Prison reform and governor empowerment became the favoured flavour amongst the executives within NOMS, who all found themselves nice highly paid positions, and their political masters. Holme House and Kirkclevington were effectively brought under a single umbrella, announced as one of the reform prison pilot sites. Things have moved at pace. Initially we were called Teesside Reform Prisons. Within nine months we became Tees and Weir Reform Prisons as Durham and Deerbolt were brought into the cluster. We've been given lots of assurances there'll be no changes to our members' terms and conditions, and to date I've not seen anything that indicates any immediate intentions to change our terms and conditions, so you may think why bring this motion to Conference? If you recall in the early days of privatisation, the privateers admitted that they struggled to make profits at single establishments. They needed volume. They indicated that a group of geographically local establishments would be their preferred choice for reasons of economy and the ability to achieve further profits through realigning management and administration of those establishments. Reform prisons have given assurances that they will be judged by their ability to address offending behaviour. Indeed, one of their performance yardsticks will be if a prisoner released reoffends within 12 months of release. What concerns me and my members is where do we go if these new reform enterprises fail to deliver? There was unsubstantiated talk last year about putting reform prisons into the control of police and crime commissioners. We've seen it all before. They've put in place clusters in the name of efficiency. However, we must remain aware that the new formations are exactly the right configuration and alignment of establishments that the private sector dreamed of long ago. The danger is ever present, and if the Tories are returned with a bigger majority, will they honour their pre-election promises to invest in the keyworker programme? Will we see yet another Secretary of State for Justice with differing views to the two previous secretaries? Who knows their intentions but we need to be unified in anticipation. Our members still enjoy significant protection as civil servants, civil service management code protectors, civil service compensation scheme, although diluted, still protects us. The rules of our pension schemes protect us. We must remain Crown servants. This should not and will not ever be for negotiation. Please support the motion.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, Conference, speaking to motion 10 on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to fully support this motion. Andy's outlined everything that there is to fear around putting prisons into separate groups of legal entities or single prisons into legal entities. And it was Michael Gove's big vision to have these autonomous prisons given free legal status and allow them to choose whatever they wanted to do inside prisons. However, when Michael Gove went and Liz Truss came in, she watered down that vision and didn't allow governors to have this free legal entity status. However, that doesn't mean to say that going forward when the new Tory government ends up getting re-elected, which looks very, very likely, that another Secretary of State may come in and reverse that and want to go back down the line of Michael Gove's vision. And I agree with Andy that probably one of the biggest fears from grouping these prisons together which they have done, is probably the fear of the return of privatisation 'cause we all know Liz Truss was a big advocate in her previous role, to privatisation. So with that in mind, and having listened to what Andy has to deliver, we're asking Conference to support this motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show? All those against? That motion's carried.

Motion 12, Durham. Do we have a seconder for Durham? (Inaudible) thank you.

MOTION 12

That we mandate that all PSO's and PSI's are terminated forthwith due to some Managers having their own interpretation of them.

DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Chair, Motion 12 reads that we mandate that all PSOs and PSIs are terminated forthwith due to some managers having their own interpretation of them. This motion might be a bit late. However in case it doesn't come off, I'll give you the background to this. I'm going to refer this for future motions that I'm reading, I refer to motion 12. It'll save time for Conference in the long run. This all goes back to a court of discipline where I represented two lads. It was a fraud case. In it we asked the commissioning officer a question reference what he had done and unfortunately we could not get the date of the event, so we put a hypothetical question reference what had happened in it is we'd looked for someone to cover a constant watch at a prison nearby. The person concerned went home at lunchtime and went to do the constant. However, he claimed all the hours worked for PP. That is incorrect. What should have happened was he should have worked his shift hours first and then booked the PP afterwards. The

commissioning officer thought this was OK to do, an admirable thing to do but it breached the finance manual. But even worse for me was the fact that he had charged someone with fraud but admitted it was OK to do so. That just doesn't add up to me.

So after the hearing where both staff were found guilty I made a complaint to the wrongdoing line. Eventually they agreed to look at my complaint. However, they asked the then area manager to investigate and he said he would not, as managers could pick and choose what they wanted in any agreement. My argument is they can't, and certainly not with the finance manual, so why bother with PSOs and PSIs if managers and governors don't accept them. Please support the motion.

GEOFF WILLETS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SUDBURY: We're asking you to reject this motion. I understand PSOs and PSIs do not fit every prison's needs. As much as managers use their own interpretation we do the same to protect our members. It is our duty as branch officials to remind governors about the PSOs and PSIs when they fail to adhere to them. Clarity of PSIs and PSOs is needed. Clear direction, individual prison circumstances need to be taken into consideration. We are an open prison an most PSIs and PSOs are written for closed establishments and forget the needs of the open estate. So we should be asking the NEC to consider all our needs when reviewing the PSIs and PSOs. We have already heard about the difficulties from Andy at Holme House with autonomy and prison reform coming in. So why take away a member's protection. This is playing into maverick governors' hands. So reject this motion.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, speaking against the motion. Colleagues, whilst we understand your frustration, this motion is fraught with danger. We accept that some managers, and it is only some, have their own interpretation of PSOs and PSIs but many of these documents protect us. For example, PSI 42 of '97, the OSG agreement, HMPPS would love us to get rid of this document. They've even tried to put it through the deregulation process. That document protects OSGs and the extent of work they do. PSI 35 of '15, annual leave policy, the only policy that protects those with their leave still in days. The other documents have gone through the deregulation process. PSI 28 of '12, pay policy manual, amongst other things protects members with disabilities who need some time with the appointment between grades and pay protection, section 9. I won't go on but there are many more policies which protect us. If your management aren't abiding by PSIs or PSOs, submit a grievance, put in a dispute, contact your NEC rep so that we can take it up with Employer Relations. But colleagues we have the upper hand. If your management are interpreting PSOs and PSIs to suit themselves, tell them you're not happy, tell them they're wrong, and tell them that until they abide by the policies you will follow your LSS to the letter. And believe me, if you do that, you'll bring your prison to a standstill. Every prison, as he comes out the shop, has a proper rubdown search, instead of the quick ones we do to move the regime on. Conference, vote against this motion and keep these policies that protect us in place. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show. Sorry Craig, my mistake.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Colleagues, I hear what Jackie's got to say. Taking grievances out, yeah, fair enough. I've been as far as Alan Scott and nobody wants to deal with this. It gets deeper actually 'cause as you go through, you'll read some more mandates and see where I'm coming from, there's massive frauds going on in the prison service, especially by governors, by officers as well but by governors to a massive scale. Nobody wants to do anything. So I just take a grievance out 'cause somebody's skimmed off about 100,000 quid that I can see of, nobody wants to do anything. I went to see my MP the other week, he was going to write a letter to Michael Spurr. Unfortunately we called an election, he's no longer an MP anymore so he can't write a letter to Michael Spurr. That's the problem you've got. Take grievances out, great. I can see what Jackie's saying, OSG agreement, yeah, I understand all that, the pay policy, the leave ... the leave was actually went into tribunal as far as I remember, Brian Caton went. I even sent them the document from the *Daily Mirror* because I believe one of the London Branches was advertising at the time for staff, advertising days' leave when they'd already said they were going for hours. So some of these things. Just please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Durham. Conference, all those in favour of this motion please show. All those against. That motion falls.

Motion 13, Nottingham.

MOTION 13

With violence continuing to rise and our members continuing to pay the price, this Union demands action and not lip service from this Secretary of State for Justice, to make it a specific criminal offence to assault a Prison Officer.

NOTTINGHAM

Conference, do we have permission to withdraw this motion? I need to see that again please Conference. Thank you, that motion is withdrawn.

Motion 14, Hull. Do we have a seconder for Hull? Humber, thank you.

MOTION 14

That this Union is to pursue the Policy that if any Penal worker is assaulted by a Prisoner while carrying out the execution of their duties on behalf of the Public and subsequently convicted at Court, that they should receive a consecutive sentence rather than a concurrent sentence to any other convictions. If that person is serving a Life sentence or on Licence recall then when granted release it should be added past their release date and not served alongside.

HULL

LISA BRITCHFORD - HMP HULL: Chairman, NEC and Conference, we ask that the Union is to peruse the policy that if any penal worker is assaulted by a prisoner while carrying out the execution of their duties on behalf of the public and subsequently convicted at court, that they should receive a consecutive sentence rather than a concurrent sentence to any other convictions. If that person is serving a life sentence or on licence recall, then when granted release it should be added past their release date and not served alongside. Thank you.

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP BEDFORD: I'd just like to recount a recent incident which happened at our establishment. From the 27th February to 1st March we were in Luton Crown Court where one of our members had been assaulted by a prisoner. Without recourse to the local establishment or the NEC or Thompsons we ourselves went down to the police station, reported the case as an assault and demanded that action was to be taken. This was done and we got to court with, we wanted attempted murder, we got it down on the paper as ABH. They argued vigorously of course, as they do, to have it knocked down to common assault. They failed. The two things that we won on that day was to show that with the right commitment and failing to give up and listen to all the people who tell you it can't be done, we managed to achieve ABH. We managed to achieve a consecutive prison sentence of the maximum of three years which was allowed. We learnt of a thing called bad character, which surely was the final straw that broke the opposition's back. So these victories can be won. My disappointment in all of that is that it has not been published far and wide. So I will tell the NEC, I've given them the date, 1st March, Luton Crown Court, State-v-Langdell or Adamson-v-Langdell, whichever way you want to go. I have written to the Chief Constable Bedford Police and told him to inform his officers, who deal with assaults on prison officers, that these are not inconsequential acts, but they are things that need to be dealt with. I referred him to the judge's comments to the jury, whereby he quite clearly laid out what the difference is between common assault, ABH, GBH, which that jury within a matter of minutes passed a unanimous guilty verdict for which we are extremely proud. And I would urge all of you to do the same. Prepare yourself, get your evidence and a lot of it for bad character is all on C NOMIS, 'Fred did this, Fred didn't do that, did that, did that, did that', you'll find pages of it when you get to the bottom. That is all bad character because they are bad characters and we need to treat them like that. So please, colleagues, support this motion but yourselves, please get yourselves armed with the information. If this is a precedent, which I doubt that it is, please make yourself aware of the facts and use it to support your members. Thank you Conference.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: At Humber we've got quite a good relationship with our PLO and the local police. Shaun Davy, our local police officer that works with our PLO, he is all for fighting for the prison staff. The problem we have is the criminal protection service, I mean CPS. They're the ones that keep letting us down, they're the ones that keep saying it is not in the public interest. Aren't we all members of the public? So it is in the public interest. Humber is supporting this motion from Hull because when we do get an offender to court for an assault on a uniformed member of staff, or a civilian member of staff, that person needs to be punished. A concurrent sentence is not punishment. It's a joke. It is a kick in the face to every member of staff that walks through every prison gate. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, Jackie Marshall speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. For some time there's been a protocol in place, The Appropriate Handling of Crimes in Prisons and you probably need to get yourself a copy. This protocol is between HMPPS, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service. The problem we have with this policy is that whilst at high levels the protocol is well-known, many local police forces and governors are not aware of it. This was discussed at the recent Crime in Prisons Board yet again and there will be another push from the police to make local forces aware. The policy states that in considering the public interest for prosecution the prosecutor will consider the likely penalty including whether the offence will attract a consecutive sentence that would be imposed by the court. The Sentencing Council definitive guidelines on offences taken into

consideration and totality clearly states that consecutive sentences will ordinarily be appropriate where any offence is committed within the prison context. So we have the policy in place, the crimes in prison board all agree that consecutive sentences should be given. We are pushing the policy and will hopefully soon be given a seat on the Crime in Prisons Board working group where we will continue to raise the issue. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Hull to come back? No? Go to the vote, all those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? That motion is carried. 15, Nottingham. Do we have a seconder for Nottingham? Leicester, thank you.

MOTION 15

That the Prison Service return passive drug dogs into every Category B, C and D establishment for daily use following the rise in NPS.

NOTTINGHAM

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 15 reads that the prison service return passive drug dogs into every category B, C and D establishment for daily use, following the rise in NPS. Conference, our branch brought this motion as we are sick to death of working on landings that frankly stink to high heaven of these substances. It is not conducive to a safe or decent working environment. The return of drug dogs into our establishments from the area-based resource would keep the volume of drugs down and restrict their movement around the gaols. Locally if this motion is carried this would see a drug dog back in the gaol every day, working reception, visits, on landings with security teams. Statistics do not lie. The use of NPS in our gaols, we need to get on top of this and get a grip and return the dogs back into the gaols to make them a safe, decent environment for both prisoners and staff. Passive drug dogs make a difference. We need this resource back. Safety has no price tag. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, Jackie Marshall speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. Incidents involving drugs are on the increase and will continue to rise. We need to use all methods available to us to help reduce the use and supply of illicit substances, to have both active and passive dogs on hand will help with this. In addition we all know that NPS is causing major problems in prisons and is directly linked to some of the violence. The dogs must be returned to the establishments. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Nottingham, do you wish to come back? Go to the vote, all those in favour? Any against? Thank you, that's carried. I now call on Motion 46, Nottingham, which is placed at 16a. Do we have a seconder for Nottingham? Sorry, 16.

MOTION 16

That Conference mandates the NEC to demand from NOMS an immediate enquiry into all of the acts of concerted indiscipline across the estate and to publish its findings.

NOTTINGHAM

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Motion 16 reads that Conference mandates the NEC to demand from NOMS an immediate enquiry in to all of the acts of concerted indiscipline across the estate and to publish its findings. Conference, it's not been a particularly good year across the estate, with many establishments, however big or small, suffering the brunt of this Tory government's cuts and the employer obliging gracefully. This has left many of our colleagues dealing with the mess and picking up the pieces when those in our custody have felt the need to express their frustrations and commit acts of violence by destroying accommodation. The knock-on effect of this is seeing staff sent out to establishments on detached duty more than likely further away from home, and prisoners being transferred to anywhere that's got an empty cell. We here rhetorical statements from the employer and from the Secretary of State thanking staff for their brave, swift actions. Yes, we were, we always are, but if none of this game of Russian roulette playing with people's lives had ever started, the service would not be in the mess it's in now. I think the very least that we all deserve is some transparency from the employer and I would urge you to support this motion so that we may all find out what caused these disturbances so we may be better prepared in the future and learn from any mistakes that we may have made. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP BEDFORD: Hopefully for the last time today! I have come to support this motion and specifically the last few words, which says publish the findings. As you all know, we had a very serious riot on the 6th November last year. A full investigation has taken place, a report has been published, but who has actually seen

it? We had to use coercion to be able to get the governor to read to us some few portions of the report. Now I don't give a damn whether governor A or B has been slated in there or officer C and D didn't (inaudible) or the POA committee were totally useless and were to blame for the riot. What I'm interested in is what are we going to do to stop this from happening again? What were the reasons for this disturbance in the first place? Because the way that I'm seeing it, what is happening right now is we are sleepwalking straight back into the next riot as we speak. I'm standing here saying that, it's being recorded, I'm telling you now, this is what will happen. The minute we re-open all of our wings rest assured with the same type of things happening, it will happen again. So what is the secret about what's in a report? Exactly as Richard has said, if they don't tell us what they found out from their investigations, how can we fix it? I might think I know how to fix it but I could be completely wrong, so if they don't tell us and share with us all the experiences, 'cause I am pretty confident Lewes and Hull and Birmingham and Manchester and everywhere else that's had some sort of disturbance over the last 12 months, there is a common denominator in there somewhere, and it won't just be one but there will be several, and if we cannot get on top of these problems, like history, we are bound to repeat the failings of the past. So colleagues, please support this motion and let us find out the truth. Thank you Conference.

<Applause>

AIDY WATTS – BRANCH CHAIR, BIRMINGHAM: Obviously post-riot ... echo Martin's sentiments there. Sarah Payne was commissioned to an investigation into the wholesale riot at Winson Green. It's been made available to our private sector employer, POA committee haven't been afforded the courtesy of seeing it, the director's been moved on to another prison, don't know whether there's been any sanctions with regard to pay, but I think the issues are very much the same in the public sector as in the private sector, it is poor staffing levels, it is inexperienced staff, young staff, and our inability really to retain experienced and capable staff because of the salaries being paid by our employers. We have Mr Petherick here this week at a fringe meeting, I believe the fringe meeting is public versus private, I urge you to come along and see what Mr Petherick has to say and see what the next Tory government will bring in terms of privatisation in our sector. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

PAUL WRAY – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP LINCOLN: NEC, Chair, Conference, I thank Rich and Nottingham for bringing this motion to Conference. I'd also just like to add that when we get the results from a lot of this enquiry, can we also be looking at the effect it's had on our members of staff. I personally have gone through three members of staff through incidents this year, all off with PTSD. It's not a nice experience to be witnessing that and I think that that's something that we really ought to be looking at and NOMS, hang your heads in shame. Thank you.

<Applause>

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

IAN CARSON – NEC: Thanks Chair. Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC, asking you to support the motion. Every act of concerted indiscipline has a considerable effect on our members. We all know that and NOMS currently claim that all such incidents are investigated, however we all know that very few if any of the reports are ever released, and as a result the failures are never addressed. If you have an incident such as some of those that have been described, and there's a report and it's never released, then the failures are never addressed. Perhaps one of the things that we should be doing, colleagues, is saying, you know what, I wanna review of all the risk assessments and safe systems of work in that area, and by doing that, you get access to the failures. So that's one of the things perhaps we need to consider. But NOMS don't want to highlight failure within their management structure. In 4 years on the National Executive I've known one example where they've addressed major failings and that was actually at Nottingham, where James Shanley, god rest his soul, the former governor, was issued with a smeligram, some concrete slippers and is now swimming with the fishes as a result of his failure. But it almost never happens, colleagues. So we have to support this motion in order to get access to that information and make the changes that need to be made. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Nottingham, do you wish to come back? Straight to the vote, all those in favour please show? Those against? That motion is carried. Nottingham, you're on a roll, 16a? Do we have a seconder? Thank you Dartmoor.

MOTION 16a

That Conference mandates the NEC to investigate with NOMS, the cost to date of all the repairs required in establishments following acts of concerted indiscipline and to publish its findings.

NOTTINGHAM

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Motion Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 16a reads that Conference mandates the NEC to investigate with NOMS the cost to date of all the repairs required in the establishments following acts of concerted indiscipline and to publish its findings. Conference, we hear time and time again rhetorical statements from the employer, from the Secretary of State for Justice, thanking staff for mopping up and safely securing smashed up gaols, caused by their cuts. Well, our branch are calling for this investigation because as tax payers, and I believe somebody alluded to it this morning, we would like to know exactly how much all of these repairs are costing as a result of their cutbacks, they're negligent in these cutbacks, they didn't give it a second's thought, and we are paying the price for it. Please support the motion.

PHIL BIRCH – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SEND: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, asking to support the motion. But I'd like to go a little bit further please, if that's alright Rich? I think what we need to do is once we've found the cost of all of these riots, because that's what they are, it's not concerted indiscipline, it's a riot, present it, because I firmly believe that the cost of these riots to the service is far more than actually giving us a decent pay rise, and if we can demonstrate that is what is happening then we've got a bigger argument to actually give a pay rise to all of the closed grades who have suffered the humiliation, the suffering that a seven-year pay freeze has given us from an employer who I'm going to say is institutionally corrupt. So let's use this information fully to our benefit. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

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

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC. The National Executive are fully supportive of the motion brought from the Nottingham Branch. In fact we've already written to the employer to request the investigation reports into the acts of concerted indiscipline in HMPs Lewes and Swaleside. This is currently on-going at present as the employer for some reason is reluctant to give us this information! The Executive will give you the commitment that we shall continue to attempt to achieve this if mandated by Conference. However, we must add that the total cost will probably never be known. An example of this, the operation to regain control of lost accommodation, associated costs of transfers of prisoners etc. If Conference accept this then the NEC are happy to continue our pursuance of this mandate. We're happy to establish the cost of the fabric of the buildings. If the employer's still unwilling to give it, there's more ways to skin a cat. Please support. Thank you Nottingham.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Nottingham to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That's carried?

Nottingham again, 17, do we have a seconder?

MOTION 17

That Conference mandates the NEC to pursue with NOMS an increase in night staffing levels across the estate in light of the unacceptable number of deaths in custody.

NOTTINGHAM

UNKNOWN SPEAKER – NEC: The Verne.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you.

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 17 reads that Conference mandates the NEC to pursue with NOMS an increase in night staffing levels across the estate in light of the unacceptable number of deaths in custody. Conference, it's on record that a number of deaths in custody has now reached unacceptable record levels and I fear that unless something changes, and changes quickly, this figure will continue to rise and that is not acceptable. At Nottingham we are locking up 1,060 prisoners at night with one CM and five officers, one of which is static in the segregation unit. A blue light goes out, that's two gone, that's a CM and two for 1,060 prisoners. That surely cannot be right. That's playing Russian roulette with people's lives. To who's cost? The residential units are staffed by the OSG group, with a patrol officer making irregular visits throughout the night if the CM's got one to send on his way or her way. In the meantime the OSG can be responsible for as many as 19 prisoners on act books, all of whom may have different observation requirements and needs through the night. That's not forgetting the other 131 prisoners on the unit and the administrative duties they are required to complete. We are all acutely aware of the importance surrounding prisoners on open act documents, the care each prisoner should be afforded and the good quality entries that are required on each observation. It cannot therefore be reasonable to expect one member of staff to be responsible for such a high number of act documents without the risk of mistakes happening. Pre-benchmarking residential units on nights were one discipline officer and one OSG. I'm urging your support on this motion for the safety and benefit of all concerned. If NOMS agree with safe, decent and secure, let's make it that, all day and all night in the hope that this may go some way to saving lives and us seeing less deaths in custody. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

JOHN BRISCOE – BRANCH SECRETARY, WOODHILL: Two occasions recently we've had our dogs removed from the wall of a Cat A establishment because they've needed the staff to come into the gaol to go out on escorts because we've been so short. That's still left us with insufficient staff to open a cell door should a prisoner need any kind of assistance. We spoke with our DDC a month ago, with the assistance of Jackie. We had four additional staff pledged to us for nights. They still haven't turned up. Woodhill is leading the number of self-inflicted deaths in custody at the moment, not something that we want to have. We have a task force meeting quarterly. We've had five now where they've attempted to look at ways of resolving the issue, none of which has involved an increase in staff. Spoke with Richard Vince at the last meeting. We highlighted one particular unit on one particular night, because I like to give facts. The person that was looking after that unit that night had 29 separate observations to do per hour and that did not include checking on Cat As or E list or answering any of the cell bell. That's a normal night at Woodhill.

We're in a position where I'm sure a lot of you will be aware we have a colleague who is going to court for manslaughter misconduct. I do not want any member here today or any member back at establishment to go through what that man is going through now. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, just to carry on from what John was saying there, I was horrified when I heard him give those figures at that last meeting, and we've all suffered the last few years with staff being cut back and nights is a different country, they've cut back nights to the very bare minimum. And it works ... on paper. Full Sutton's not made of paper. Neither is any other prison in the country. Last weekend we had a situation where a prisoner in our CSC had to be (INAUDIBLE) out last Saturday night. I'm not 100% aware of the full situation but basically they didn't have staff to take him out. I received a phone call late Saturday night 'cause I work in the prison estate. 'Would you be able to go out with (INAUDIBLE)' 11 o'clock on a Saturday night, what do you think? 'The prisoner is already in the ambulance,' because speaking to that member of staff on Sunday morning, when I reported for duty, he said, 'Did you get a phone call last night?' I said, 'Yeah, I did.' I said, '11 o'clock, ridiculous!' He said, 'They rang me at quarter-to-ten...' That's an hour and 15 minutes they've been ringing round trying to staff that escort. Now that prisoner could have died. Who would be at fault? Rolls downhill doesn't it? We've got nothing in place, not just the staffing levels, we've got in our gaols, we've got no plans for contingency, my colleague from Nottingham there alluded to it. When an escort goes out, John has alluded to it, we have to bring dogs in, we have to compromise security. We shouldn't be doing this. We should have contingency. If it's not paying call-out allowance or a pager system whereby there's a payment made that you make yourself available for the week ... or here's an idea, haven't we got a lot of guys that wear suits that wander about our gaols sometimes? Our governors are very, very proud that they're all in ... for C&R, they are all operational. How about them being on a rota? If it goes skywards, bring them in.

Please support this motion, colleagues. There needs to be more done to make sure these gaols are safe.

<Applause>

RICHARD SMITH - MORTON HALL: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking in support of this motion. As we are an IRC, we run a 24-hour reception, still with minimum staffing levels on nights, so we have detainees kicking around in reception who are completely unknown quantities, as I'm sure many of you understand from working receptions. To put this in perspective, we had an incident recently where we had a detainee attempting to hang himself on an open unit with 20 other detainees. The staff went to try and help this detainee and the whole of his associates turned on the staff, putting four staff and the orderly officer at significant risk of being assaulted with no support. Please support the motion.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Chair, Conference, in support of the motion. One of the things, we've gone through this as well and we've also just recently started to do a nights review on our current staffing. When Swaleside was first built we had four residential wings and we had a PO, an SO and four officers. We now lock up 1,112, eight wings, and we still have one CM, one band 4 and three officers, 'cause they took away our gate. We're fighting this thing about bed watches and everything else, healthcare, we've already discussed in Through the Gate Services are next-door to useless and they're risk averse, so of course anything happens during the night, the first thing the nurse says to us is he must go out to hospital, rather than deal with that individual. That reduces our staffing levels below that of which are safe. We've had a thing creeping in, and it crept in a while ago and we keep fighting it and fighting it and fighting it, where we've had our members working 24-hours in one go. Because when they've sent escorts out and everything, they'll put the night crew out onto the escort, because at least they've had some rest and sleep and they're alert, 'cause we've got to look after the risk of that prisoner escaping, and they will then invite staff who are on duty, who have worked during the day, to remain in the establishment and carry out the night duties, on the basis that it is a so-

called sleeping duty. It's a poor, dangerous and unacceptable practice, something we've been fighting and fighting for a long time. Nights in every establishment with the risk to our prisoners and the population, NPS and everything else that's coming in, we cannot gamble with people's lives and we should not be gambling with our members' security and their employment. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK MERRISON – BRANCH SECRETARY, SUSBURY: Chair, Conference, NEC, I'll just give you our figures. We've had three death in custodies in the last eighteen months and all seem to be related to NPS. We have an SO, two officers and four OSGs to manage 580 prisoners. The difference for us and the majority of you is that ours are still running around. Support this motion.

<Applause>

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC, asking you to support this motion. The illegitimate child of benchmarking with the night staffing levels is bequeathed to us all and I remember benchmarking Holme House, at the time I was the branch secretary there and remember questioning the plans, BDG's plans for the night staffing levels, which my goal at the time I believe reduced the night officer grades by two-thirds. So we said, I said, how do we operate with this number of staff? And they said, 'Adopt new ways of working' so I said, 'Well, what does that mean?' And they said, 'Do things differently.' Yeah right. We know that Ian Mulholland oversaw the nights review before his move to Interserve. The details contained in that review were never released. Clearly that's not because the report recommended a reduction in the night staffing levels.

Incidentally I got a telephone call last night, so any of you that like to bet, now that I've mentioned Ian Mulholland, should take your subs and put it on Interserve getting some of the big contracts in the reconfiguration of the estate. I just thought I'd throw that in at that point and have a little dig.

Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Nottingham to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? That's carried.

Motion 18, Wormwood Scrubs. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Thank you.

MOTION 18

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with organisations operating prisons where POA members are employed to seek a resolution where all prisoners committing acts of violence are then subject to mandatory drug testing within 48 hours of the violent act and that a positive inference should be drawn where refusals to provide a sample occur in line with current MDT policies, and that resources should be increased above current total staffing levels to accommodate this. Further, that this data should form part of all local and national violence statistics including, but not restricted to the violence diagnostic tool and national safer custody statistics plus any equivalent reporting formats in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

MATT CLARK – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: The motion reads the Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with organisations operating prisons where POA members are employed to seek a resolution where all prisoners committing acts of violence are then subject to mandatory drug testing within 48 hours of the violent act, and that a positive inference should be drawn where refusals to provide a sample occur, in line with current MDT policies, and that resources should be increased above total staffing levels to accommodate this. Further this data should form part of all local and national violence statistics including, but not restricted to, the violence diagnostic tool and national safe custody statistics plus any equivalent reporting formats in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Conference, we all know the link between drug use in prisons and escalating violence. Currently this link's just anecdotal. If you carry this motion today and the desired outcome can be achieved, we will have clear data that will further highlight the failings of our employers and this government in tackling drug use and violence in prisons. The POA have utilised the media to great effect in the past 12 months in highlighting these issues. If the NEC can achieve the inclusion of these stats in all national reporting figures in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, it will further strengthen our arm and also provide a much needed

increase in staffing. It's nice to hear that our employers tell us drugs and violence reductions are shared concerns. Let's see if they do more than talk. Please support.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, the NEC obviously are in support of this motion from the Scrubs. This should in fact be a standard in any violence reduction policy, and would give us more definitive data regarding violence within our workplaces. If our employers are giving lip service to a zero tolerance towards violence in our workplaces, then we cannot understand why they would oppose this. Thank you Conference. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Scrubs, do you wish to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That's carried.

Motion 19, Ford. Do we have a seconder? Sudbury.

MOTION 19

That the NEC challenge NOMS and its management, to include legal action where appropriate as to who is responsible for the implementation of JES, Benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable to insure they are held accountable for the unsafe reduction of staff which has resulted in countless assaults on staff, the recent riot at HMP Bedford and HMP Lewes, the murder and serious injuries to the offenders at HMP Pentonville and the recent escape of two offenders from HMP Pentonville.

FORD

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates, motion 19 reads that the NEC challenge NOMS and its management to include legal action where appropriate as to its responsibility for the implementation of JES, benchmarking, Fair & Sustainable, to ensure they are held accountable for their unsafe reduction of staff, which is resulting in countless assaults on staff, recent riots at HMP Bedford and HMP Lewes and the murder and serious injuries to offenders at HMP Pentonville, and the recent scape of two offenders from HMP Pentonville. Colleagues, the prison service has been subject to a lot of change over the years, we've seen it all. We've seen several prison closures, dramatic cuts in staffing levels and even a rise in population which has led to a rise in demand and in violence. All this chaos has resulted from NOMS pursuing budget cuts and putting saving money first rather than safety of staff and the wellbeing of people we look after. Frontline staff are always held accountable for their actions an it's about time the management and those at the back were held accountable for theirs. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, Conference, speaking to motion 19 on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to reject the motion. Fully understanding where all the frustrations that Ford have outlined at the rostrum there, but just to come back with regards to the history of benchmarking and FNS were subject to Special Delegates Conferences and while we've always been opposed to the implementation of the JES, the benchmarking and Fair & Sustainable were membership supported, so asking us to take legal action where appropriate to who was responsible for the implementation might by default see us taking implementation against ourselves. So basically we're asking Conference to reject this motion but on the item under JES there's motions further on in the order paper to address that problem there currently is, so please reject.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ford, do you wish to come back? Straight to the vote – all those in favour of this motion? All those against? That's lost.

20, Liverpool. Seconder for this motion? Thorn Cross.

MOTION 20

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all establishments have their own cellular vehicle to be paid for out of national budget and not local

LIVERPOOL

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Conference, the motion reads that Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all establishments that have their own cellular vehicle should be paid for out of national budgets and not local. Colleagues, at Liverpool we struggle to move violent and refractory prisoners. The service provider, GEOAmev, will quite often refuse to move anybody who's overtly violent. The prisoners have got onto this. We can't move them out of gaol. We have to beg, steel or borrow a cellular vehicle, normally from Thorn Cross. Colleagues, we need tools to do our job properly. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glynn Travis on behalf of the NEC.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, NEC, the National Executive support this motion. We think it's well constructed and extremely needed in all of your establishments to deal with refractory prisoners, and therefore we ask Conference to support. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Liverpool, do you wish to come back? Straight to the vote. All those for this motion please show. Any against? That's carried.

21, Liverpool. Do we have a seconder? Thorn Cross.

MOTION 21

That this Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all establishments that have Tornado commitments should have a vehicle which has blues and twos.

LIVERPOOL

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues, that this Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all establishments that have Tornado commitments should have a vehicle which is blues and twos. Be a few smiles around the room now when I mention that. We smiled when this motion was put forward, but when we thought about it it's all about professionalism. This came out of an incident last year, Tornado shout to Haverigg, Liverpool's Tornado team all gathered at the prison, loaded up onto the 50-year-old prison van, which is used for everything, and it wouldn't start, so you've got the scenario where you've got ten of Liverpool's finest trying to bump-start the van down Hornby Road. Needless to say they didn't get there in time. It's all about professionalism. We're a professional service, give us the tools and the training to do a professional job. Support the motion.

<Applause>

JIM McCABE – BRANCH SECRETARY, BARLINNIE: Chair, Conference, I put a piece together earlier but with the in camera stuff it's kind of blew it away. Now we applaud the work that the Tornado teams do, but I would ask you to reject this motion based on the fact that since quarter-to-two the (inaudible) spoke about how the government's time is up, how they're treating us, how they're wanting us to work rest days, how they're forcing us to work overtime and everything else we've spoke about for the past two hours, it's how the government and your employer is treating you ... now the 127 argument doesn't cover us in Scotland. We're not covered on 127. We can take strike, but you are still forced into your box. Basically the British government has reintroduced the Masters and Servants Act of 1823 to keep people in their place, 'cause that's what that was there for, away back 100 years ago, where if people who took action out of their contract, could be sentenced to prison. Now out with the (inaudible) why are we running to save a government building or a NOMS building where if it's brick and mortar that's been damaged, costing millions(inaudible) to save millions, we've saved tens of millions, why are we running to save their buildings. Out with the (inaudible) I get that. Please reject the motion.

JOHN MUMFORD - DARTMOOR: We ask Conference to reject this motion. At Dartmoor we believe this would lead to another voluntary task that we do not need at present. The money needed to send someone on a police driver's course would be better spent on extra staffing resources. Please reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis, NEC.

GLYN TRAVIS – NEC: Chair, NEC, Conference, the NEC also ask Conference to reject and there's a number of reasons why. Whilst it's a well-constructed and probably on the face of it seems to have a lot of potential, there are also some

hidden issues that would come with this. 1) Would the vehicle be big enough for your Tornado complement, what size would you have? A specialist driver that would be needed to drive the blues and twos vehicle. Blues and twos for the prison service can't break the speed limit anywhere, they can't go through red lights, and so there's no difference between that and any other vehicle. So there's a lot of complications that could come if we were to actually try and pursue this and on that basis, along with what other delegates have spoken, we seek Conference to reject this motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Liverpool to come back?

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues, we're providing an emergency response to colleagues of ours who are potentially in serious danger. Glyn's mentioned training issues there; why can't we have parity with the police, the fire brigade, the ambulance service and even the coastguard? Colleagues, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That motion is lost. Being called for a card vote – need support of ten branches. Card vote scrutineers and tellers. Conference, the very first slip: orange, peach, peachy orange, the very first one.

Is there anybody else waiting to submit their card vote? We've got Nottingham waving a slip and we've got another branch over there. Brixton are still waiting. We've got the scrutineers and tellers, we need to come back in the room, we've still got some slips to collect.

Conference, we have scrutineers on the way to collect the outstanding slips so if you can stand up if you need to give in your card vote and the lovely Paula will come around and collect them. Well done, Phil.

Thank you, Conference, while we await the result we'll move business. Motion 22 – Albany; do we have a seconder for Albany? Winchester.

MOTION 22

That all Members are supplied through the annual Uniform Issue full PPE to include waterproof attire (trousers).
ALBANY

NEIL YULE – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP ALBANY: Chair, NEC, guests and colleagues. The motion is: Members are supplied through Uniform Issue full PPE to include waterproof attire. I appreciate HMPPS have recently run a uniform survey, however, my members are sick and tired of being required often dirty, ill-fitting PPE. The lack of full waterproofs mean, that whilst remaining mostly dry from the waste up, our legs get absolutely soaked. Functional, clean and suitable PPE is an absolute must. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson, NEC.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to reject the motion. This motion is clearly well-meaning, but we cannot allow full PPE to form part of an annual uniform issue. PPE, where issued, is designed to protect the body from injury or infection – your baton is PPE. You heard earlier on the Vice Chair talk about the rollout of PAVA so colleagues at Hull, Wealstun, Risley and Preston, if things go as planned will be being issued PAVA in July of this year. PAVA will be PPE. That can never be part of an annual uniform issue, so when you zap someone with it you need to go somewhere and get a new canister. So bearing that in mind, Conference, I ask you to reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Albany to come back? Straight to the vote – all those in favour, please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

23 Lancaster Farms, seconder please? Preston.

MOTION 23

NEC negotiate with NOMS that all staff who are required to complete an annual C & R refresher and an annual fitness test receive an allowance each year to enable them to purchase suitable clothing and footwear to wear during their training sessions.
LANCASTER FARMS

JULIAN NEWBOLD – BRANCH SECRETARY, LANCASTER FARMS: Chair, NEC, Conference. The motion reads: NEC negotiate with NOMS that all staff who are required to complete an annual C&R refresher and an annual fitness test receive an allowance each year to enable them to purchase suitable clothing and footwear to wear during their training sessions. Conference, my branch submitted this motion for two reasons, one) quite frankly, they are fed up with wearing

their own clothes at these sessions only to have them soiled, and two) because they're equally fed up with NOMS getting something out of them for nothing. Something they've been good at for many years. A core day they've introduced, it makes you late off duty, ten minutes or so, knowing full well you probably won't claim the TOIL back. Making you attend Conference and getting annual leave, making you use that for it. There's a couple of examples, I'm sure you can think of many more. My branch want you to consider these, that NOMS get enough out of us for nothing so let's push back, let's get something out of them that we currently give them for free. Please support the motion, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson, NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive and we're seeking rejection of this motion. The reason why we're seeking rejection is quite simple, Lancaster Farm has quite rightly pointed out, NOMS get something out of our members for nothing and every time we go in front of them and we turn around and say to them, 'The fitness test, C&R', what they're saying to us, 'It's gotta be realistic.' So if it's gotta be realistic when was the last time one of our members, when there was an alarm bell, moved swiftly to their locker, got changed into t-shirt, tracky bottoms and trainers, and then responded it? You're all issued, amongst the unified grade, with a uniform. They've told you that you must wear their PPE, boots and shoes, so therefore from this National Executive, when you go for your C&R fresher and when you go for your fitness test, if they haven't provided you with the appropriate clothing you turn up in your uniform and you do it with that. Conference, with that please reject.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Farms to come back?

JULIAN NEWBOLD – BRANCH SECRETARY, LANCASTER FARMS: Conference, I don't know anybody that's turned up to a C&R refresher or a fitness test in their uniform, that's just unrealistic. I'm surprised that the NEC would tell you to turn up in your uniform for these two sessions, and with that I'd ask you to seriously think would you actually do that, would you turn up at your fitness test in your uniform? I just don't think you would. So we want allowance, my branch wants that allowance to wear suitable clothing, tracksuit, trainers, what you normally turn up to your refreshers and your fitness test with. I urge you to support the motion, get some money out of NOMS, something that they don't give you for now. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote – all those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

Conference, we're now onto motion 26 – Stoke Heath. And, Nottingham, if this is carried your motion would fall. Do we have seconder for Stoke Heath? Nottingham, thank you.

MOTION 27

For the current issue uniform to be replaced with more suitable Operational uniform, namely polo-shirts to all Operational staff.

NOTTINGHAM

NIGEL HARVEY – HMP STOKE HEATH: Thank you, Chair. Chair, NEC, Conference, delegates. The motion reads: Conference notes that the uniform currently issued is not fit for purpose. Therefore, Conference mandates the NEC negotiate with NOMS a change of uniform to mirror the uniform that is issued to the police. Delegates, in the current operational environment our uniform is out of date, and more importantly, out of touch with the environment in which we work. Other public services, such as the police, have changed their uniform to suit the needs of the job. In a lot of establishments we allow prisoners to wear their own clothing, I would ask you, how hard is it to spot a member of staff during mass moves when prisoners are wearing similar items of clothing to our uniform. Let's consider the amount of equipment that our colleagues carry on a day-to-day basis: radios; body-worn cameras; batons; handcuffs; searching gloves; security keys; stationary and of course the POA diary. I put it to you that our current uniform is not fit for purpose within the current climate of an increased workload and increased violence. Our police officers have a modern uniform that, not only looks smart and highly visible when in a crowd, but it also enables them to carry out the equipment they need and safely to meet the demands of the job. Conference, I urge you to support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton, NEC.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Chair. Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC to motion 26; asking Conference to reject the motion. Conference, uniform, the provision of uniform and the standard of the uniform that is provided to our members has constantly been a thorn in the side of this association. It's sub-standard, it's

not fit for purpose and I agree with everything that our colleague from Stoke Heath has said. But what you'll get from this motion is NOMS providing you a sub-standard police replica uniform, 'cause that's what'll happen, and what we want is a bespoke uniform that is fit for purpose provided by NOMS and not a second class replica of the police uniform that NOMS would provide. So we've got to keep pushing NOMS to provide a proper uniform that's fit for the modern day prison service, and on the back of that, Conference, we ask you to reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Stoke Heath to come back. Straight to the vote – all those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That falls.

27 – Nottingham. Secunder for Nottingham please?

MOTION 27

For the current issue uniform to be replaced with more suitable Operational uniform, namely polo-shirts to all Operational staff.

NOTTINGHAM

RICHARD WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 27 reads: For the current issue uniform to be replaced with more suitable operational uniform, namely polo-shirts, to all operational staff.

Conference, I was asked by my branch to bring this motion because they feel that the white shirt is now archaic and no longer practical or suitable for daily use in the modern day prison service. They are asking for the white shirts to be replaced with a lightweight, breathable, black polo-shirt that is now favoured and widely used in the modern day police force, but also other services as well; you see paramedics wearing polo-shirts and all other operational emergency services. I myself have to agree that when working in reception lifting bulk prop boxes and prop bags I can turn up for work in a nice crisp white shirt at seven o'clock in the morning and by seven-thirty it looks like it's never seen a washing machine or an iron. Then I get sent out on emergency escort and I look a complete wreck, my uniform is a disgrace. Times change, the service has changed, the dynamics have changed – white shirts don't look good after 14-hour shifts. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton, NEC.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, NEC responding on motion 27, again, asking you to reject the motion. This has come to the Conference on a number of occasions. Part of the reason that we're asking you to reject is that the white shirt on a landing is easily identifiable to other colleagues in your prison, and with it in the current climate where you've got prisoners wearing all sorts of t-shirts, polo-shirts and everything else you want to make sure that your colleagues are easily identifiable on that landing should you need to see them. So on that we ask Conference to reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Nottingham haven't indicated they wish to reply so we're straight to the vote – all those in favour, please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

28 – Sudbury. Do we have a seconder? Holme House.

MOTION 28

Due to the increase of Violence in Prisons we as a branch ask Conference to mandate the NEC to reinforce our right for Health and Safety and pursue with NOMS that extendable batons are to be issued in the open estate as part of staff's daily equipment.

SUDBURY

GEOFFREY WILLETTS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference. I'm asking Conference and the NEC to support this motion, it reads: Due to the increase of violence in prisons we as a branch ask Conference to mandate the NEC to reinforce our right for health and safety and pursue, with NOMS, extendable batons are to be used in the open estate as part of staff's daily equipment.

Colleagues, we are a fact and evidence-based branch and we are currently participating in an nights review. I was hoping to have the finished article to hand to show you. It has been formulated by the branch at HMP Sudbury and identifies and proves that escalated violence and incidents within a night state period, not to mention the extreme incidents in the core day. It contains factual evidence which reinforce the need for every unified member of staff, who is eligible and trained in

the use of extendible batons, to be given the correct protection on a daily basis so they can be given the same chance to protect themselves if and when an incident happens at any time. I'm sure nobody in this room would deny any of our members the right to protect themselves.

Colleagues, the recent public media concerning this escalated violence only highlights the problems around estates, not forgetting that the fact in an open prison we have no physical barriers to put staff and prisoners between, and prisoners move freely 24/7 if they wish. We have no alarm bells for staff to come running, and if they did a geographical layout it would mean walking with a purpose would be like taking on a marathon, most staff, even before engaging in C&R. So you can see the fact that personal protection, if not available, is putting our members' health and safety at risk. Not forgetting the 1952 Prison Act Legislation, Para 8, Powers of a Prison Officer which states every prison officer whilst acting, as such, should have all the power, authority, protection and privileges of a constable. I see police officers on the streets with batons, cuffs, body-worn cameras, so where's mine? 'cause I want the same protection and I deserve the same protection. You deserve the same protection.

The public's perception of open conditions, most (inaudible) is often the white collar and low-risk backgrounds that reside at open prisons. This could not be further from the truth. The over-flowing, wrong categorisation of prisons being allocated to open conditions is a ticking time bomb waiting to happen. At the beginning of the year we had a rather concerning incident on nights that resulted in a member of staff being assaulted and prisoners assaulting each other. I'm sure you didn't get to hear about this as SMTs, governors and even the DDCs have tried to play down this serious incident. I understand similar motions have been put to Conference but times are changing and our members' health and safety is at risk. Is it going to take a fatality before NOMS wake up and address that every prisoner officer, in every prison, up and down the country should be issued with suitable equipment to protect their wellbeing? Support this motion and let this motion be rolled up and let the NEC use it like a baton to verbally beat NOMS over the head with. And they can also ask for my shoe and boot allowance which they took off me for my baton which I never had. Support this motion and protect our members.

<Applause>

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates. As my colleague said, we put a motion up similar three years ago. I'll give you a little story: the police turned up one day we'd taken a prison who'd threatened to stab his ex-partner, that he was in for, he told the member of staff who was an SO and two of us on nights that he'd got a knife down his trousers and he was gonna go home and stab his ex-partner. We called the police, chased them down the road slightly, and the police turned up, four police cars, I didn't know we had so many in West Sussex that night, three were traffic, they turned up there with stab-proof vests, tasers, they had the lot. They had cuffs, they had batons. He said to me, 'So what have you got to protect yourself?' I went, 'The mobile phone in my hand and the white shirt I'm wearing. It's bullet proof, it's stab proof ...' the rest of it. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL: Chair, NEC, Conference. HMP Hewell which also now includes HMP Hewell Grange, the open prison. Fully supporting the motion. The Cat D prisons aren't Cat D prisons anymore, it's become more and more violent, there's more and more unpredictable behaviour – on Saturday night we was rolling on the floor trying to stop one escaping who'd come back from his RDR drunk. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP OAKWOOD, G4S PRIVATE SECTOR: Conference, we don't have the luxury of having a baton at our establishment, so why don't the NEC actually support us in getting a baton as part of our health and safety. You've got it, why can't we have it too?

<Applause>

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, Conference, NEC. Violence is everywhere. It's common sense, all prison officers should have a baton. Categorisation now is non-existent, governors are forcing prisoners into slots, they're not interested in the risk. I think Jeph raised the issue there, they don't even have alarm bells, you know, you've gotta give these staff the chance to fight back. It's a no-brainer, I agree everybody should have a baton regardless of who you work for, please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd.

DAVE TODD – NEC MEMBER: Conference, Chair, invited guests. The NEC wholeheartedly support the motion from Sudbury. The Executive has been mandated by the following motions in previous Conferences: in 2007 Barlinnie asked for an active campaign to have extendible batons introduced throughout the UK; in 2010 Stoke Heath asked all prison officers, senior officers, principle officers to be issued with extendible batons; 65 of 2012 from Thorn Cross called for prison officers working in the open estate to be issued with batons and in 2014 the Grendon branch asked for a review to amend policy to allow staff in the open estate to carry batons as a consequence of the increased violence in that estate. Conference, violence is on the up in all of our establishments. The issuing of batons to all is part of the ongoing health and safety talks currently that the NEC are engaged with on your behalf. Prisoners are now more volatile towards staff than I can ever remember; we all need to be able to protect ourselves in the workplace. Sometimes this is not just from prisoners but also from members of the public who are performing criminal acts to supply drugs, phones and in some cases prostitutes to the open estate. If you work in the open estate you'll be acutely aware of how our re-categorisation system is letting prisoners progress through the system that are simply not suitable for less secure conditions. The Executive believe that we are a national service and as such all should be inclusive with PPE. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Sudbury to come back? Straight to the vote – all those in favour, please show? That's carried.

We come to the awards section now and I call Steve Gillan, motion number 29.

MOTION 29

That Conference award Finlay Spratt Honorary Life Membership to the POA.
NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much, Chairman. Motion 29: That Conference award Finlay Spratt Honorary Life Membership to the POA.

It gives me great pleasure in moving this motion. I think Finlay has been a stalwart of this trade union: he joined the Northern Ireland Prison Service on the 7th June 1976; he was elected POA Branch Committee Member at Magilligan in December 1976; he was then elected as local Chairman at Magilligan in December 1981; further elected Vice Chair of the POA Northern Ireland June 1984 and then he was elected Chairman of Northern Ireland on December 1986 and he held that position until December 2016, some thirty years.

40 years in elected positions within the POA at local and national level. Finlay was instrumental in setting up the Prison Service Trust in 2002 after the peace process to cater for the needs of the widows and family members of our murdered colleagues in Northern Ireland, something that this union should never forget. But that doesn't tell the whole story. Finlay has given an outstanding contribution to this union and to his members in Northern Ireland and that should not be underestimated. Over the years Finlay had suffered, like all members in Northern Ireland but particularly Finlay, death threats, threats against his life, constantly looking for bombs under vehicles, but it never deterred the man from negotiating the best deals for his members in Northern Ireland in order to protect their health and safety and wellbeing as well. The Executive cannot think or envisage a more difficult environment to work in, particularly to hold the Chairmanship for thirty years during those times of troubles and not taking one backwards step from being the voice-piece in Northern Ireland on behalf of his members.

Northern Ireland has always been a difficult environment. We talk about the peace process but for our colleagues in Northern Ireland there has never really been a peace process, they've always been under threat, and on behalf of the Executive I pay tribute to the outstanding work that Finlay Spratt has done on behalf of, not just his members in Northern Ireland, but for this trade union. Conference, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, I have an indication from Maghaberry as a seconder, is that correct? Failing that I've got Whitemoor also indicating?

UNKNOWN: Maghaberry

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. Did anyone wish to speak on this motion? Straight to the vote then – all those – sorry.

UNKNOWN - ?MAGHABERRY: Chair, NEC, it's with mixed emotions that I stand in front of you today. Finlay took our union from strength to strength and in taking us from strength to strength I would ask the delegates on the floor to be upstanding to have a minute's silence for the 31 members of staff that the Northern Ireland Prison Service has lost in the dedication of its duties. Would you please be upstanding for a minute's silence?

Thank you, delegates. As I say, it's with mixed emotions that I stand here. Finlay was in office when I took up a job within the Northern Ireland Prison Service. We went through extremely difficult times. Our widows had been left to one side, as Steve has already said, Finlay was instrumental in putting together the Prison Service Trust with which I am extremely proud to serve on as a Director of that trust. Finlay has taken us, or had taken us, from strength to strength. He has been there as a supportive mechanism for the whole of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, whether they be POA members or whether they be not. As we say in Northern Ireland, he put the arse in my trousers! He got us to where we are today and this gentleman should be honoured with everything that we can bestow on him. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan to come back?

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: No, no need to come back, it's all been said, thank you Maghaberry.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote – all those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? That's carried, thank you, Conference.

Now moving onto motion 30 – Steve Gillan.

MOTION 30

*That Conference award Geoffrey Burrows Honorary Life Membership of the POA
NEC*

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you, Chair, thank you Conference. Motion 30: That Conference award Geoffrey Burrows Honorary Life Membership of the POA.

Geoff joined the Prison Service in December 1988. He served at Brixton, Moorland, Lancaster Farms before he was medically retired in 2011 due to violence at work against him. He joined the committee in Lancaster Farms in 2001 and he became Secretary in 2002, a position held until medically retired. Geoff was a good campaigner, Geoff, whilst at The Farms, campaigned against the gaoling of children by the Youth Justice Board, and their treatment within the criminal justice system. Who will ever forget the 29th August in 2007 Geoff was a leading player at Conference, along with Liverpool and others, in making that day happen in respect of the POA's first national strike. We know after that that Geoff was personally blamed, along with John Hoey, for the one-million-pound worth of damage at Lancaster Farms by Jack Straw, who was the then Justice Secretary. Of course we all knew that Jack Straw was clutching at straws, as usual. Geoff, together with the NEC, faced him down.

But it didn't stop there, since Geoff's medical retirement he continues to do outstanding work on behalf of this union, he goes to parliament and has campaigned against violence against members because he knows what it's like to have a violent act against him. He's currently doing a full PhD researching attitudes to violence from male offenders. His tireless work to better the lives of current POA members is truly outstanding and his dedication, even in retirement, is first class. Even when his wife was diagnosed with cancer Geoff has continued with his research on behalf of POA members to better our lives in between caring for his own wife. He's an excellent recipient for the highest award that we can give to our membership for their outstanding work. Conference, please support this motion for Geoff Burrows. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Lancaster Farm indicating that they wish to speak about Geoff, ex-member of their staff.

SARAH RIGBY – BRANCH CHAIR, LANCASTER FARMS: Chair, NEC, Conference. Whilst Geoff was at Lancaster Farms he was a source of knowledge and support to me personally, something I will never forget. I started there as a newly promoted senior officer and was put on the same wing as him. He helped me out on many occasions and I often witnessed him putting other staff's wants and needs before his own. Geoff is deserving of this award; since his retirement he has continued to try and raise awareness of the rising levels of violence in our prisons, as Steve's already mentioned. I could say a lot more about why, in my opinion, Geoff should be awarded Honorary Life Membership, but I suspect Geoff being Geoff, he'd much rather I shut up and sat down, so I will. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, Conference, all those in favour of this motion, please show? Thank you, that's carried.

Motion 31 – Dave Todd for the NEC.

MOTION 31

That this Conference recognise the outstanding service and contribution to the POA from Brian Clarke formerly of HMP Birmingham and in doing so award him Honorary Life Membership of the POA.

NEC

DAVE TODD – NEC MEMBER: Conference, Chair, invited guests. It gives me great pleasure to move this motion to award Brian Clarke Honorary Life Membership. Brian Clarke joined Her Majesty's Prison Service on the 29th May 1984 and completed his training with throngs of decorated war veterans returning from the Falklands at HMP Leyhill where he alleges officers were trained as opposed to screws at Wakefield. He was the only one on the training school that got posted back to HMP Birmingham. Once back at the Green he duly opted out of overtime making him very popular for a new member of staff.

Brian had a healthy interest in POA issues and attended all branch meetings. He put himself forward for the local committee but wasn't elected, the second time he wasn't elected but complained of irregularity on the ballot and so won on the second occasion and spent two spells on the committee before challenging the incumbent POA Chairman and overwhelmingly winning. He himself found the value and commitment of the POA when a prisoner made an allegation and took civil action against a number of staff including himself. He spent two days in the dock at the Royal Courts of Justice being defended by a POA barrister because the Prison Service did not want to defend them. Naturally, of course, they were all acquitted.

Brian's work has been tireless for the Birmingham committee and he attended numerous trade council meetings representing the views of the POA and having our voice heard. He organises the old codgers do at the Green, which all the retired members come back and have the opportunity to swing the lamp and is the social highlight of many an old ex-screw. Even in retirement and after the Birmingham prison riot he gave a number of television interviews telling the world just how it was for his former colleagues and POA members. Please support, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Any other speakers?

AIDY WATTS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WINSON GREEN: Dare I say it? On facility time. <Laughs> The one prison man, Birmingham through and through. I can say I've been privileged to work on the committee with Brian Clarke for over 13 very difficult years, but interesting years. I can honestly say that we've never fallen out, despite having one or two differences along the way, this is mainly due to his statesman-like stance rather than anything I've ever said or done. I have witnessed first-hand his forensic approach to codes of discipline, I have been present when he has also given many a Mafiosa talk to the committee, but he has always ensured he has been the lightning conductor for the branch, the committee and indeed me, shielding us from the worst excesses of some very fierce and protracted storms.

He retired as Branch Chairman in September 2016 feeling every ounce of pain of representing a branch through, what few will now remember, was a two-year market test, a six-month transitional period and steering the branch through the virgin territory of the first ever public sector prison passing over to the private sector and the difficulties we experienced for the first five turbulent years. During the eight years since the Rt Honourable Jack Straw made the announcement to market test Birmingham, the branch kept faith with Brian, despite the aggressive buffeting we endured and despite him being challenged at the ballot box. Sadly, I know he won't linger considerably on his achievements, successfully negotiating retirement age back down to 60, that's six-zero for TUPE staff, previously HMP at Birmingham. Just proving the POA strapline that 68 is indeed too late. Also achieving higher rates of pay for those staff at Birmingham than those in the public sector.

Brian was pivotal in Birmingham maintaining our extendible batons, despite the excessive scrutiny and reluctance of our new employer to allow us to have this volatile piece of personal protection equipment. He was rightly very proud in persuading the then Chief Executive of G4S to recognise the POA instead of another union as they do at other sites, and this is the reason today that Oakwood have recognition rights with the POA. He moved the motion that made a change for the rules and constitution to give us our first ever private sector committee, which I'm now pleased to say is up and running, galvanising strategy to improve conditions, not only in prisons but immigration centres and for all POA members in the private sector.

I think you can all now see the advantages of having Brian Clarke in your corner.

Perhaps one of his proudest moments was moving a motion, and despite it being supported from the floor by Andy Darken from Latchmere House, he still managed to get it carried, certainly no mean feat at the time. Many of you will have seen his wiry figure dapperly dressed enjoying a roll-up outside the conference hall, never missing an opportunity to

network or build support for a particular motion. Many of you will have seen him as part of the furniture at the many bars around Southport and Portsmouth, with his Bon Ami outlook buying drinks like prohibition is just about to be announced.

Brian's passion, unlike so many others, has never dimmed and he has always been about what he can do for this union, not what he can get out of this union. He is a serious loss to our union just as he is a serious loss to HMP Winson Green, the committee and indeed this Conference floor. He has crossed swords many times with governors, journalists and the NEC, taking them to task of countless issues vociferously defending our new sister prison Oakwood when they had few friends, both internally and externally.

I commend the NEC for bringing this motion as he is already a Cronin Clasp holder, already doing conduct and discipline work for our union. I know he would make a superb envoy for our union and Birmingham ask you to fully support this motion for his unstinting work he has done over the years.

<Applause>

JANE WARNER – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP OAKWOOD, G4S PRIVATE SECTOR: Chair, NEC, colleagues. On facility time as well. I've known Brian for a short space of time compared to the majority of you, only five years, and during that five years he has been an absolute font of knowledge for me and my fledging branch. We knew absolutely nothing, and at one point there was just me running the branch. I knew that I could pick the phone up and I could speak to Brian about absolutely anything and nothing would be a problem. He's always been there for me and so is Aidy now, which he's just carried on. It would be the icing on the cake and the cherry as well for Brian to have this award, so I urge you to support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, all those in favour please show? That's carried. Thank you.

Conference, we're going back to the card vote from motion 21, the results are in, thanks for the scrutineers and tellers. Number of votes in favour – 9,811; number of votes against – 12,745. That motion falls.

Conference, it gives me great pleasure to ask someone who needs no introduction whatsoever to address Conference with fraternal greetings. Colin Moses, Honorary Life Member, Awesome Chairman who took us through some tough times, and look at him, he's still standing tall, strong and proud, and it's a pleasure to share a stage with him. So without further ado, can you please welcome Colin Moses to the stage?

<Applause>

Fraternal greetings, Colin Moses, Honorary Life Member

COLIN MOSES: Mr Acting Chairman, NEC, Conference, it's a great honour to be up here, to give a fraternal greeting from the Honorary Life Members. On a personal note, I look round this conference hall and I see many faces I know and I see many faces I don't know. It's six years since I left this hall and left this stage, and I left with a tear in my eye because I was taken away from me something that I liked doing. I'm not going to say as much as loved doing 'cause I love my family, that's gotta be the first thing, but I enjoyed doing it, and like many of us who are Honorary Life Members, and you've just put another three up there, they watch the Union, they watch the POA and they sympathise with everything you are facing. I would ask you at times at Conference to talk to the men and women at the back of the hall because you may say, 'Oh well, they've had their time, they've done their bit, they don't know what it's like now;' yes, when many of us were in the Prison Service there was no drones, there was no mobile phones, there wasn't the epidemic you've got now, but there was a Prison Service and one of the things that really gets me when I'm looking at what you're doing now, and I'm in there], I've been on there myself, is the attacks that are mounted on the Union on social media. Luckily when I was about there wasn't any social media or the phone calls, you just didn't answer it. But that's one of the differences, that's one of the things I wanna say is support the NEC. I was on the NEC for 15 years including my time as Chairman. I would have to Diane Abbot to do my counting how many years I was at the back of there, I couldn't. But what I do know is that what I see happening in this Union, what I've seen happen in the last six years, hasn't been good. You don't need me to tell you that. It hasn't been good. And that's not about apportioning blame to anybody. I'm here today at the invitation of a man who's just finished as National Chairman and the NEC, that's Mike Rolfe. He invited me, one of the first that actually did. I'm not going to go on to why I have never been up here before then, that's for other, not from me. But what I do know is the POA is never about any single person and it never will be, so when you're apportioning blame and when you're saying, 'We haven't done this' or 'You haven't done that', you've done all sorts and I think it's on this occasion I have to mention a very good friend of mine, and I hope and I'm sure all your thoughts are with him, that's Brian Caton. He was General Secretary of this Union for many years. In my time in the job since 1986 I only ever had three General

Secretaries, one of them's still here, another man I call a good friend, David Evans, an Honorary Life Member who unfortunately is not here, and a man I hope to see here next year, that's Brian Caton. And anybody who's ever known Brian, he is Mr POA, that's all he wants to talk about when you talk to him. I've attended many things with him and I hope you'll join with me, whether you're religious or not, and say a little prayer for him to get well very, very quickly. Please Conference, put your thoughts with Brian Caton.

One of my things while I was National Chairman and I was thinking about different things you've done and Honorary Life Members have done and been involved in, I should really be ashamed of it but anyway ... I did it ... on the 23rd June (I had to check the date), on the 23rd of June 2010, along with a man called Michael Spur, you all know him, don't you? <Chuckles> I signed a bit of paper ... his name's on it and my name's on it, big, bold print, ended up on the front page of the Gatelodge. It's called 'Zero Tolerance to Violence'. I think I should take him to court, shouldn't I, and say 'You've made me sign this bit of paper and you don't know what it means' 'cause that's what we signed. And I didn't sign on behalf of Colin Moses; I didn't sign on behalf of the Honorary Life Members; I signed it on behalf of the POA, and he couldn't keep his word on that. I had somebody say this morning if he was a Premier League manager, unless he was managing Sunderland of course, I had to get that in the speech somewhere ...

<Laughter>

...unless he was managing Sunderland he would have been sacked! Or unless of course he was managing here and he's kept on. They might have David Moyes next.

But on a more serious note, and I won't take up much of your time, I went through the newspapers at the weekend when I knew I was coming here and I thought let's have a look through the newspapers to see where the POA Conference is mentioned. Remembering the amount of work that's done by the National Executive and by ourselves to try to get our story across. Lots of salacious stories in there, lots of stories about prisoners and about what prisoners were up to; nothing about this Conference coming, and the importance of it. So it was with some disappointment I said that, but I also watched on the news that it was Mental Health Awareness Month. Mental Health Awareness Month. Where do you think most mentally ill people end up? Tell me where they end up. 70% in our prisons, yet there's not a mention of us here.

It's a dedicated system by the press in this country to starve people of real information about what is happening in our prisons, and that hasn't changed from those men and women who are sitting in the back of the hall to today. It's a dedicated system of starvation of stories, true stories about what you face every day. And I would say to you, keep on fighting them. Keep on getting those stories out. Make them.

And on November 15th last year you held protest meetings and you got that story out and me, as an Honorary Life Member, was certainly proud and you should be proud of what you did that day.

I've got a badge on in here, and I sat through this conference last year and I heard somebody come and say, 'Well that was worth it.' Ten years ago, and Aidy from Birmingham just reminded me of that when he came to the rostrum, ten years ago in August we had, and I'm not held by any sort of legal action, anything like that, 'cause I haven't got any money as everybody knows ...

<Laughter>

And ten years ago in August we had not protest meetings, we had a strike, some will argue Moses bottled it, we should have stayed out longer, some might argue the NEC bottled it, we should have stayed out longer, but I can tell you, in uniform, that day, outside of being elected National Chairman was the proudest day I've ever had in the service, and what you should not be afraid of is ever to go on strike again if you believe it's right and you believe you can do it, whether you can win or not. And I want to make a quote to you from a man who in my time as Chairman addressed this Conference twice. He's no longer with us. I think he's one of the greatest trade unionists who ever lived in this country, a man called Bob Crow, and he said: 'If you fight, you might lose, but if you don't fight, you will always lose.'

And we'll end up on this ... as an Honorary Life Member, I don't go in prisons any longer. I watch them, I talk to people, but I'm sure of one thing: the only people who will defend uniformed staff is not HMP or NOMS or whatever it wants to call itself now, or a Tory government or a New Labour government or a Liberal government. The only people who will defend uniformed staff are the POA, and that's regardless of whether you're in Northern Ireland, Scotland or here in England and Wales. So remember that when you go back to your establishments, when you're feeling sick about facility time, when you're feeling sick about do I really wanna do this job, do I want ... you are the only people and you represent the only organisation that will defend uniformed staff. Please keep up the good work, as I say, on behalf of the Honorary Life Members, some who are here and some who aren't. And I'd like to say thank you again to the NEC for inviting us and thank you to Conference for letting us get involved.

Thanks again. Have a great Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Colin as ever passionate as always. It's an absolutely pleasure to have you address us and thank you very much for that on behalf of the POA, the NEC and Conference.

Conference, Just a few reminders. We have the secure healthcare services, they have a meeting in the Green Room in the Floral Hall and we also have fringe meeting at 6 o'clock in the Waterfront Suite, small claims and legal services. There will be refreshments available. That brings us to the close of business for today. Thank you for your contribution and I'll sustainable you at 9 o'clock in the morning. Thank you Conference.

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May, 2017

Wednesday 10th May, Morning Session

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. Conference I have an indication from the Feltham Branch that they wish to appeal the decision to reject their emergency motion, so I'm inviting Feltham to the rostrum.

LAURA READER – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: Chairman, NEC, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, Feltham branch wish to appeal the emergency motion to Conference, which was submitted yesterday and rejected by the Standing Orders Committee. I realise I cannot go into the body of the motion but I ask Conference to support this motion going to the order paper, there has already been a precedent set for emergency motions being brought during Conference when Belmarsh did so at the Special Delegates Conference in October 2014. You will all have got an open mandate from your branches so have the ability to make a decision on the merits of this motion set at Conference once we had finished the debate. Delegates, I ask you to support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee.

TERRY FULLERTON – STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE: Thank you Chair. Conference, the Standing Orders Committee considered the emergency motion received from Feltham on Tuesday the 9th May 2017 and returned this for the following reasons. The provision for appointing... And I'll just tell you what the emergency motion is before I go on! The emergency motion was that Conference instruct the NEC to use rule 9.5 of our Rules and Constitution to employ Mike Rolfe as an Assistant Secretary from the 9th of June. So the provisions for appointing an Assistant Secretary require an individual to be a member of the POA. Mike resigned membership due to the fact that he no longer met the criteria of being a full member once he resigned his position from the prison service. Mike explained his decision fully to the NEC and they accepted his resignation on the 3rd May 2017. You ask the NEC to use rule 9.5 to employ Mike. There is a strict examination process which all candidates must engage in, with an assessment through an independent body as part of this process. Therefore the motion from Feltham is rejected because: 1) It does not meet the criteria for an emergency motion; 2) There is no need or requirement to employ an Assistant Secretary as far as the Standing Orders Committee are aware and this would be a decision for the General Secretary and the NEC having considered a business case; and 3) The Standing Orders Committee also believe that no branches within the hall would have had an opportunity to seek a mandate from their branch to determine whether or not to support or reject the motion. And Conference, Conference paper ...Annual Conference motion 3 of 2015, set the criteria which was adopted, set the criteria for emergency motions at or prior to Conference. The criteria is if an issue of national importance arises and the normal administration procedures could not be followed the NEC and/or delegates attending Conference wish to submit the motion the standard form must be used to allow the Standing Orders Committee to consider as approved by Conference under rule 12.5(c). 25: In this situation the delegates must inform their branch of their decision as soon as possible under the provisions of rule 20.4, in the case of an NEC sponsored emergency motion the membership will be advised by way of a POA circular. 26: The Standing Orders Committee shall consider the request and approve the motions for inclusion in the Conference Agenda. 27: All branches will be advised of any accepted emergency motions as soon as possible, and 28: If the Standing Orders Committee rejects any emergency motion the branch shall have the right of appeal to Conference prior to the adoption of Standing Orders.

Conference, the Standing Orders Committee considered the emergency motion from Feltham and came to the conclusion that it did not meet the criteria for an emergency motion, however it will be the Conference decision whether or not you accept the appeal. Back to the Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Vice Chair. Conference, I now ask you to accept or reject the appeal from Feltham. All those in favour of hearing the appeal from Feltham please show? All those against? That's lost.

Thank you Conference, we'll now continue with the order of the day. I call Dartmoor for motion 32. Do we have a seconder for Dartmoor? Exeter, thank you.

MOTION 32

That Conference instruct the NEC to demand that NOMS commission a scientific air quality check on the use of NPS and the effects that it has on both staff and prisoners in the public, private prisons and special hospitals. This should be completed as a matter of urgency. On completion the report must be published.

DARTMOOR

JOHN MUMFORD – DARTMOOR: Good morning Chair, NEC, Conference. We ask you to support motion 32, it reads: Conference instruct the NEC to demand that NOMS commission a scientific air quality check on the use of PS and the effects that it has on both staff and prisoners in the public, private prisons and special hospitals. This should be completed as a matter of urgency. On completion the report must be published.

Conference, when the Prison Service was forced to publish a scientific air quality report on second-hand smoking the contents of that report showed that our members have had to endure significant harm to their health for years with some branches still having to deal with the effects of second-hand smoking as this Prison Service has failed, to date, to make all prisons smoke-free. Our employers have a duty of care under health and safety to immediately act upon the findings of that report. At Dartmoor we have been smoke-free for some time but over the last few years we have found ourselves subjected to the involuntary inhalation of psycho-active substances on a daily basis. This is the case for the majority of staff that work for the Prison Service, the staff that we all represent. What are the government doing to protect us from these harmful substances? Nothing. I would like to take a moment and list a few incidents we've experienced recently at Dartmoor which will no doubt mirror incidents you have all experienced in your establishments. In the last few weeks a good friend of mine, an officer, a member was found in the segregation unit on his own in the office whilst in patrol state. He was heavily under the influence of Spice, he was rushed to hospital and kept in for a number of days due to having a suspected heart attack. It makes me angry. What if this happened on nights? He wouldn't have been found. Recently we had prisoners smoking Spice in the healthcare waiting room, the fumes seeped into the healthcare facility and three nurses then suffered the effects, causing oxygen to administered to all involved.

Colleagues, we have brought this motion to Conference 'cause at Dartmoor we fear not only the short-term harmful effects of NPS but in particular the long-term, negative health effects that this drug may cause to all staff that work in prisons. We have to do something about the situation and we need to act now, before it's too late. The government has forced many of us to work to 68 before we can draw our pension, the reality is many of us will not make that retirement age as we will have contracted terminal breathing illnesses and who knows what psychological damage? If a scientific air quality check is carried out and the findings are as severe as we expect them to be then the Prison Service management need to instigate immediate action to protect our health and safety. This government keep promising extra staff, more security, mobile blocking technology, extra dogs, we've seen none of these at our establishment and no doubt many of you are in the same position. At Dartmoor we say enough of the false promises, enough of the talk, it is time for action. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MATT CLARK – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Chair, Conference, speaking in support of this motion. If this can be done it should be done. Many delegates in this room have suffered the effects of Spice or other NPS. When we return to our establishments some of us will no doubt hear about friends, comrades and colleagues in new incidents of Spice inhalational poisoning. I myself have been found slumped in a chair, dribbling in my own lap, unable to say my own name due to the effects of NPS. Our employers have a duty of care to all who live, work and visit our establishments. We need to know the true effects of this poison we breathe on a daily basis. Please support.

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: NEC, Chair, Conference, a couple or three weeks back we had a black, *black* week. We had 160 code blues in a 7 day period. We had Spice, I think DHL was delivering it, it was coming in that regular. We had staff feeling the effects as in uniformed staff, and as a uniformed member of staff you're normally the first to respond, you're the one dealing with it in the thick, in the cell, where it's still there and all we've had is, 'Well, get 'em out the cell.' How do you get 'em outta the cell because they're off their heads, they're battered? Then you've got healthcare, we've had a number of our healthcare staff at Humber feel the effects and go down with the effects of Spice. We've had two or three officers had that effect. The big, *big* concern for me is, is any member of staff here, at your own establishments, feeling the effects and not quite sure what the effects are? Jumping in your cars, on your way home, we've got quite a lot of our staff that live a considerable distance away from the establishment, end up in a car crash, kill themselves or kill somebody else. *Who* is to blame? We don't know what the effects are to us, we see what the effects are to them. *We* don't take drugs. You look at the fellas and lasses that we look after, they *live* on drugs, their body is designed around drugs 'cause they've taken it that many times and you see what the effects are to them, what about us? We're clean, we don't live that lifestyle, so what is the effect on us, that's what I wanna know. Please support this motion.

JOHN DICKSON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SHOTTS: Chair, NEC, delegates, just gonna give you a wee bit of information as well on what we have recently found at HMP Shotts was, they're now starting to put in water marked mail and with the water marked mail what they're doing is they're putting Spice on the envelopes and inside the mail which they are then touching and it's then going into your skin and into your system. So I'll just let you know that this is not just about inhaling the smoke, there are actually other ways of bringing it in and they're actually either chewing the paper or indeed, they're boiling the paper to get the Spice off it as well, so just let all your colleagues know when you get back to work that they use gloves when they're handling the mail from now on because that's where it's also coming in. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

TERRY McCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues, speaking in support of the motion *but* how long does a report take to commission? How long will the report take to come through? This is a problem for the here and now, this is an important threat to the health and safety of all our members and needs dealing with now. Support the motion.

<Applause>

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, speaking to motion 32 on behalf of the NEC. Dartmoor, Scrubs, Humber, Shotts and Liverpool have explained everything that needs to be explained about NPS. It's a very serious concern to this NEC and it's also a very serious concern to you out there working within those prisons. You know, the media just brush over it when it involves prison staff, and it hasn't gone unnoticed that until recently when police have become affected by the effects of Spice that it's now become frontline news again about what the effects of Spice are. This is a worthy motion, we'll take this forward and we'll push as hard as we can to make NOMS do this but there's also a circular out there, 9 of 2007, which I would urge anybody in this hall to tell their members to use, because it's NOMS' own circular telling you not to go onto any area where you think anybody's been smoking and tells you not to go on there for at least 30 minutes. They're not gonna come back at you 'cause that's their own advice to you if you think somebody's been smoking, *whatever* they've been smoking. So please use that circular when you go back to your branches, tell your members not to go into those areas, you're fully protected by that circular because they're not gonna come after you, we will take this motion on. Thank you. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Come to the vote, all those in favour of this motion? That's carried. Motion 33, Full Sutton. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Holme House, thank you.

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Morning Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference. Colleagues, health and safety. Think of those two words. They get devalued sometimes but at the bottom of it, two of the most important things in our life, surely? They are in mine. We all want to be healthy, we all want to be safe. I'm sure they're important to Michael Spurr and I'm sure they're important the esteemed Madam Justice Secretary, as I believe Lizzie prefers to be addressed, and I love a preferred name. We all want to be healthy and safe, it goes without saying. Other people's health and safety though, quite a different matter. In this country employers over the years have showed such lack of interest in their workers' health and safety, legislation's had to be developed over the years to prevent employers putting their employees at risk in the pursuit of their business interests. But we've got the legislation in place, the Health and Safety at Work Act '74 and we've got the Safety Reps, the Safety Committee Regs of '77, both of which have been amended over the years but you've got a solid, legal basis for protecting workers' rights, *our* members health and safety, we've got the protection in law.

Interestingly the Brown Book, the Safety Reps and Safety Committees regulations has a list of special hazards which recognise the specific risks associated with certain types of work, construction sites, railways, oil rigs to fishing boats, specialist work has special rules, special considerations because of the nature of the work. Prisons aren't in there though or secure hospitals. Now to me, that means that we're entitled to *exactly* the same protection in law as any other worker in this country, so *why* does this service employ in senior positions people who quite obviously do not have our health or indeed our safety at the very core of our operations? Right at the top Miss Truss says she's put safety at the top of her White Paper, I'm not seeing that in our establishments, I'm not seeing that at all. And I'm frankly sick of hearing from governor after governor telling me, 'Well, prisons aren't nice places, these things are gonna happen, you have to expect it.' *No, I don't!* As I said, we've got the same rights to protection as anyone else in this country, we do not go to work in the morning with the expectation that we could be assaulted, that's just plain wrong. Now when these governors are saying this, 'These things happen,' they don't happen in admin blocks, those governors are sitting several locked doors and gates from the landings, asking us to go out there and take the risks. Now we can never, ever eliminate the hazards in any workplace and prisons obviously not, but we can do something to minimise the risk and that brings us to risk assessments. And as a safety rep I've gone through the risk assessments for our establishment and I'm horrified. They not only affect staff, of course, they also affect anyone working, resident or visiting the establishment. One of the hazards we have is hostile prisoners, surprisingly enough. The level of hazard is rated at a level 3 of 5, which in our risk

assessments means an injury requiring an absence of over 7 days *may* occur, not one that requires reporting under RIDDOR, that would be a 4; 5 would be a fatality and that could never happen in such a well-run gaol, could it? Yet in my service there's been two prisoners murdered in Full Sutton, so yeah, it obviously does happen. But of course you multiply the size of the risk by the likelihood of it happening to find your final score on your risk assessment. The likelihood of encountering hostile prisoners in a high security estate gaol is also a 3, defined as: Possible, could occur sometimes. Huh! You think? This, when you multiply with the size of the hazard, comes up with a 9, meaning action recommended is to quote, "monitor", possibly from an office outside the establishment, certainly well away from the hazard or as a cynic might say, 'Single figures, job done,' because a score of 9 means nothing actually has to be done, just monitoring. I call this wilful cheating or risk assessment based on resources, I've heard that referred to on more than one occasion and that's not just my opinion, it's *easily* proven by facts. Between 2015 and '16 assaults on staff went up by more than 43%, 700 requiring hospital treatment, and it's going up further, as we know. That's two a day, colleagues, two of our brothers and sisters going to hospital instead of going home, *every day, each and every day*.

Colleagues, we need to get in there, we can draw upon the expertise of the NEC, we've got Ian Carson that has offered to help with his team to come into Full Sutton. We also have the HSE. I'm going on - I'm almost out of time - we need to get in there, we need to hold these people to account. The point I've got to get across though is those risk assessments are the responsibility of the employer, as safety reps we can get in there, tell them where they're going wrong; if they want to go ahead and do it wrong, by all means, but document where you've advised them and when things go wrong, and they will, then we can hold them to account. I am fed up with people building careers by taking chances on my safety and my colleagues' safety. Please support this motion, colleagues.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning Conference, this is why we went out in November last year and as part of the coming back through our gates and everything else, the NEC negotiated with our employers there was gonna be a complete review of all health and safety risk assessments in our establishments, so it should have happened, it should have been done by now. Yesterday I sat in here and watched the life being sucked out of this conference hall as the legal advice was given to us about what we can and cannot do. To be honest, this is where the fightback starts. We need to go back to our branches and give notice to our governors that unless they actually do this and start taking this seriously, then we will give notice and we'll go through the legal process and start putting our governors through the courts. Please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ian Carson?

IAN CARSON: Chair, Conference, Ian Carson responding on behalf of the NEC, asking you to support this motion for all of the reasons so passionately and eloquently laid out by my colleague from Full Sutton. In his opening address the Vice Chair outlined the offer that NOMS made to us at the end of last year where we could review every risk assessment and safe system of work in the prisons, we need to take up that offer colleagues, we need to get in there and review every risk assessment. The team that has been conducting the health and safety visits on behalf of the NEC have so far visited 13 gaols and I've been looking at risk assessments as I've been going round and what's really disappointing is that very few of them are up-to-date and almost none of them have got any reference to your violence diagnostic tool and I find that very surprising, colleagues, and we need to turn that around.

Cookie's just made a fantastic point there. Yesterday we got a bit beaten up, didn't we? We did, we got beaten up yesterday, but this is the ground that we win on, health and safety. We're now in talks with the Health and Safety Executive, they're about to embark on inspections of six gaols in England and Scotland, when did you ever think you would see that happen? And they're gonna go in and look at levels of violence in prisons but we have to be doing our bit. We *have to* get into prisons, review risk assessments, safe systems of work, and then make sure controlled measures are in them risk assessments to ensure that our members are safe. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show? Thank you, that's carried. Call Holme House, motion 34. Do we have a seconder for Holme House? Thank you.

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIRMAN, HOLME HOUSE: Chairman, NEC, Conference. The motion reads that Conference condemn as unfit for purpose occupational health provision provided to our members, and Conference mandates the NEC to achieve through negotiation a fit for purpose scheme that provides full and effective ongoing occupational health services to officers with both physical and mental health injuries.

Our members have never endured such a sustained grinding down of their physical and mental resilience. Yes, NOMS made the savings but every one of you in this hall know who's paying for these savings, it's us and all our operational

colleagues up and down the country. We've all seen the effect on our colleagues, high blood pressure, hyper-vigilance, stress and anxiety, PTSD, exits through both medical inefficiency and ill-health retirement are at the highest levels. It's the detriment of our members that the employers' occupational health provisions have failed miserably to respond to the increasing pressures on our frontline staff. My opinion of our occupational health support is not good. In all honesty all NOMS have provided is an expensive report writing service with time-bounded treatment packages. Guess what? When a prison officer's on sick leave with diagnosed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder six sessions of counselling and a telephone consultation from a doctor, that's not gonna cut the mustard. All too often our employers' pre-occupation is about getting the member of staff back to work as quickly as possible. They take little account of how long it takes to get the necessary help from an overstretched national health service. The Prison Service employs a huge range of psychological services to provide care to the prisoners in our custody, would it be unreasonable to ask that those resources could also be made available to members of staff that have suffered mental injuries within our establishments? The current occupational health arrangement is not up to the job, staff are engaged with the current arrangements telling me they don't feel supported. They talk of a culture of presentism and the numbers say that they're encounter with occupational health leaves them more stressed, more anxious, suffering feelings of conflicting pressures. We know the physical and mental challenges our members are facing, they deserve much better occupational health support than we're getting. Support the motion, condemn the current occupational health provision, give the NEC the ammunition to gain our members the support they deserve. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, me again, fully support the motion and I'd like to go further. There is absolutely no doubt the current occupational health provision is a shambles, it's used by management as a tool to bully staff into coming back to work before they're ready and to putting staff onto landings who are not fully fit to be there and therefore failing in duty of care towards not only them but their colleagues and the prisoners in our care. An absolute shambles.

At a recent health and safety meeting in our establishment, our health and safety elite was trumpeting involvement our SMT have got, that they've to develop with Mind in order to help pushing up towards mental health awareness time. Now, their statement was that they're looking at all new ways of getting people back to work or off the sick figures. I was looked at a bit strangely when I suggested that maybe we should be working with mental health charities, with mental health professionals, in order to stop our colleagues getting broken in the first place. The word that's missing from the occupational health in this job is preventative. Stop people getting broken in the first place, look after your staff and they will not get into this, and it covers a whole raft of things *I know* to make the job less stressful, to actually care about your staff, it may be a big ask but we have to push it. It's got to be better. Even in normal businesses there's studies from Canada, from America, from Australia, that show that investment in proper occupational health, proper preventative occupational health, is a net gain for the employer because he doesn't have to pay the sick pay in the first place. Colleagues, please support this motion.

<Applause>

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

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Good morning Chair, NEC, Conference. The NEC support this motion and would just like to add one or two things to the debate that's already come through. Firstly we talk about telephone conferences, no individual has to put themselves through that and accept it, they say they want to see a medical adviser rather than having a telephone conference with any individual. HMPPS, as it is now known, absolutely sing the praises of the EAP system because they spend £6 million a year on it and they accuse *you* and your members, our members, my members, of not using the system. And the reason that people don't use the system is 'cause people don't *trust* the individuals that are there. Gerry's absolutely right, we need to have preventative measures to prevent our officers and our colleagues wherever you work, from suffering the effects of unsafe working environments. Health and safety, risk assessment, safe systems of work are paramount to your future and how *you* start to protect *your* colleagues. Nobody wants an officer to go to work and not go home, having faced horrific injuries following assault because of lack of staff. Nobody wants to see an officer having to use EAP because of the harmful effects of NPS or second-hand smoke but every day you go to work as branch officials and allow your members to *continue* to put themselves at risk. It's a reality.

The POA has put circulars out about how you deal with smoking in prisons, how long you should leave a cell door locked before unlocking it, and I ask you this: Did we get taken to court for putting that information out? Did we? No! Why? 'Cause it's their policy, it's what *they* want *you* to do but you constantly, our members, me, we're *all guilty* of doing this one thing colleagues, cutting costs, cutting corners, making things work. Neil Johnson drafted the circulars and the advice and put it into simple, plain terms, about use of force, how we deal with issues. The EAP system of spending £6 million, instead of spending £6 million on a system that *doesn't* work and should be condemned, colleagues, we should be

spending the £6 million in protecting your welfare at work by preventative measures which is about risk assessment and safe systems of work. Please support, thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote, all those in favour of this motion please show? Thank you, colleagues, that's carried. I'm gonna hand you over now to Steve Gillan who's gonna chair the National Committee for Secure Healthcare Services.

ANDY HOGG – ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY: Surprise Conference, I'm not Steve Gillan, I'm Andy Hogg, I'm the Assistant General Secretary in Scotland. Good morning Conference and welcome to the Annual General Meeting of the Special Hospitals. It's an important aspect of our annual gathering at POA Conference and I'm glad to see today in particular it's been very well attended.

You'll see from your agenda that Steve as Chair of the Committee will address Conference with opening remarks and that I, on behalf of Duncan Keys who is the Secretary to the Committee, will seek to move the Annual Report. We also have a speaker and a motion also to discharge. Duncan sends his apologies to Conference and he is unavoidably required elsewhere today, so he's not able to deliver the Annual Report and asked me to do so. So without further ado can I ask Steve to come up and address Conference with his opening remarks?

Secure Healthcare Services Annual General Meeting

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much Andy for that and it gives me great pleasure in opening the Secure Healthcare Services Annual General Meeting and the important work that that Committee have done over the past year.

I would like to pay tribute, actually, to the delegates of Rampton, Ashworth, Broadmoor and Carstairs who have done magnificent work over the past year and helped me enormously as General Secretary in chairing their meetings with their specialist knowledge. It's been obviously a very difficult year and we have touched on many subjects including pay because obviously they come under the 1% pay cap and you'll have read in the media that the RCN were balloting their members for strike action. In actual fact they weren't and I want to put the record straight on that, what they were doing was asking their members what they *thought* of the increase and the appetite from the NHS staff Side Council, of which we have observer status, is looking like there's not a lot of appetite from the healthcare unions at this minute in time to take any industrial action as a result of the Pay Review Body recommendations in respect of pay. Obviously we will keep a close eye on that and if the other unions do determine that they wish to ballot for any form of industrial action then we will join in and cooperate with that ballot to take action with other trade unions. Of course, NHS pensions is a big issue, not just in relation... We tend to talk about pensions in the civil service in relation to prison officers but we need to take note of what's happening as well in relation to NHS pensions because it's exactly the same scenario as what we have been faced with in the civil service. We've been dealing with issues on league pay, particularly at Rampton where letters before action have been sent to the employer in a potential legal challenge in relation to that; Agenda for Change, retention of staff, recruitment, all the same sort of issues that affect us in the civil service.

I need to mention though the Ashworth industrial action and the outcome of the employment tribunals. It gave me great pleasure actually standing on picket lines with Ashworth members, Ian and Gary take great credit for that in leading their branch. I sanctioned, on behalf the Executive, that strike action because of the disgraceful dismissals of Mr Hilton and Mr Gregson. We're delighted that we won that employment tribunal and that there was no appeals to the EAT by the Mersey Care Trust. I've got to say though my dealings with the Chief Executive in relation to that and senior managers in Mersey Care I haven't any respect for them in relation to the manner in which they dealt with the members of staff. They dug out issues in relation to not just Gary but Ian and other people on the Ashworth Committee and we'd run a case for Gary in relation to Trade Union discrimination at the employment tribunal as well and we won that hands down. We also had a situation where the bullying and intimidation continued in relation to seven members at Ashworth where they were facing dismissal in relation to social media comments, allegedly that were gross misconduct. I'm pleased to say that all those charges went away in relation that no cases were ever continued. So I'm pleased to say with the help of Neil Johnson, Andy Hogg, Duncan Keys, Glyn Travis and the Ashworth Committee I think we've had a major, major success in relation to taking direct action and I thank the many members - you know who you are, I'm not gonna identify you - that came out and stood on the picket lines when we took strike action. And I've got to say that day I think we had all the wintry elements to contend with. And I thank the TUC as well, the Regional Secretary from the TUC, for turning out as well. So in many respects it was very successful and I'm very proud, as General Secretary, that we've won those issues. And we've also got a motion from Ashworth, which was an emergency motion, which will be heard during this AGM.

So thank you very much, I'm glad we've got a full house because in recent years some people don't turn up to this AGM but it's a massively integral part of this Conference and what affects them will affect you and vice versa. So thank you

very much and I will now move on to that Annual Report which will be moved by Andy Hogg. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

ANDY HOGG – ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY: Thanks Steve. Conference, NEC, Andy Hogg moving the Report on behalf of the Executive. Conference, it doesn't take much for me to convey the degree of appreciation and regard in which your colleagues that operate in the special hospitals are regarded and I think the attendance today would justify that remark. The AGM remains one of the most significant features of our Conference and quite rightly so. The fact that we set aside a dedicated portion to discuss and debate issues that are most relevant to our colleagues is a testimony to the mantra that unity is indeed strength. It is not only a good thing to do but it is the right thing to do.

Across the year colleagues the POA have sought to take forward the agenda of the hospitals through various avenues but in particular through the National Staff Side of the NHS and whilst it may only be in the capacity of observer status that has not prevented the voices of our representatives from being heard where it was once upon a time silent. So throughout the year the profile of the POA have been raised in a variety of issues, notwithstanding the opportunity we now have to input into pay submissions but also to seek to influence significant agenda items such as the review for the Agenda for Change, terms and conditions.

You will have taken from the address by the Chair of the disciplinary matters that have been dealt with not only successfully but also providing an absolute vindication of the stance that was adopted by this union to defend our members working in that sector. Hopefully lessons will be learned by the employer, although listening to Steve I have doubts about that, and hopefully we'll inspire a more proactive engagement with the local union committee that has previously been the case, only time will tell though.

Conference, you will see from the papers in front of you the range of subjects covered by the Committee and this will give you a flavour of the issues that are being addressed and continue to be addressed by the Committee and its representatives; to go into detail on each and every area would take us up to the rest of this Conference. However, pensions, the Ashworth dispute, league pay, sickness levels throughout the estate, Agenda for Change, terms and conditions, recruitment and retention and not least, pay, are all issues that have been addressed and that's not to mention staff shortages and levels of violence across the estate. It all sounds incredibly familiar. No matter where we do our business it seems to be the same picture we face, it is Conference but a synopsis of the matters that's dealt with both locally and nationally on behalf of our membership in the special hospitals. And with that Chair, I ask you to move the adoption of the Annual Report.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much Andy. Conference could you indicate please if you accept the Annual Report? The Annual Report is accepted. Thank you very much.

It gives me great pleasure to invite our guest speaker, which is Danny Angus, the MVA lead from Mersey Care NHS Trust. Danny Angus is a senior clinical nurse overseeing the positive intervention programme at Ashworth Hospital High Secure Services and the Trust Personal Safety Services Training Department. He has a number of years' experience working with high-dependency patients in Ashworth Hospital, both as a nurse but for the last ten years working to reduce seclusion/long-term segregation and developing expertise to positively manage violence and aggression. Specialising in the proactive management of complex patients with a diverse range of mental health needs, whose risk is considered so high that they are detained under long-term segregation. He has developed a range of recovery-based approaches to meet the psychosocial and physical health needs of this patient group in a therapeutic manner and collaboratively developed a clinical model of care to reduce long-term segregation, which had been adapted for the high secure prison estate. He is responsible for training and supporting staff in reducing restrictive practices and is a strong advocate for compassionate care.

Conference, please give Danny Angus a warm welcome. He will do a presentation with his speech as well. Thank you Danny.

Danny Angus, Management of Violence & Aggression Lead, Merseycare NHS Trust addresses Annual Conference

DANNY ANGUS - MANAGEMENT OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION LEAD, MERSEY CARE NHS TRUST: First of all, I'd like to thank you for inviting me to speak at your National Conference about our experience of improving staff safety by reducing restrictive practice. We have a range of reducing restrictive practice initiatives at Mersey Care, and today I'm gonna focus on our overarching philosophy, No Force First. The key component consists of active listening and collaboration, true coproduction and peer support, through using advanced statements. So our staff have a greater understanding of the functions behind our patients' behaviour to enable them to provide the patients with the appropriate support to prevent that behaviour escalating, by developing a flexible safety culture where everyone is responsible for the safety of the environment and reducing conflict. Showing compassion and understanding, as many of our patients have

encountered severe trauma in their lives and their behaviour is seen in the context of past events. It's also equally important to acknowledge the impact of trauma on staff.

We are nursing some of the most complex, challenging and stigmatised people in the country and as an organisation we have recognised that staff at times can become fatigued and if we don't support them in a proactive manner, then this can lead to burnout. This is a piece of work that I am currently collaborating on with POA representation from Ashworth Hospital and our Health and Wellbeing Department. We also train our staff to be patient and use careful interaction that's respectful and compassionate even during challenging periods. And the use of positive recover-focused communication, 'cause as you know, how we talk about our service users strongly indicates how we value them.

I'm going to show you a short video which captures both the patients' and staff experience across Mersey Care of delivering this approach.

<Video plays>

Patient: Fifteen years old, went into gaol and started self-harming while I was in gaol. I had self-harmed before when I was younger but I did it in places where it wasn't seen by people. I've been restrained quite a few times, physically restrained, in gaol. The restraint's actually a lot different in gaol than it is in hospital. Well, nobody likes being restrained. It should always be done as a last resort, because it's not nice being on the receiving end and I don't imagine it's actually nice to be the person that's actually restraining someone.

Danny Angus on video: No Fuss First is Mersey Care's restraint reduction programme that also has the ultimate aspiration of eliminating the use of physical and medication-led restraint on our inpatient unit.

Patient: All those years ago it was a mixture of different sort of restraints, so medical, so medication (a lot of, an awful lot of) and physical restraint, which was dreadful, and in the past I've been restrained when I've managed to get out the door, been restrained by two big men, staff. This is a long time ago. And when I gone ...they got me back in, I was still running but I wasn't going anywhere because I was restrained with my thumbs up my back and feet were still running but they weren't on the floor so I was going nowhere. And when people are restrained in that way it really creates trauma for people that have been abused or been abused in any way. So your legs are parted, and then you have people on your back ... and at that time all I could see is their big hands holding my tiny hands down and I'm scared.

Speaker: When I took over at the patient unit there was high levels of staff going off work with work-related stress as well as injuries from restraints, and they've significantly reduced.

Speaker: When you do restrain a patient this situation actually escalates and there's more chance you'll get hurt than if you give them space and have a flexible approach.

Speaker: It's the right thing to do, it's the safest thing to do and have the organisation that supports that, so I encourage people to be open-minded, to learn from their experienced colleagues and to see this is the best way to provide care.

Patient: No Force First does exactly that. Makes a difference for people like me and many, many others.

<End of video>

So in terms of implementation of this approach, we initially coproduced and co-delivered staff engagement events which provided staff with a greater understanding of the impact of physical restraint on the service user. Staff felt this form of emotional engagement provided them with a greater understanding of the potential negative impact of physical restraint, and helpful strategies to prevent incidents escalating and support. Through analysing incident data, our wards were able to identify themes in relation to conflict and incidents, and develop simple initiatives to reduce conflict and aggression through quality improvement methodology, plan do study act cycles. An example of this was when a ward manager on a high dependency personality disorder ward, through analysing his incident data, what he identified was that the majority of incidents of aggression and hostility that could lead to physical restraint, were due to a lack of meaningful activities on his ward. The patient population he had at the time were high profile and high risk, so could not mix in off-ward rehabilitation areas. So therefore what he did was he changed the function of two rooms on his ward and made them into activity rooms, and through analysing incident data at month periods he's seen real reductions in conflict and aggression. So the result of these simple initiatives ... that had a positive impact on reducing aggression and hostility on the ward were then shared across teams to facilitate learning.

So in terms of its impact and outcomes of this approach, since full rollout in April of 2016 we have seen a 22% reduction in restraint across the organisation and a 6.4% reduction across all aggressive incidents. Positively, we have also seen a reduction of 42% in assaults on staff and a 46% reduction in percentage of assaults causing harm to staff. However, we

acknowledge that one assault is too many.

These findings are matched in work-related sickness in the secure division, with the days lost due to work-related sickness last year reduced by approximately 1800 days, again which equates to around £250,000 and our staff have been commended for this.

Other benefits include a more positive experience for patients and positive feedback from staff on a new, improved personal safety service training which focusses less on physical restraint techniques and more on the requirements to prevent conflict in the first instance. We have developed a standardised training manual across the four high secure hospitals in the UK, which is the only one of its kind to be endorsed by NICE guidance, which we are all extremely proud of. We have also written a guide to reducing restrictive practice so that this approach is consistent across wards and services and is sustainable in the future. And because of these achievements we have been shortlisted for two national Patient Safety Awards this year.

So in terms of next steps, we have created a No Force First organisation and are collaborating with a range of organisations to spread this approach further. We are working with patients, prisoners and staff to improve on these approaches. We are developing strong relationships with our POA representation at Ashworth Hospital and our guide will continue to give staff the tools necessary to improve and sustain this progress.

We are also working with Liverpool University to evaluate which bits of the package are most effective and lead to positive outcomes in terms of staff safety. And we have also developed the HOPE(S) Clinical Model of Care to reduce long-term segregation, which has now been embedded across the three high secure hospitals in England. We received positive feedback in terms of reductions in long-term segregation, reduced incidents of violence and restraint, and a reduction in staff burnout.

We've also adapted the model with colleagues on the high secure prison estate to reduce long-term segregation and conflict in their segregation and CSE units. We trained staff from the eight high secure prisons in England and the high secure prison estate have identified three pilot segregation units for this approach, which are HMP Wakefield, HMP Long Lartin and HMP Belmarsh. The initial feedback has been extremely positive and this wave has led to us being jointly shortlisted this year for a National Health Service Journal Patient Safety Award in the Changing Culture category.

Thank you.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY, NEC: Danny, thank you very much for that presentation into the No Force First implementation scheme in Mersey Care that's been rolled out and piloted elsewhere. Our union will take, I suppose, a cautious welcome to what you have just identified; if it helps to reduce assaults patient on patient on Mersey Care then that can only be a good thing, and if it reduces, I note that you're doing work in the high security prisons in the segregation units for the prisoners there, and if it works to reduce violence, not just prisoner on prisoner but prisoner against our members, then we will welcome it, but we will give it a cautious welcome until we interrogate the figures in relation to this, because I think many of our members at particularly Ashworth are still scarred by the treatment of messrs Hilton and Gregson, who had done nothing wrong in a restraint of a patient, a violent patient, and they were treated appallingly by the employer, and we identified that earlier, and we won hands down on the unfair dismissal at employment tribunal, so we would want, whilst you have a scheme of No Force First, we would also want, as zero tolerance to assaults on our members as well. And again, we do welcome, Danny, anything that reduces violence in the special hospitals and our prisons, but we will integrate those figures to make sure that they're actually factual so as we can then take confidence from that. If there is no confidence then of course we would come back and say that in actual fact it's not working and we would want a proper debate and action taken to protect our members against violence and violent incidence. But thank you very much for coming to our Conference. You're more than welcome to stay and listen to the motion that's going to be done, but before that I would like to present you with a box on behalf of the Union. No one goes away empty-handed, so thank you very much Danny, and I'm sure Conference, you'll give Danny a warm welcome for his presentation.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: So Conference we have one motion which was emergency motion 1 which is now placed at motion 96(a) which is Ashworth. Do we have a seconder? Thank you, Broadmoor.

MOTION 96a

Following, the breakdown of industrial relations at Merseycare NHS Foundation Trust between the local POA and Management, a number of internal investigations occurred which resulted in claims being pursued through ACAS and Employment Tribunals. The outcome of the recent tribunals exonerated those members. Therefore, Conference directs the NEC to lobby for an independent enquiry into the circumstances surrounding these issues and waste of tax payer's money estimated to approximately £250,000.

ASHWORTH

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR, ASHWORTH: Chairman, NEC, Conference, just to explain this is in as an emergency motion because we had to wait until after the remedy hearings for Hilton and Gregson and for myself. <Pause> Following the breakdown of industrial relations at Mersey Care Foundation NHS Trust between the local POA and management a number of internal investigations occurred which resulted in claims being pursued through ACAS and employment tribunals. The outcome of recent tribunals exonerated those members. Therefore Conference directs the NEC to lobby for an independent enquiry into the circumstances surrounding these issues and the waste of tax payers' money, yours and my money, which is estimated to be approximately £250,000.

We've had two tribunals involving three people, one of them was appealed, which increased the costs. We know what our costs were and as I say we estimate that the employer, including what they've had to spend out in the remedy hearings in compensation, has spent round about a quarter of a million pounds. Now they've had only tribunals with other unions and other unions have won things, so Mersey Care's bill is lumped into the millions and that's one Trust. It's one employer. We need to have answers. The only way we're gonna change anything, the only way we're gonna change this culture, Danny painted a glowing picture of it, I see a different picture, I see a different picture every single day. I've spent two years under the spotlight, I spent two years, I didn't expect to be addressing Conference, I thought I'd be out of a job. And I honestly, honestly believed that it was over and all it was was my branch passed two motions... My branch passed two motions and that was it, they wanted a vote of no confidence in the management and they wanted us to ballot for industrial action and all of a sudden I was a target. That's not a problem in some respects because you're just doing when you're up there, you're doing what you're elected to do, and if you don't have a strong committee you're not gonna get anywhere Me and Jeremy, you can't get a cigarette paper between us two, you speak to one you're speaking to the other. And without that I wouldn't be here; without the support of all of my committee, which are sat at the back, I wouldn't be here.

Hilton and Gregson. The union went out on a limb, it was a good case and we won it, it was the right thing to do but tribunals are a lottery, *tribunals are a lottery*. My case for attacking my trade union activity, it was a lottery, it really, really was. We had brilliant legal counsel, Nadia Motraghi from Old Square Chambers, Adam Samuel from Old Square Chambers, we spent a lot of money on defending us because it was *right*. But Conference the NHS, our employer, spent an awful lot of money that needn't have been spent, Steve was speaking to them all the way through, and do you know what, they weren't listening. They're still not listening. We're supposed to have gone to ACAS and Joe Rafferty, our Chief Executive, has no real interest, they haven't spoken to me in two years. They don't speak to the Committee, we get messages passed down via other people, they don't speak to us. We don't have industrial relations at Mersey Care, they'd rather speak to Steve Gillan who then has to relay it to me than actually speak to our local committee but that's going a little bit off the motion.

We need you to vote for this motion so we can actually lobby parliament to try and get an enquiry into why we're wasting this money, a quarter of a million pounds is eight nurses for a year, eight nurses for a year, eight staff, eight staff we desperately need. So I ask Conference to support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Ashworth, Glyn Travis to respond on behalf of the Executive.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Morning Conference, again. It saddens me really that this union has to debate such a shambolic approach by an employer towards trade union members, towards workers and towards individuals who were doing probably the most difficult and challenging job anywhere. The individual who led to Hilton and Gregson both losing their jobs, that led to the General Secretary going to the Nation Executive Committee and seeking their approval to ballot the members at Ashworth to take the ultimate, to go on strike, which they did for a day to support their colleagues, that led to the tireless work of Neil Johnson in preparing all that work and that groundwork, Gary has said that the cost is £250,000. The cost is *immeasurable* because the cost to the families of Peter, Kevin, how they coped for those months and months and months is immeasurable. The fact that the trust spent around about £250,000 of tax payers' money to undermine individuals because they felt it was right and proper to do that is disgraceful, an absolute disgrace. The fact that the union spent around £60,000 defending the members was justified and we'd spend it *every day*

as we do, when necessary, to support members, but we shouldn't need to. And so we *need* an enquiry because: 1) What about the individuals who knew that the strike was about the way that the Trust had dealt with the individuals; about the fact that the Trust were using a private Facebook page to attack members, to try and sack seven people for having a comment on a private Facebook page. Suspended, all facing dismissal and only for the work of Steve Gillan, your General Secretary, and the Committee at Ashworth, without their support I genuinely believe that Gary wouldn't have been here 'cause he would be sacked, along with other members at Ashworth that *would* have been sacked, and that Peter and Kevin's cases would have been lost in the abyss of an employment tribunal piece of paper.

So colleagues I urge you to support this and ask you to show your support to the General Secretary for the work that he did. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference all those in favour of the motion please show? Those against? Carried unanimously, thank you Conference. On now do the closing remarks of the AGM.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, as I said in my opening address Ashworth has probably taken up more time of the National Executive Committee and the legal issues but we shouldn't forget the issues at Rampton, Broadmoor and Carstairs because it's equally as important that we carry on the business of the union in respect of those branches. And I'm very proud to be Chair of the Special Hospitals and I'm grateful for the team that assists me in relation to it from the support staff to the National Executive Committee, to our lawyers and indeed the delegates of those branches because they make my job, in actual fact, very easy. Without them I wouldn't be able to operate and be Chair of that Committee because they look after me and now this union in their time of need to Ashworth, we've certainly looked after them. And when you get someone like Mr Hilton and Mr Gregson, with the stress that they must have been going through, and to see their colleagues taking strike action on behalf of them and to be there on that picket line throughout the day watching even retired members turn up to support them, showed me that there's true solidarity in this trade union. And I've got to say those individuals were eternally grateful, Mr Hilton and Mr Gregson, to clear their name. They also cleared their name at the Nursing Midwifery Council as well because that was also important that they weren't found guilty of anything there and I've got nothing but admiration for them and I was delighted that our Executive and legal team supported them throughout that period. It's not about me as General Secretary, I was proud to lead the strike, but the reality is this was a massive team effort from everybody in our trade union from NEC to full-time officers, to the legal team, to All Square Chambers, the membership at Ashworth and we even had people come down from Scotland, from Carstairs, to support them on that picket line. So that indicated to me there was true solidarity there and when Mr Hilton and Mr Gregson at the end of the process said that there was only one trade union to belong to at Ashworth and that was the POA, then that made me even prouder, Conference.

So I now close the Annual General Meeting. I hope you've found it informative because their problem is our problem and vice versa as well, so thank you very much Conference and I now close the Annual General Meeting. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you General Secretary.

<Applause>

Conference, I'm now gonna invite Chris Swindon up, he's the fundraising manager for Francis House Children's Hospice in Manchester, he's got a short video presentation and then I'll say a few words after it, so if Chris could approach the stand? And when we're ready we can run the video.

video starts playing

Address by Chris Swindon, Fundraising manager, Francis House Children's Hospice:

CHRIS SWINDON – FUNDRAISING MANAGER, FRANCIS HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOSPICE: Thank you for letting me speak to you all today, good morning Conference, Chair and NEC.

Francis House as you've seen provides care and support for families from all over the Northwest who have children, sometimes just one child, with life limiting or life shortening conditions. Thanks to the support of organisations such as the Prison Officers Association we've been able to care for our families for over 25 years. Since I last addressed Conference our care has actually expanded to support even more families. At present we're supporting over 460 children, teenagers and young adults with short life expectancy or life limiting conditions, 264 families will use the hospice for respite care, 179 families are receiving some form of bereavement care or emotional support and around 1,200 sick children and family members are in our care at one time. Now without our vital support these families can struggle, looking after children can sometimes be a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week job and it is a job for them, some of them have to give

up their careers because they have to look after their children constantly due to the conditions which they have. As a result of that some of these parents have obviously succumbed to ill-health and unfortunately, on some occasions, death. This is mainly down to pure stress of not having the support around them constantly, but the support of the POA has ensured that more families around the Northwest will receive our support and care.

Now most recently we've actually been going through a special transition at Francis House, we opened the doors of Francis Lodge, which is all on the same site, but this provides age appropriate care for teenagers and young adults. Many of you, I'm sure, have children here and of course when they reach their teenage years they start to get a little bit more independent and demand their own schedule. Well, they're no different from our children at Francis House whereas once they get past the threshold of being children they like to take control and they get to go to bed when they want, get up when they want, play PlayStation at four o'clock in the morning and the care team are happy to sit there and make sure that they enjoy every moment of time that they're with us. The Lodge was actually opened last year specially by HRH Duchess and Duke of Cambridge, which was a very special moment as Princess Diana opened the hospice itself 25 years' prior.

While our expansion has made a real difference to the lives of families our developments have come at a cost. That video is a couple of years' old now and unfortunately many of the children who featured in it are no longer with us. As well as that unfortunate fact we have to face the reality that our running costs have exponentially gone up from £3.6 million, I believe it said on the video, it's now £4.2 in our last audited accounts. However, all of our major requirements that we're looking towards funding is for more nursing care and more care staff to make sure that all of our families are constantly cared for as best we can. Now with the support of Prison Officers Association this, I'm sure, will continue. We give our care free of charge and without your support we wouldn't be able to do that, so thank you all once again for inviting me to Conference to speak to you all and I wish you a very pleasant and successful Conference. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Chris, I'm sure you'll all agree it's very commendable the work that hospices do. I don't know personally how people work there 'cause I'd just be walking round all day in tears, it breaks my heart. You do a fantastic job and last year at Conference we raised £5,000 in aid of these hospices, there are raffle tickets going on sale today, there will be a book of collection at the end of play today, please give generously. I think personally we can smash £5,000, smash it into bits, let's raise some money for a worthy cause. And I'm pleased to announce that in a proud tradition of the POA the Finance Committee have approved a donation of £500 to Francis House and £500 to Derian House which is in Liverpool, so thank you Conference and please give generously.

<Applause>

Conference, we'll continue with business, I call Hewell Closed for motion 35, do we have a seconder for Hewell. Thank you.

MOTION 35

That the NEC negotiate with NOMS with regards to the abolition of the Prison Officer Grade fitness test.
HEWELL CLOSED

JON SWIFT - HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 35 reads that the NEC negotiate with NOMS with regards to the abolition of the Prison Officer Grade Fitness Test. The submission of this motion was a culmination of many similar requests on the same theme from across our branch membership over a period of years, all for a variety of reasons and have gathered support and momentum in our branch as fears have been raised before are now being realised. Some of the issues with the fitness test at the moment is the equipment is becoming obsolete and they've been withdrawn from the test, it's considered a tool for dismissing staff, it creates unnecessary stress and it's caused ill-health. There isn't a reduction in the test based on age and for a 68-year-old the fitness test presents a significant and unrealistic challenge. The fitness test is outdated and no longer fit for purpose. It was designed originally for staff up to and including the age of 60. Since then terms and conditions have changed for many staff without any alteration for staff to reflect the changes into their retirement age and there is no longer a realistic tool to assess someone's capability to perform the job.

The current fitness test expects a Prisoner Officer Grade to run a bleep test in slalom of round cones. If you run to alarm in your establishment and it is caught on camera, you state so in your evidence, someone else states in their evidence you slip, fall or bang into something and receive an injury, the indicators are the Treasury Solicitors will not pay out any compensation as you are directed to get to the incident in as fast a method as you can but without running. This is especially poignant considering that today's modern prison day issue non-slip footwear have proven themselves treacherous in wet conditions. At Hewell the fitness tests have stopped using the push-pull test due to the fact the

machine requires new parts which are now obsolete, what does that say to credibility of the test and NOMS attitude towards it? You could argue we should be asking for a fitness test that is fit for purpose and ready to suit people over 60. How about instead introducing a staff fitness programme with a test that reflects the experience for operational staff to move around the establishment in PPE and with shields, navigate the stairways and establishment doorways, routes to navigation for relocation purpose, one that is safe to use and has purpose, not one that is designed for you to pass wearing training issue shorts and a vest top T-shirt on a nice, level, even gym floor with rests in between while you wait for others to complete their parts of the test.

On the flip side I can tell Conference the fitness test is also proving itself to be a retention issue with many able-bodies prison officers hitting that point in life where they contemplate their own fitness and futures based on the fact they're not 21 anymore and are finding themselves unable to run around as they once used to. Having had conversations with many of the over-40 prison officers who have chosen to leave Hewell in the last 40 months, the fact that they worry about their future fitness abilities and with the current Victorian workhouse human resource ethos, there are genuine concerns about being victimised and on the scrap heap as they grow older. This was highlighted earlier this year by one of our branch members who suffered a heart attack taking the fitness test. Let's get real, let's have a test designed for prison officers, suitable for prison officers and designed by prison officers. Abolish the current test.

<Applause>

ROB SMALLWOOD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HOLLESLEY BAY: Hollesley Bay has long campaigned and sought for changes of the challenge to the fitness test. In 2012 we spoke in support of Rochester's motion asking for it to be replaced with health screening and two years' ago we brought a motion to Conference, which was adopted by Conference, to challenge the fitness test on legality and ethics. I think we might have been better informed if we'd received the report back, motion 133, find out where the NEC is now with that, but this motion cuts to the chase, let's get it abolished. I'm not saying that we shouldn't screen people when they're coming into the job for their fitness and strength and ability but as you get older and older it becomes harder and harder. The people who have the experience have the skills to de-escalate situations without the need to be athletic or anything else. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, you have got it absolutely spot on and the message from this Conference to the employer is that the fitness test is *absolute pants* because when you look at it, I've walked round establishments and they've turned around and told us that the fitness test was based on the role of a prison officer. I can't remember any prison officer walking round the establishment with a shield, not once, so why do we have to hold it up for 10 minutes? Everybody in this room knows that when you go into a situation with a shield you'll be lucky if you've got it in your hands for two minutes when you go in. And then they turned around and said about the bleep test, we need to assess the fitness so they can answer alarm bells. So what do we do, run 15 metres, bleep and then run back? That's not what we do, that's not what we're about. We're a professional service and it's about time that the employer put in place something that screens the health and wellbeing of our members, not use an archaic piece of policy which they've stuck by in order to dismiss our members, that's *all* it's become, a sacking charter. Conference, please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll go to the vote, all those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? That's carried, thank you. Leyhill, your motion now falls 'cause we've just carried that one. We'll move onto motion 37, which is Stoke Heath.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Permission to withdraw, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have permission to withdraw motion 37, all those show? Thank you, that's withdrawn. Call Holme House, motion 38.

MOTION 37

Conference notes that the Hepatitis C vaccine is not being given regularly to all POELTs during their training period. Conference should insist that NOMS under Health & Safety, vaccinate all POELTs as a mandatory requirement during initial training period.

STOKE HEATH

MOTION 38

Conference mandate the NEC to instruct Thompsons legal to take legal action on behalf of the POA against NOMS for continuing to fail to protect POA members health and safety from the harmful effects of second hand smoke since 2007 as evidenced in the air quality reports and the medical report of Professor John Britton.

HOLME HOUSE

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Permission to withdraw, Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have permission to withdraw motion 38, please show? Thank you, that's withdrawn. Now call The Verne, motion 39. Do we have a seconder for The Verne? Thank you.

MOTION 39

To include all IRC's alongside prison's in the NEC's Policy of working in smoke free workplaces.

THE VERNE

GARY LAST – BRANCH CHAIR, IRC, THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 39 reads: To include all IRC's alongside prisons in the NEC's policy of working in smoke free workplaces. There is no need for big, long speeches, our colleagues that have already detailed the major issues with NPS and Spice under motions 32 and 38; quite simply put our lungs are the same as your lungs, our staff require clean air. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton for the NEC.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, speaking on motion 39 on behalf of the NEC. Fully support this motion, happy to take this forward on behalf of Conference and The Verne. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote, all those in favour of this motion please show? Any against? Thank you, that's carried. Durham, motion 40. Seconder for Durham, please? Send.

MOTION 40

We mandate the NEC that due to the ineffectiveness of NOMS to introduce a full smoking ban across the Estate an allowance is paid to all staff for having to put up with secondary smoke.

DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Conference, the motion reads: We mandate the NEC that due to the ineffectiveness of NOMS to introduce a full smoking ban across the Estate an allowance is paid to all staff for having to put up with secondary smoke. This motion came from an ex-shipyard worker. When they built ships in the Northeast, yes, they did tell the industry we're savaged by cheap, subsidised ships from the East. When someone welded inside a ship, due to the conditions, all the workers in the vicinity got an allowance. The smoking policy is poor to say the least, smoke comes out from the cells around the doors and even when you leave the cell door closed for 30 minutes you can still smell and taste the smoke when the prisoner comes out of his cell. We at Durham were at the forefront of banning smoking, everything was set up, only for us to be told the day prior by the Prison Board, 'You can't do it.' Now we're going to be the last area. It's our health and safety that's being put at risk. Mr Spurr said he felt for us, reference, closed grade prison officers only having 0.5% pay rise in six years. Well, you're not feeling for us enough, never mind just 0.5% pay rise with the effects of secondary smoke, some of us are not going to see much of our pensions. And while I'm on, has anything been done about the e-cigarettes or is it gonna be the same as diesel cars, too little, too late? Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Mandated to speak against the motion. Whilst we fully understand why we're asking for this our health and safety and our health is not for sale and if we're asking for an allowance to put up with second-hand smoke then we're selling our health. We shouldn't be tolerating this, we should be demanding the absolute gold standard and that is smoke-free zones, smoke-free prisons, our lungs are not for sale. Please go against this motion.

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, whilst the motion does say allowance and being back-dated, it might be worth considering whether this goes through or not but for those of us that have to work in gaols that are still smoking –

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Apologies.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Can I take the point of order, please.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: (inaudible)

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: He acknowledges that. Stewart, would you like to say anything else?

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: No

<Laughter>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: You might as well finish off Stewart!

<Laughter>

We await with baited breath.

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, Conference, indulge my absent memory at the moment. What I would say that when it comes to allowances, I'd say consider an allowance of giving staff who are working in gaols with where there is no smoking ban an allowance of 10 free days sick if we should be ill in these environments. Every allowance doesn't *have* to be financial, it can be paid in other ways. Just a consideration.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair, Conference, Terry Fullerton speaking to motion 40 on behalf of the NEC, asking Conference to reject the motion. But in doing so we can understand the sentiment behind what Craig's had to say on behalf of the Durham branch but if we endorse this motion, Conference, we're endorsing the fact that we want to put you into a place of danger by sending you into places where there's a smoky environment. We've been asking branches for some time to abide by NOMS own PSI 9 of 2007, which is not to go into that environment if you think somebody's been smoking. We've been saying that for some time. If we were to accept this motion and we were successful in getting that allowance that would give NOMS the remit to say, 'Actually, we're paying you to do that, go onto that landing.' So for those reasons Conference, we're asking you to reject this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Would Durham like to come back?

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I hear what everybody's got to say. As the Wandsworth Chairman quite rightly said, it doesn't say anything about being anything monetary or something, it could be anything, it could be five days' extra leave, because what we've got to put up with, the smoke. I hear what Terry's got to say, it's from the branch, it's for Conference to decide.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we'll go to the vote, all those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That motion falls. Durham, motion 41, do we have a seconder?

MOTION 41

We mandate the NEC that due to the ineffectiveness of NOMS to introduce a full smoking ban across the Estate an allowance is backdated to 2007 when the initial ban should have come in.

DURHAM

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Permission to withdraw.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have permission to withdraw this motion? Thank you, that's withdrawn. I call Pentonville, motion 42. Do we have a seconder for Pentonville? Thank you.

MOTION 42

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate a change to the PPE issued to staff. Stab or slash resistant vests should be made available to staff who wish to wear them.

PENTONVILLE

DAVE BARTON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP PENTONVILLE: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion has come from my branch, specifically after our unfortunate events of last year; I know there was a similar motion last year that was struck down. However, the Conference instructs NEC to negotiate a change to the PPE issued to staff, stab or slash resistant vests should be made available to staff who wish to wear them. Now I can remember last year's debate and it fell 'cause there was a lot of people said there's no place for slash or stab resistant vests, we're the Prison Service, we're not the police. Things have changed. These landings are very, very violent places, the stats on violence go up year-on-year. I'm glad this has been put under a health and safety issue 'cause it is a health and safety issue, it's a simple bit of kit that can be given to staff who wish to wear them. Now I get the argument that if we bring them in everyone will have to wear them but do we wanna come back to Conference next year or the year after and, heaven forbid, we've had a member of staff that has met the worst? So I please ask you to support this motion.

<Applause>

JIM SHAW – BRANCH CHAIR, WANDSWORTH: Conference, NEC, Chair, we had a branch meeting on this issue, we're mandated to pursue the issue of stab-proof vests, like the idea of it's a matter of choice. One of the things that was noted by one of our union committee members was that the local park keeper had a stab-proof vest and I don't know why he thinks he needs 'em but if he needs 'em, I'm sure we do, so support the motion, thank you.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, STABSIDE: Conference, I think it's already a mandate of this union because this has come up before about PPE and about stab vests and all this sort of stuff and police have been used as examples and everything else. The one issue we have with this and that is the wording of this motion, *staff to use it if they want to*. The danger point of this is if a member of staff chooses not to wear a piece of PPE that is provided by the employer and is subsequently stabbed or loses their life, then they lose nearly all the support and protection that this union can bring to help them and this is the problem we have with this motion. I believe it's already a mandate of this union and if it is, please, you have to go against this motion purely on that wording. We cannot have staff choosing whether they wear PPE or not, if PPE is provided it is the law that they must wear it. Thank you.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chairman, Conference, NEC, echoing what my colleague's just said. Excellent sentiment behind the motion, unfortunately the wording. PPE is non-negotiable, if it's available you wear it or you'll lose your cover. Please, you unfortunately have to, on that wording, reject the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: My brother's a police officer, he's a police sergeant up in Hull. Me and him talk regular about his job, my job, our job. When he goes out on patrol he is dressed up like Robocop on speed with all the kit that he gets issued. We get nothing apart from a bullet-proof shirt and a baton. You draw your baton you get suspended. Proof, it happened.

We had a couple of three days constant shut down a couple of months back where we literally raked the prison. We turned everything up-side-down, if it had a lid on it, it came off; if anything could be hid in it, it was opened. You should have seen some of the weaponry that we found. Some of it was medieval. There are more and more incidences within our establishments through bladed weapons and other such implements, and some of the injuries that some of the staff up and down the country throughout the Estate have received over the last few years are horrendous, and the injuries that our charges end up receiving which then results in staffing issues, because we've got to take them up to hospital. We have then got to find bed watch staff and we are also in a vulnerable place because we're in a hospital, late at night, in a very busy area with no one to support us apart from your colleague. Support this motion.

<Applause>

LAURA READER – BRANCH CHAIR, FELTHAM: We support this motion for the following reasons. One officer at Feltham was kicked in the stomach causing her internal bleeding, facing the prospects of not being able to have children. Five years' later she's now pregnant but facing a high risk pregnancy due to that injury. Just two weeks' ago another female officer was kicked in the stomach causing a ruptured uterus and fluid on her spine. If both these females had been offered these vests there would have been some resistance to the impact of that kick and they may not be facing the possibility of the injuries that they've endured, so we support this motion and we ask you to support it.

<Applause>

TERRY McCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues, speaking in support of the motion. How could we not support a motion that enhances the safety of our staff in the workplace? I've listened to what Swaleside and Full Sutton have to say, I can agree where they're coming from but please support this motion, our health and safety's at risk.

<Applause>

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Chair, NEC, Conference, we have to support this motion, if this kit is available or is made available to us, who's gonna choose not to wear it, we have to wear it. Levels of violence have increased, you have to support this motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

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

JACKIE MARSHALL: Chair, Conference, Jackie Marshall speaking on behalf of the NEC against the motion. Conference, whilst we understand the sentiments of this motion, Cookie and Gerry are bang on, PPE cannot be an option. If it's provided then it must be mandatory and it must be worn. Since my time on the NEC this has been Conference policy anyway and through the Security & Custody Whitley, we've been fighting to get it. It's also now on the 128 point health and safety that they got following the action on the 15th November. HMPPS have given evidence but statistics say we don't need them but we think differently. Let us continue to negotiate for something that is already Conference policy but please reject this motion and make the wearing of PPE mandatory if it's issued. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Pentonville to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That motion is lost. Conference, it's time for a break, back at quarter past eleven. Could I ask Styal to approach me during the break please? Thank you.

<Conference break>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. Conference, I'm now going to introduce Yvonne Pattison, the NAPO National Co-Chair. Having worked with Yvonne in meetings with HMPPS it's blatantly obvious when she's in the room because she doesn't agree with anything they say and backs the POA up at every opportunity. I'm now going to introduce her from a sheet of paper that she's given me and she's prepared. I don't know if they're lies or not but we'll give it a go, Yvonne.

Yvonne joined the probation service in 2002 following her previous career in mental health, which explains a lot to be honest. Hence some 30 years of working with challenging behaviours. During her time with probation she has worked in a variety of roles and specialisms, including court and reports, victims, programmes and offender management as well as fulfilling a training role. In particular she was worked with high-risk men in the areas of domestic abuse and sexual offending. In TU she has held a number of roles at branch level including Union Learning Rep, NEC Rep, Secretary and Branch Chair. Nationally she was elected as Vice Chair in 2013, then Co-Chair in 2014 and again in 2016. Over the past year she has worked alongside Mike Rolfe to improve relations between NAPO and the POA, as they both could see a benefit to a closer working relationship between the two primary justice unions. And we do have good relationships with NAPO and it gives me great pleasure to introduce to Conference Yvonne Pattison, NAPO National Co-Chair.

Address by Yvonne Pattison National Co-Chair NAPO

YVONNE PATTISON – NAPO NATIONAL CO-CHAIR: Thank you. Good morning Conference and thanks for that introduction Mark. I am one of NAPO's Co-Chairs, there is two of us and my colleague, Chris Winters, is sat at the back of the hall, but apparently I'm the mouthpiece and she's the brains, so there we go.

I'd like to thank the former Chair, Mike Rolfe, for asking me to speak and the NEC for confirming that that was OK. I realise you were expecting Michael Spurr and I was going to apologise for not being him, but on reflection I'm actually quite pleased I'm not as I fear he may be even less popular than what I am, so ... when I spoke to Mark yesterday he

said, 'Oh Yvonne, you can talk for as long as you like.' The lad's got a bit to learn! He's not doing a bad job of chairing but he's got a bit to learn saying to me, 'You can talk for as long as you like.' So I'll apologise in advance.

OK, so it's a real privilege for me to be here to speak to you and return some of the great input to my own Conference that both your General Secretaries and Chairs have given NAPO's Conferences over a large number of years. Speaking of General Secretaries, my own General Secretary, Ian Lawrence, was unable to attend, which is why you've got me, and he wishes to send his apologies for not being here in person but wants to extend fraternal greetings and his best wishes for a successful Conference. And he also looks forward to continuing a closer working relationship between NAPO and the POA, given the many challenges ahead for all of us.

So I thought I'd start my address by quoting the late Jo Cox MP when she said, 'We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.' It's a quote that's been used many times since her tragic death, yet I thought it was fitting to use it as it reflects the position that our two unions find ourselves in.

At this point I'd like to point out that there are no plans for NAPO and the POA to join forces in the proper sense. Our respective identities are really important to us both, but where there was once a clear dividing line between the two services, we now find ourselves with many more areas of common ground, as the powers that be have kept introducing changes which have enforced a cross-over with our respective roles. What I mean by this is the role of the prison officer and that of the probation officer has become blurred with many roles once sitting in one field or the other now being transferred. More of that later.

Your members have long since faced the challenges of the privatisation agenda with some prisons contracted out for a significant time and more recently specific areas of work within the prison estate following this route. The privatisation agenda to the probation service came much later with the transforming rehabilitation agenda seeing a significant proportion of the service sold off in 2014 to private profiteers with a payment by results contract. Examples of these companies are SODEXO and Interserve who were awarded the vast majority of contract package areas. Has this led to a better level of service as was suggested? Well, does it ever? When you make a public service about money, no it doesn't. Unsurprisingly, a number of recent HMI probation reports have raised huge concerns around the quality of service and supervision, with some service users having no structured work completed or worse still not being seen at all. As you can imagine, this has a worrying impact on public safety as it is not uncommon for individuals' whereabouts not to be known or little or no evidence to active risk management to identify potential concerns. NAPO have continued to highlight our on-going concerns with both the employers and more recently with Sam Gyimah MP, the Prisons and Probation Minister. No doubt we'll be taking our concerns to yet another minister post-election.

I'd like to touch on safety now and I know that safety within the prison estate has long been a concern for POA members. Whilst probation staff working in the prisons are much fewer in numbers, our members do play a vital role within the establishment and thus are also at risk from assault and other associated issues. We feel that one of the most important factors when considering safety for all in the prisons is to ensure that our prisons have adequate staffing levels by an appropriately trained and experienced workforce. Clearly there is a long way to reach this desired outcome but NAPO are fully supportive of the POA's campaign to achieve this. I have a message for Liz Truss, Secretary of State for Justice, and Sam Gyimah, MP: your sticking-plaster resolution to solve the staffing crisis within the prison is not good enough, and I hope whoever takes the reigns post-election will take the time to speak to people on the ground level and their respective unions to develop a more effective, sustainable resolution so that our staff and the people they look after live and work in a safe environment. Let's watch this space. I'm not gonna be holding my breath.

Unless there's a dramatic change, our staff cannot be successful when attempting to work with, identify problems and offer skills to enable people to make positive change. It's not asking a lot, is it, to have the space and time to be able to do the job properly? Or is it? I don't know. It seems to be.

As if this wasn't enough we are now faced with a multitude of change documents with the offender management in custody, now the offender management review, the probation systems review to name but a few. There has been much talk of these for some time but with very little concrete said about any of them. They may be implemented imminently, later in the year, next year, not at all, who knows. But what we can say, whilst the goal posts move constantly and the rumour mill is rife, this is not conducive to a stable, settled and safe working environment. I'm not sure what the sickness levels are like within the prisons but I know that sickness has become a huge problem within probation, making the already huge workload practically unmanageable. Obviously none of this is having a positive impact on the workforce or for those we work with, and I would suggest that both services are at breaking point. This problem needs to be taken seriously and those responsible need to come up with some proper solutions.

Anyway, now I've cheered you all up tremendously, what can we do as trade union members, about it? Yesterday we heard HMP Feltham table a motion to de-affiliate to the TUC and this is something that some of NAPO's members have questioned, given the huge costs associated. You'll recall this motion was lost following debate and your General

Secretary, Steve Gillan, amongst others, spoke about the strength of being a small union which is part of a bigger, stronger organisation. Now the POA certainly punch above their weight and the same can be said about NAPO, and we're much smaller than you guys. Whilst we may be bespoke unions working within the criminal justice sector, we do also experience a lot of the same issues as other unions, and we all know that unity is strength, don't we?

Over the past year, I've spoken many times with your former Chair and other members of the NEC about the challenges we both face. We do share the same employer, formerly NOMS and the now rebranded HMPPS. It is really useful for us to be on the same page when responding to the many challenges thrown our way, and our on-going communication has helped us tremendously. Communication ... well I would suggest that's not the employer's strongpoint so let's, the POA and NAPO, continue to get it right.

The fact that the POA continue to have no right to take industrial action is something which I am sure your NEC will continue to challenge and hopefully eventually it will be overturned and your trade union rights restored. That said, I was personally impressed by the act of solidarity shown by your members on 15th November last year. You made your point and I was thrilled to hear that a number of concessions around health and safety were addressed. Your unity in such situations will continue to be your strength, so please don't give up the fight.

In probation, of course, we can ballot for industrial action but the challenges around this still remain high. We have typically low numbers turning out to ballot with the trade union bill making our ballots less than effective when trying to make our point. On top of this we do struggle at times to get people through the doors. As individuals and professionals they are committed to their clients, and their colleagues tend to make them feel guilty when work isn't completed and on top of that the threat of perceived disciplinary action for not having completed timely or satisfactory work does get in the way. It's not just industrial action that's an issue but also protest action, which has become increasingly popular, thus avoiding the cost of the ballot.

To give a recent example, just the other week on Workers Memorial Day NAPO had planned a number of lunchtime meetings to discuss the high workloads and the employer's unsatisfactory response in addressing this. We were actually approached when at NOMS, sorry HMPPS, by a senior civil servant requesting that we call it off as our members taking part were risking breaking the civil service code of conduct. Yes, that old chestnut. Whilst the concerns were real, we had issued instructions to members not to identify themselves as employees and not to stand directly outside their places of work. Additionally any posts on social media should be done in the name of the union etc. etc. But apparently that wasn't good enough and HMPPS threatened disciplinary action to any of those taking part, and Sonia Crosier, who's the Director of Probation, wrote a letter to our General Secretary asking for us to suspend the action. Needless to say we stood our ground and a number of protests did go ahead but not to the level we had hoped, which ultimately watered down the effect it may have had. So the point of this story is to say that being a member of your trade union does give you rights and I often despair at the seriously low numbers and turnouts at ballots, indicative ballots etc. Your leadership teams need to be directed by you, the members, so please get involved, use your vote and have your say. I appreciate I'm probably preaching to the converted here but there's lots of members that don't even bother and that's a real shame.

So you'll be pleased to know that I have nearly finished. I'm sick of listening to myself, so you must be. So together and separately we do want the same things, as discussed earlier: safe workplaces, better workloads, etc. etc. and I believe that by continuing to work more closely together we can make sure that our requests and concerns are made time and time again at the highest level, until they get it.

So I'm gonna finish with a quote from Samora Machel, who was a Mozambican politician during the time of the country's independence in 1975. He said: 'Solidarity is not an act of charity, but mutual aid between forces fighting for the same objective.'

Thank you for listening. Solidarity, POA, from NAPO. Let's fight this thing together.

Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Yvonne and I think when we eventually find out what this new offender management model actually looks like, we're gonna be working even closer together, 'cause undoubtedly there's gonna be a lot of issues to deal with.

As is tradition, Yvonne, we've pulled out all the stops and we've got a little gift for you. I personally sourced the Poundland shop down the town last night and got you a bargain for 50p, so –

YVONNE PATTISON – NAPO NATIONAL CO-CHAIR: Great!

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Please show your appreciation for Yvonne and I'm pleased to present this to you.

Presentation of Cronin Clasp awards

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, we're now going to come on to the presentations, beginning first with the Cronin Clasp winners, so I have to invite the Cronin Clasp winners onto the stage.

<Pause>

Call Tony Jackson from Sudbury, Charles Dunbar-Douglas from Dumfries and Niall Macintosh from Whitemoor, please come to the stage.

<Applause>

Thank you Conference, and to the three worthy winners, I take no responsibility whatsoever for what I'm about to read.

<Laughter>

First of all Tony Jackson, from HMP Sudbury. Tony is an outstanding person with values and morals. His dedication to the POA Union has been underpinned by his years of working down the Derbyshire pits. Tony's an outstanding unionist, colleague, friend and advisor to every individual that walks through the gate. His dedication to the POA reflects his continued trade union views which is fuelled by hours and hours of commitment in his own time. Even through his adversities and personal circumstances Tony battles to support members and non-members in their hour of need, enhancing the Union's beliefs and portraying a positive message to both newly recruited members and old. Whilst Tony has been dedicated to HMP Sudbury's POA Committee he was elected onto the committee as Branch Chairman and sustained this role to the highest level. His passion for union rights has landed him with threats of being sacked, detached duty to the other side of the country and transfers to far-away destinations, but he still managed to voice the views of the branch. But his determination to do what's right has always shone through despite the pressure. Tony's 29 years of experience and knowledge empowers staff to feel safe in the workplace and it he will be clearly missed but not forgotten. Tony's presence in the prison is welcomed by staff on a daily basis and when he walks into a room he gives staff the courage and confidence to air their views toward vindictive members of management. Tony is like a human shield with a dose of super-strength medicine rolled into one. Vertically challenged but powerful. (I never wrote it!) They say good things come in small doses and they are right when it comes to Tony. One of Tony's pearls of wisdom sayings is, 'You wouldn't want to be a branch official if you didn't care,' and this remains etched within the committee's morals. I'm sure he will keep an eye on the branch from afar, even an odd glance at the Cloud the committee use or checking in his diary for the 19th July and remembering when PSO 8525 came to fruition with a little smile on his face. He is a true gentleman with outstanding morals, integrity and high levels of chivalry. He's a true role model with the ever-changing Prison Service and his standards have never slipped. We wish Tony all the best for the future and now he is retired but I'm sure he will keep busy with his family and might even get to finish off them small jobs around the house. (His wife's laughing so I don't think he will!) We thank you for keeping the branch and committee strong for all these years. Written by Sudbury branch committee.

And it gives me great pleasure Tony, to award you with the Cronin Clasp.

<Applause>

The next Cronin Clasp winner, Charles Dunbar-Douglas, HMP Dumfries. Charlie joined in October 1987 as one of the last intakes of the two for one pension scheme beneficiaries on ITC 108 over 29 years ago. He immediately became involved in the Union as soon as he walked in the door, taking an active role as the voice of the new recruits of that era. During a rather turbulent time at the local branch committee, infighting and constant friction with our then National Committee and a lack of leadership from anybody locally, Charlie stepped up to the plate. He used his excellent personal skills and ability to converse at any level to steady the ship through choppy waters. He quickly became Branch Secretary for a period of two years, during which time he became Treasurer. His ability to manage finances is well renowned, a typical Scotsman shall we say, but the line he consistently uses is, 'It's the members' money'. At times this can be forgotten about, but believe me, Charlie doesn't let you forget. During this time he assisted in organising Scottish Conference, which in those days was the responsibility of a branch every year. As you can imagine, it is a difficult job which takes time, effort and dedication to organise. Through doing this Charlie once again showed his skills and passion for his beloved Union. His organisational skills meant that the Conference was a great success and came in under budget. I refer to my comments about a Scotsman earlier. Charlie took a step back due to family circumstances but, to his great credit, was still an active member through those difficult days, continuing with his role as Treasurer. Charlie has been Treasurer now for over 23 years and has carried out this role both very effectively and, as previously stated, efficiently. He continues to offer advice

to new recruits and junior members of staff, as to the advantages of being a part of this great union. He is part of an excellent recruitment team we have at Dumfries. Only eight non-operational members out of 126 operational staff. And it is largely due to Charlie's passion and knowledge that this is achieved. Personally, Charlie has assisted myself with the role of Branch Secretary in the early years, offering advice and approaching me with the concerns of members, which is very much appreciated. He is a well-respected member of this branch and has helped and assisted all the various committee members through the years. To show how high the membership of HMP Dumfries hold Charlie it was recently, when a member was going into a meeting with the SMT and none of the Committee were available due to shifts and Scottish Conference – the member asked for Charlie to sit in with them, and without hesitation Charlie was there. The meeting became emotional for the member and the member received the opportunity from the SMT to finish for the day. Charlie showed his caring, compassionate side of his union skills and took the member home and made sure they were OK before returning to the establishment. He also contacted Committee to make us aware of his meeting, the situation and how the member was. He showed he is a true friend, a true gent, but mostly a true Union Man to the core. He is the moral compass for the Dumfries branch and fully deserves the Cronin Clasp award. Written by Dumfries branch committee.

And it gives me great pleasure, on their behalf, to award Charles Dunbar-Douglas the Cronin Clasp.

<Applause>

And last but not least, Niall Macintosh from HMP Whitemoor. Niall has been a loyal and active member of the POA since the day that he joined the Prison Service in a long and distant past. During this time he has been a POA branch committee member at HMP Littlehey from January 1998 until he took over as Branch Chair at HMP Littlehey in June 2000. Niall held the post as Branch Chair there until he stood down in March 2005 to transfer to HMP Whitemoor. Niall was elected as the Branch Chair at HMP Whitemoor in August 2007 and this is a post that he still retains to this day. In my opinion this speaks volumes about the character, knowledge and regard that the branch holds him in, as every time that he's been up for re-election since taking up the post, he has been unopposed. During his time both as a committee member and as the Chair, Niall has worked selflessly for the benefit of his branch members and also for his fellow committee members. It is often due to Niall's knowledge of procedures and his working relationship within the prison management that he's able to achieve so many favourable results for his embers. These have ranged from members not being dismissed from the Service to representing members in many other types of hearings, interviews etc. that as POA reps we represent our members in. Niall has also, during the last few years, become a scrutineer on behalf of the NEC, a position that he and the others on this team are specially selected for. Niall has been the seawall that has stopped the tide from crashing over us here at Whitemoor many a time, and I'm sure his colleagues at Littlehey felt the same when he was there. It was with Niall's passion and knowledge that as a Committee here at Whitemoor, we have been trained as reps to the high standard that he sets, not only for himself but also for the standards he expects us to uphold for the members of the branch when they are being represented. Niall is only ever really off duty when he is away on one of his legendary holidays which anyone that knows him well will know what I mean. Otherwise he was always on the end of the telephone 24 hours a day to both the Committee or to the members of the branch, as many of them here have his personal mobile number. Written by the Whitemoor branch committee.

And it gives me great pleasure, Niall, to award you the Cronin Clasp.

<Applause>

Conference, the Cronin Clasp is a reward, a prestige award that not many people pick up in their lifetime as a Trade Union Representative on the POA. It's for dedication, it's for commitment, it's for desire and these three fit the criteria to a tee. And I'd just like to invite them up to say a few words if they so wish.

TONY JACKSON – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: Chair, NEC, Conference, it's a great honour and a privilege to be recognised by fellow members at POA. It's a great union to be in, always has been. Somebody told me you've got to be in it to get involved and I've been involved in things for union over the years, but the best part about it is that I've had the support and the backing from everybody that I've had dealing with. Some good, some not so good, but overall it helps you to carry out my job what I did as a branch chairman at Sudbury and passing it on to the future that's come. I'd also like to say a big thanks to those that gave me the support in the past that are no longer here – I'll never forget them. Thank you very much Conference.

<Applause>

CHARLES DUNBAR-DOUGLAS – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: Mr Chair, Conference, I'd just like to thank the POA for this honour. This came as a total surprise to me today. I wondered why my branch committee was so keen to get me down to Conference this year, so it came as a total surprise. I've always been a keen POA member since I came in the door of the prison and I was a trade unionist before that, being a member of UCATT, so being a trade union member I'm

always proud of my branch and my branch committee, and we've been through some good times and some bad times in the past, but we've got an excellent branch committee at the moment and I, as usual, continue to support them in every way that I can, even [162:12] the money. So I'd just like to thank my branch committee for this tremendous honour and thank you.

<Applause>

NIALL MACINTOSH – CRONIN CLASP WINNER: Chair, Conference, NEC, those of you who know me ... I'm actually gobsmacked and speechless at the minute. I have got a few thanks to say – Griff, you'd better start running now!

<Laughter>

Thank you for the kind words. Branch Chair's only as good as the committee. It was mentioned earlier on and I had a good committee, both at Littlehey and currently at Whitemoor as well. I've had some good Branch Secretaries and some very good Committee members and without them I wouldn't still be doing this now, so thanks to both Littlehey and Whitemoor's committees. I am gonna mention somebody who's sat in the honorary life members as well, because it was down to that man that I got involved with the POA, going back to 1989, and that's Benny Goodman in the honorary life. Thanks Benny, it's down to you that I started this. Finally ... got to say thank you to Kirsty, my wife, who's sat there. She's also a prison officer at Whitemoor. She lives it twice, at work because when I'm not there she gets a lot of the phone calls, she's not even on the committee, but without her ... I don't know ... at home as well, so she gets a double whammy. Finally, NEC, thank you for this award. As I say, I'm gobsmacked but thank you very much. Cheers Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, please show your appreciation to the Cronin Clasp winners.

<Applause>

Can you make your way outside – photo-opportunity.

We'll now move on to the Toe by Toe Award. 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 us absolutely nothing in our goals to get the Shannon Trust in and help with this project. They train prisoners to teach other prisoners to read. There's profile time to do this as well, so you need to go back to your goals and ask what's happening with that time that's been profiled if you don't have this initiative in your prisons. And actually it's [166:06] a function with the Shannon Trust where they commissioned a report which proved beyond any doubt whatsoever that this project and this initiative works. Beneficial to staff and beneficial to prisoners. And this award recognises the dedication and commitment by a member of staff in the field who carries out this work on behalf of not only the POA but the Shannon Trust. And it gives me pleasure to introduce you to Angela from the Shannon Trust, who's gonna say a few words and announce the winner. Thank you Angela.

Address by Angela Cairns, Shannon Trust

ANGELA CAIRNS – CEO, SHANNON TRUST: Hello everyone and thanks very much, Mark, for that fantastic introduction. I'm really pleased to be here. It's a really important date in our calendar because it gives us an opportunity to say thank you. Today we're saying thank you to one particular POA member for going above and beyond in supporting Shannon Trust Reading Plan, but we also say thank you to everybody who makes that happen. This year we had our snapshot survey in February and we ask all our learners and mentors at that point what they think, why they got involved and what impact learning to read and being involved with the Shannon Trust Reading Plan and Turning Pages makes. One of the telling things is obviously that it does help people to learn how to read, which is great for us. But it also tells us that it improves confidence, people's communication skills, it makes them more positive about the future. Crucially also eight out of ten people who are learning are telling us that by taking part they're now going on to further learning and training, which obviously improves their chances both in prison and when they go back out into the community.

Those are the stats. Behind those are lots and lots of personal stories which I hear when I go and visit Reading Plans and we get feedback from people all the time, which tells us things like now they can read to their children, now they have a chance of getting a job, now they can get things like a driving licence, things that are really important to people, and it's really moving and it really does make a difference to people's lives. So thank you very much for everything that you do. Just a couple of quotes here to illustrate that. 'I can now read notes on the board,' 'I can fill in my canteen sheet', 'If I keep it up it'll help me in prison and on release,' 'It's just the fact that I'm learning, so obviously I feel better about myself. For the first time, learning instead of sitting inside doing nothing, and it's an investment for the future.' 'I never knew I could do

something like this. I've helped others and it's opening up job opportunities for me too.' That was from a mentor, so both our learners and mentors get great value out of it.

So for me, I meet lots of prison officers as part of my job, prison officers who are supporting us and coming to our area meetings, and also prison officers who I meet when I go on visits, and so many people are going above and beyond to support the Shannon Trust Reading Plan, and people who are learning, using Turning Pages. And today I'm very pleased to announce the winner of the Shannon Trust POA Cup, or the POA Shannon Trust Cup, whichever way round you want to say it, as Michael Lavell from HMP Manchester.

<Applause>

Just before I hand over the cup to Mick, I'd just like to say a little bit about his nomination. Our nominations come from POA Branch Chairs and also from our volunteers and Mick was nominated by our volunteer Viv and Bridget from the library. And I'll just read out a couple of bits from it 'cause I think it gives a flavour of why Mick has won this award.

'Perhaps the most persuasive argument to support Mick Lavell's nomination for this award is the progress which has been made in 2015/16 to embed the Shannon Trust Reading Plan at HMP Manchester in very testing times. We've moved from virtually no mentors and learners and low morale amongst Shannon Trust team and remaining mentors, to a consistently healthy number of both mentors and learners. Learners are making progress. Nine men have progressed from book 1, several to book 3 and one has completed the programme this year. A number of learners have been able to take part in the Storybook Dads Scheme because of Shannon Trust Reading Plan. Almost as important has been Mick's support for the Shannon Trust Reading Plan Team. Bridget joined the library in 2015/16 and has, with Mick, been proactive in developing new strategies for mentors and learners and learner recruitment. He's always tactful, firm and above all good humoured with both staff and men. He really does keep the whole Reading Plan going.' And lots of key words for me came up in his nomination – tactful, persistent, active, commitment, determination, made it possible, worked tirelessly, and above all he's good humoured. And Mick has been doing this I think we worked out for about 13 years now, so a huge and enormous thank you and well done to Mick.

<Applause>

MICK LAVELL – POA SHANNON TRUST CUP WINNER: Thanks very much everybody. I'd never even heard of the POA Cup until a couple of weeks ago and I started getting phone calls from some people saying 'Congratulations' and I thought it was some sort of windup! Anyway, I'm not even sure whether I should be here today because according to my detail my leave's still pending!

<Laughter and applause>

I don't know what they're gonna say tomorrow when I don't turn up again!

<Laughter>

Anyway, it's nice to be recognised for the work we do, much appreciated, but I couldn't have done it without the support of the library staff at Manchester and also the staff, the officers.

Thanks very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Angela, as a token of our appreciation, can you please accept this gift?

<Applause>

On with business Conference, I call Durham motion 43. Do we have a seconder for Durham. Littlehey.

MOTION 43

That we mandate the NEC to seek the Wrongdoing line is disbanded forthwith due to them having little or no power.
DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Motion 43 reads that we mandate the NEC to seek the Wrongdoing is disbanded forthwith due to them having little or no power. I'd ask you to refer to motion 12 on this. They

have no power unless you are an officer. They are not bothered, some of you might remember the industrial action, I was at the gaol at 5:30 in the morning, and I was still there at 6 o'clock at night, I was rest day. That's not a problem with me. Myself and John, the Chair, were threatened with getting put in front of a judge for stopping the coach, but so be it, that's the job. But it's interesting what happened that day. We had certain governors turn up from Franklin to help, and a certain governor who'd been involved in motion 12. When we eventually returned to work myself and the chair went to the gaol to see if the staff were OK, we went round the gaol to make sure only what was agreed happened and nothing else, and as we were leaving the gaol we noticed a cell door had been left open. So on checking the cameras I found out it was one of the scabs from Franklin had left the door open. So I reported, as a good prison officer. They cut it short, the governor commissioned an investigation to it, unfortunately the governor took redundancy so the investigation, nothing happened. But that wasn't the end to this eventful day. A few days later, someone informed me that on the day of action, the governor had come into the establishment with a mobile phone and give it to a prisoner to use ... so the next morning I went onto my wing and spoke to a prisoner who informed me this was correct. I spoke to the prisoner concerned who had been given the mobile phone. 'One of the new ones,' his words, not mine. He also went on to say, 'I was surprised he gave it to me as I'm an A list when on escort.' He carried on to tell me two others had been given the phone, both confirmed that this was correct, the first was on a murder trial and got a 25-year rec, the other who was an idiot asked if he could take a selfie and send it to his girlfriend. It's true. He didn't take the selfie by the way. So once again I reported it. I'll tell you what has happened. I have been threatened with disciplinary for breach of data protection as I'd copied all my emails to the governor to the branch. I informed him to bring it on, I wouldn't even call Terry Fullerton, I would call the head of the civil service as I am now a whistle-blower. No disciplinary action has taken place over the phone. I haven't been called as a witness to any disciplinary for the governor concerned, probably because I would say why are you investigating it as it has broke the Prisons Act and it should be dealt with by the courts. For no other reason, the Wrongdoing Line should act for all, regardless of rank, so now on two occasions they have failed. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, the Executive are asking you to oppose this motion from the Durham branch. The sentiment and frustration from the branch are not lost on the NEC. The motive for the current opposition, Conference, is that currently there are protections in place for whistle-blowing, as Craig's alluded to. There was a case last year where one of our members lost their appeal against dismissal due to the fact that they had not used the line. The Reporting Wrongdoing Hotline is described as only to be used in the following manner, in exceptional circumstances, where you do not feel it is able to raise your concerns through the normal channels. If we were to remove the Wrongdoing Hotline, would it be beneficial to our membership? Allow me to read some extracts from the policy.

Staff who raise concerns under this policy are protected by the Employment Rights Act 1996 as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Any member of staff who raises a concern about wrongdoing in good faith, that they reasonable believe to be true, will be protected from any form of discrimination or victimisation arising from the allegation.

The desired outcomes:

Wrongdoing in NOMS will be identified and addressed and staff will raise concerns in the appropriate way. Concerns will be raised at the lowest appropriate level and with the line management, unless this is clearly inappropriate given the particular circumstances. In exceptional circumstances where staff do not feel able to raise concerns through the normal channels, they are directed to the Reporting Wrongdoing Hotline. Staff who raise concerns under this policy are protected by the Employment Rights Act 1996 as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Raising your concern at the right level

If you have concerns about your personal treatment you should raise your concerns in almost all circumstances through the staff grievance procedure. Concerns that are not about your treatment should always be raised first with your line manager. If clearly inappropriate, to raise with another manager. In exceptional circumstances where you do not feel able to raise your concerns through normal channels, NOMS has a reporting hotline.

The information to this hotline will be processed according to the nature and the seriousness of the information. Information held in the unit will be stored securely. The actions that may be taken as a result of the information by the unit are set out in section C of this document.

Colleagues, it's apparent that the Wrongdoing Hotline does not have ownership of the information. Nor does it have the remit of making recommendations. It merely processes the information and should pass it on to the appropriate line manager to deal with or escalate. If you're still not happy with this there is in the policy:

Members of staff wishing to obtain confidential advice from independent sources outside NOMS can contact the following nominated NOMS official who is a Non-Executive Director, Alan Hammill.

To finish off, colleagues, the lack of power is not with the Wrongdoing Hotline. It's who gets the information from the hotline who are letting the membership down. If no action is taken, let's not throw out the baby with the bathwater. Please reject, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Durham to come back? Go to the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? Against? That motion is lost.

Call Stoke Heath for motion 44, which is a debate so need for a seconder. Please feel free to join in the debate.

MOTION 44

Conference to debate the issues around staff being extended to cover short falls in the detail due to:

1. *Meeting the MSL, when at the start of the profile the profile will be short, due to staff shortages.*

As we can safely predict that we will be short of staff for several months to come (and not likely to be covered by the current PP system) this is surely a predictable shortage and as such, should not fall to the staff to be ordered into cover, but rather covered by Additional Hour's payments.

STOKE HEATH

UNKNOWN SPEAKER - STOKE HEATH: Thank you. Chair, NEC, delegates, the motion reads Conference to debate the issues around staff being extended to cover shortfalls in the detail due to 1) meeting the minimum staffing level, when at the start of the profile the profile will be short due to staff shortages. As we can safely predict that we will be short of staff for several months to come and not likely to be covered by the current PP system, this is surely a predictable shortage, and as such should not fall to the staff to be ordered in to cover but will be covered by additional hours payments.

Colleagues, our branch is looking at the fact that our regime management plan has just been re-written and our MSL strategically reduced with the help of a BDG visit along with NEC input a couple of months ago. This helps our establishment but what of other establishments with staff shortfalls and higher MSLs in place due to outdated regime management plans? The RMP was put in place to provide a safe and predictable regime both for staff and prisoners, along with safe systems of work to carry out tasks. However, the RMP only covers the core day when we can reduce the regime to facilitate staff shortfalls and emergencies. This motion broadly speaks around the problem around evening or nights, when at this point the regime has no scope to curtail it. We rely on volunteers to cover this work or order staff to extend to the cover to the MSLs but then the knock-on effect follows through into the next day when you start off even shorter due to the night before. Surely predictable staff shortfalls need to be addressed through a system which will be fair to our members, or new profiles not implemented until such time as staffing post figures are on it. Conference, I would urge you to join the debate.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: No more speakers? Glyn Travis on behalf of the NEC.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you Conference. Minimum staffing levels... I don't know whether people have still got this, it's a very old document, it's called Bulletin 8 and it applies to every single prison. NOMS don't like it, they'd love us to get rid of it and it sets out a statement of agreed principles which every branch official should ensure you use whenever you're dealing with minimum staffing levels, whether it's under a regime management plan or whether it's under your local agreement that you should have as set out in Bulletin 8. So it doesn't matter where you are within your profile, whether you've got your target staffing figure or not. An establishment may have a target staffing figure of 100 officers, you then set a regime that matches that so that you know that you've got 100 officers on shift patterns working alternate weekends, extremely long days, and you've got to deliver a set of work. So your top line is we can deliver everything, which never happens, you've then got to have clear blue water between what you would normally expect to deliver, 'cause you've got 20% non-effectives, and then you should set your minimum staffing level which has to be reached by using your normal establishment level of staff. It is enshrined in the agreed principles point 2, where it sets out '[185:24] closely work with the requirements of the establishment, responsive to changing pressures, enable managers to manage more effectively, improve the efficiency economics' and all of the other issues. You then go onto the extent of the application, which is covered under paras 7, 8, 9, 10 ... 12 covers the working week. It's clear, 'An officer may work in some weeks more than his weekly hours because of unavoidable attendance' i.e. coming back from escort, 'travelling time, emergency attendance, special attendance, exceptional to present adjudications.' So colleagues, where we have a problem the resolution is enshrined in Bulletin 8. If you've got a problem in your establishment, and we know it exists because we've got a staffing crisis across the estate, there is the provisions of PP, which is covered, as Jackie just told me, under PSI 24 of 2008, and that sets out what governors can use additional hours for, if people wish to volunteer to do that work. So it's up to you as each establishment, through your regime management plan, through a local agreement about how you manage your minimum staffing level. 'cause the minimum is your State A where everybody stays locked up because you're in patrol state. If a governor and you have got minimum staffing levels that are too high,

you will have a line that identifies where staff are being used for additional hours. You will then go into a dispute under PSOA 525, you will put forward a suggestion to change, identifying the reasons why you want to do that, colleagues, and the information is there. Any branch who needs assistance in dealing with the issue can either contact Ian Carson as part of the RMP team, Joe Simpson or any of the Executive and we will come in to assist you, to ensure your minimum staffing levels are established, you have a local agreement, which is what Bulletin 8 says you must have, after consultation with you as the trade union. So we know it's a problem. It's a bigger problem in some gaols because of the extent of the staffing crisis they've got. HMPPS will continue to use detached duty to shore up a system that's in crisis, we know that, but we have the tools and the mechanisms, colleagues, to ensure additional hours worked are kept to an absolute minimum. That's either paid or unpaid. And minimum staffing levels should always be met using Bulletin 8, because you shouldn't need to use PP to meet your minimum staffing levels. So when you haven't got the staff there, you don't deliver the regime. It's as simple as that.

Thank you for the debate, colleagues.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Motion 45, Frankland. Do we have a seconder for Frankland? Thank you. Wandsworth.

MOTION 45

That Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with NOMS, to increase the non-effective percentage beyond 20% to reflect the profiled work lost to maternity, paternity and adoption leave and back to work plans.

FRANKLAND

PHIL HANNANT – HMP FRANKLAND: Chair, NEC, Conference, the motion reads that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate with NOMS to increase the non-effective percentage beyond 20% to reflect the profiled work lost to maternity, paternity, adoption leave and back to work plans. The standard non-effective currently runs at 20%. We believe this is some 20 years out of date. Statutory rights relating to paternal, adoption leave, the '88 judgement on carrying over leave due to long-term sick, the reduction from 18 years to 10 years for additional five days annual leave have all placed unprecedented pressure on local resources. Paternity, maternity, adoption leave, suspensions, restricted duties, back to work plans, keep at work plans, do not attract a non-effective. Last year 50% of Frankland's staff carried over 5 days annual leave. Obviously some staff want to carry it over for certain reasons but we don't believe anybody should be forced to carry over five days' annual leave. Please support the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

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

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, the National Executive are supportive of the Frankland Branches motion and completely agree and understand why this is on the order paper. This is in fact current policy of the Union. Motion 62 of 2010 from Holme House mandates the NEC to negotiate for an increase in non-effectives due to annual leave allowance, maternity leave and disability leave. Motion 63 of 2010 from Swinfen Hall asks the NEC to pursue the Prison Service to put in place extra funding for Payment Plus to cover pregnancy-related leave. Motion 64 of 2010 from Swinfen Hall asks the NEC to pursue the uplift in non-effectives due to the uplift in annual leave, as did motion 65 of 2010 from the Birmingham Branch. If a member of staff is absent due to adoption leave, maternity leave or paternity leave it's nigh on impossible in some establishments to commit to business as usual. I don't think that any branch could cope with more than two or three people off their [191:24] with these types of leave. This is on top of the leave commitment and training. It's like juggling water in some establishments, high levels of sick due to the atrocious working conditions we endure on a daily basis are all elements that add weight to the argument that we need a greater non-effective. Our members are in some cases being burnt out by the lack of non-effective cover in the current profiles. PP is not the answer either, even though the honourable justice Mr Leggitt in his award of the temporary injunction to the Secretary of State seems to think so. We cannot run HMPPS on Payment Plus. This trade union is a responsible trade union that protects its members from burnout, which the derisory 20% non-effective contribute towards. Here are some stats from the National Offender Management Work Stats Bulletin from 31st December.

42,927 full-time equivalent NOMS staff in post. This represents a reduction of 366 in post over 2016 and a fall of 133 on the quarter. A 5.3 shortfall in bands 3-5 prison officers across public sector establishments, the shortfall of prison officer target staffing levels increased by 1%. There was also an increase in the shortfall of band 2 operational support staff from 11.2 to 12.1%, leaving an attrition rate of 9% amongst bands 3-5 prison officers, which has now risen to 12%. This is an increase of 3.3 percentage points compared to year ending March 2016. The overall rate across NOMS over the last year stood at 8%, a 0.6 point rise compared to the year ending March. A fall of 347 prison officers over the year to December

31st. 12 sick days per person in the National Probation Service. This is a higher than average 10.6 days lost amongst both NOMS staff overall and within the Prison Service establishments.

The Executive commend Frankland branch for bringing this motion. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? Any against? That's carried. We've done 46 at 16a so we're now on to Wymott and 47. Do we have a seconder for Wymott. Preston, thank you.

MOTION 47

Conference instructs the NEC to seek from NOMS, the proper oversight of healthcare provision and the adherence to the terms of any contract signed with a third party who provide such services, with special regard to agreed third party staffing levels to deliver these services.

WYMOTT

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WYMOTT: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, motion 47 reads Conference instructs the NEC to seek from NOMS the proper oversight of healthcare provision and adherence to the terms of any contract signed with a third party to provide such services with special regard to agreed third-party staffing levels to deliver these services. I addressed the general idea of contracted out services by a third party in motion to Conference 9. This is the specific because as I alluded to when I spoke on motion 9, we've seen utter chaos at times at HMP Wymott with the provision of healthcare. Operationally this has seen morning medication still being delivered at 10:30 and after, which has meant that the regime's been torn to shreds. We've even seen the ridiculous state of affairs where evening medication has still been going on after midnight in a patrol state. We've even had prisoners woke up at 1 o'clock in the morning to be given sleeping medication. I kid you not. This cannot be allowed to continue. To be fair, our governor has been tearing her hair out and the governor prior to that, he was similarly frustrated in that these services are provided through NHS England, by a third party other than them, so they have no control over it locally. The governor has no real control over this. Any complaints that the governor has to make has to go through NHS England, and then passed on to the third-party supplier. That's the operational side of things.

There is a financial side to this as well because the provider of these services is making money. At HMP Wymott we do know that the contract stated that there should have been 14 nurses provided. The maximum that we ever achieved was 8. That has a net effect on that third party supplier's bottom line. It's profit. But at what cost. We've seen operationally the chaos that it can cause. Financially it can cost as well because we have prisoners that are not receiving medication. Two-thirds of our prisoners, it is stated, have mental health problems. Now if you've got a severe psychosis and you need regular medication delivered at a regular time, on a daily basis, and this doesn't happen, there is a reaction and that reaction is generally violent. So we can see the fabric of our goals damaged.

But let's move on to the more important issue, the flesh and blood costs. It could be no coincidence that during the time that we've seen the chaos at Wymott through the provision of healthcare, assault figures have gone through the roof. Prisoner on prisoner assaults went up by over 79%, serious prisoner on prisoner assaults went over by 100%, assaults on staff went up by an incredible 143%, and serious assaults on staff increased by 100%. This is inexcusable. There needs to be oversight of these third-party contracts, and as I said with motion 9, god knows what's coming next with governor autonomy. We need proper oversight, we need these people that are providing the contracts and the services be made to deliver and there needs to be financial penalties. There needs to be oversight. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I asked for the contract and I was given it, G4S, it's a nightmare. It hasn't got no staffing figures in, it hasn't got any costings in, all it says is if G4S haven't got enough staff they've got to go to the person who give them the contract and tell them that, and they will deal with it. Doesn't happen. The governor makes complaints. I'm led to believe on the new contract that comes in there will be penalty clauses but if you have a look at the contract after page 9 you'll get bored 'cause honestly it's just a load of waffle. I couldn't understand it. It needs a legal person to look at it. So be very careful when you do get them but ask the governor yourself, your governor should give you it. There's no reason why not.

LES DENIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Hewell has seen the installation of American company Don't Care UK as our healthcare provider. They came with no thought to who was going to do the work as all the previous NHS staff headed for the hills and quite rightly so. At Hewell Grange the category open, if the nurse is on holiday nobody comes. There are no consequences to actions for healthcare, it's a poor service, it's gone right downhill. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, the NEC support. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote. All those in favour please show? Any against? Thank you Conference, that's carried. Conference, just a few announcements. First I'd like to mention a POA member, Barry Carlton, from Broadmoor, who sadly after 39 years of being a member, passed away on Sunday. He's always been an advocate for the POA and thank you Broadmoor for bringing that to my attention.

We have a fringe meeting in the Waterfront Suite just through those double doors, and it's actually with John Hendy QC. Now he's the barrister who gave us all our legal information and advice about the recent injunction and the motions that you dealt with yesterday in camera, so I would suggest that it is well attended and if you've got any questions you wish to clarify with him or ask about the advice that we receive, please attend and please ask him, and he'll be open and as honest with you as he has been with us. Conference, we do need to expedite business this afternoon so if we can ask you to reconvene at 13:40 hours, that would be appreciated.

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May, 2017

Wednesday 10th May, Afternoon Session

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference. Motion 48, Durham. I'd like to ask Dartmoor to address their concerns to this motion; if this motion is carried their motions of 50 and 51 will be incorporated into this motion. Do we have a seconder for Durham? Dartmoor, thank you.

MOTION 48

That we mandate the NEC to seek a review of all Operational Grades JES scores in light of the New Offender Management Model.

DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Conference, motion 48 that we mandate the NEC to seek a review of all operational grades JES scores, in light of a new Offender Management model. I think the motion says it all, we all know what we do and the JES scores should be continually looked at by the Department. As we are well aware they are not, so please support the motion.

DAN ATKINS – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference, since the JES scoring was introduced the Prison Service has failed to revisit the system. At the time they failed to score us correctly under factor 9 and equated our job the same as a porter in a hospital. Not to insult the work that a porter does but we are in the midst of an epidemic of violence from prisoners against our members. 7,000 fewer officers, 25,000 assaults in prison last year, prisoner-on-prisoner assaults up 28% and assaults on officers up 40%. This is *their* figures. *They* have caused the spiral and descent into indiscipline which has led to major riots and disturbances throughout the Prison Estate. Will the correct scoring and the subsequent uplift in wages it will cause give us a safer environment? No, but it might encourage more people to join this job which this government is failing to achieve with the current terms and conditions. The government's façade of employing 2,500 extra staff over and above the staff in post is a political message that is covering up their inability to change around years of funding cuts, which has brought us to the current position.

At Dartmoor our staff in post figure is only 94 officers. At this current time we only have 79 and we are facilitating a red regime under the regime management plan on most days because of these shortfalls. This leads to more indiscipline and a stressful environment for staff to work in. Under BDG and as an adopter site we lost 16 officers and now are failing to carry out even the basics. Even if the government can recruit 2,500 more staff they are not destined for Dartmoor or for most of the branches in this hall. Conference, please support this motion.

MICK PIMBLETT – BRANCH CHAIR, RISLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference, with the implementation of F&S officers in PE, Industries, Offender Management, ETS, were made band 4s. We were told when we raised concerns about them taking on senior officer-type duties that the system made it mandatory for them to take on these supervisory duties. There is now a proposal from HMPPS to introduce an Advanced Prison Officer role for staff who are trained as mentors and qualified first aiders to become a band 4, Advanced Prison Officer if they acquire one of four other skills. C&R, Hostage Negotiator, ACCT Assessor or Enhanced Searcher. To me it appears that these tasks are now being given a JES value for Advanced Prison Officers when they were not previously taken into account and considered for any band of staff. In the Fair and Sustainable Operating Guide there's a paragraph that states: Additional tasks that are not specific to an individual's job description such as Care Team, First Aid, p-NOMIS Administrator, have been evaluated under JES so that the correct level individual can undertake the task but it will not appear in the actual job description.

I've been told that these duties for an Advanced Prison Officer would be mandatory. To put it another way, and this is what I've been told, these additional duties do not get evaluated if they are voluntarily undertaken. I've raised the fact that some officers and other staff, including SOs and CMs, might now stop doing the voluntary work that they are not paid to do because it is voluntary. Now that these duties are being JES'd they need to revisit all of the scores within our prisons. It really is a mess and it's quite apparent that the MOJ is desperate to make headline grabbing statements on progress rather than genuinely tackle the important job of reforming the staff in our prisons. May I remind you that we warned NOMS about the loss of the PO grade, the banding of specialist grades, the removal of line management responsibility from SOs and the flaws in prison complexity, F&S and JES. There is no satisfaction in saying that we told you so after the events, when solutions could have been found if NOMS would have worked collaboratively with this union. Conference, support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, Jackie Marshall speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. We continually tell HMPPS that we are not happy with JES, the POA has objected to the criteria and assessment used to provide a weighted score for each task since the beginning of JES. The process is driven to administrative work rather than operational skills, competencies and knowledge. If you look at the JES score and justification against it, the criteria is clear, operational staff get a raw deal. I have to say when we've been challenging JES Policy Team recently I wish I had a tape recorder 'cause there's been some class moments. At one point we were challenging the 2.5 score on Factor 9, which was appearing in the Key Worker job description. We asked how that could be the score when HMPPS have been hammered by various external bodies about the rise in violence. After some time their Policy Lead eventually said it was 2.5 because that's what it was in 2012. Well, forgive me if I'm wrong but I think things have changed a bit since 2012. But the best was yet to come, last week during the new OM model negotiations HMPPS wanted to move a piece of work to band 3, work which currently sits in the band 4 job description. Obviously we objected saying you can't do that, if you've assessed the piece of work as band 4 work, then it must stay in that band 4 job description, and we told them that they couldn't pick and choose where they put the jobs. Our friendly JES Policy Assessor then informed us the work was only put in the band 4 job because they thought band 4s had better access to a computer.

So yes Conference, we are happy to ask for a review, please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That motion is carried. 49, Liverpool.

MOTION 49

That Conference mandates the NEC to negotiate with NOMS, an increase in levels from 4 to 6 of the Fair and Sustainable Job Evaluation Scheme, Factor 9 emotional demands and risk.

LIVERPOOL

MOTION 50

That Conference instruct the NEC to demand that NOMS re-visit the J.E.S scoring taking into account the excessive violence that staff are now being subjected to.

DARTMOOR

MOTION 51

That Conference instruct the NEC to demand that NOM's re-visit the J.E.S scoring in relation to Band 3's carrying out work that Band 4's were J.E.S scored to do, especially after this work was removed from Band 3's under the implementation of BDG and the subsequent reduction in staffing, an example being the OMU review and the 6 prisoner caseload per Officer, which has been outlined by the Government.

DARTMOOR

MOTION 52

A call for an immediate ban on all financial bonuses paid to Senior Management grades throughout NOMS.

ALBANY

Do we have permission to withdraw this motion, please show? That motion is withdrawn. 50 and 51 are incorporated, so we go to 52, Albany. Do we have a seconder for Albany? Scrubs, thank you.

NEIL YULE - BRANCH CHAIR ALBANY: Chair, NEC, Conference and guests, the motion is stop all financial bonuses paid to Senior Management Teams. I'm guessing along with everybody else in this room I find it abhorrent that after all that HMPPS has done to all of us and our members, that they continue to receive financial bonuses. Time and time again I sit across tables trying to work things out, do whatever we need to do for our members, but every time I look at them I realise that actually after all the things they do, there's a financial implication for them. We struggle to achieve fair and reasonable pay rises, a fair pension age, starting pay is insulting, staff assaults, etc. are up but our senior bosses continue to receive financial bonuses. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis for the POA.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Conference, the NEC seek rejection of the motion whilst fully understanding why Albany brought it. And the reason that we seek rejection is because 1) the definition of what a financial bonus is, isn't clear; 2) we're not clear in relation to who we're talking about, senior managers, because we've got POA members who are at band 8 who are managers; we've got members who are subject to performance reviews and if they get a specific marking, they get a bonus. And so understanding though we are, I think the motion's got lots of merit but it lacks clarity, and it's one of those motions that we were looking as could we have tried to advise and look at it without changing the entire motion as standing orders, we couldn't deal with it. So for those reasons we would ask the Conference to reject this but certainly we'd welcome Albany looking at a similar motion but being more prescriptive so that we can challenge NOMS, as we do, about the bonuses that people get. You know, when you're looking at where we've got a slight problem, where people are withdrawing to a place of safety, you've got governors jumping on a bus and getting £500 of tax payers' money to try and resolve issues, that's simply not right and shouldn't be there, but this motion isn't clear enough and we ask Conference to reject.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Point of order.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Point of order.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Chair, NEC, Conference, two years' ago we were informed at this Conference that no motion would be knocked back for the wording because the Standing Orders Committee would speak to the branch, highlight the problems and then get them to re-write it. Has that happened in this case?

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: The Standing Orders Committee, as has just been explained, couldn't offer that advice because to offer the advice would have rewritten the motion.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: If Standing Orders could have contacted the branch, highlighted their concern, the branch could have still brought the same motion or had the opportunity to change the motion on the concerns of the Standing Orders.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: The ruling's been made, thank you. Albany to come back? Go to the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show? Any against? <Pause>

Do that again Conference. All those in favour, please show? And all those against? That falls.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Call for a card vote, do we have 10 branches? We have 10 branches, scrutineers and tellers please. We're after the green slip, Conference. Anybody else need to give their slip in to the scrutineers and tellers before they leave the room? A few at the front. Thank you scrutineers and tellers.

We've moved business. I call motion 55 Nottingham, which has now been placed at 52(a). Nottingham are asking for permission to withdraw this motion, can they withdraw this motion, please show? Thank you, Conference, that's withdrawn.

MOTION 52a

That the POA negotiate with NOMS, a Local Retention Allowance for all Operational staff in establishments with highlighted recruitment and retention issues.

NOTTINGHAM

MOTION 53

That this Conference debates the grossly unfair pay scales which see's member of staff doing exactly the same job but receiving huge differences in remuneration.

WYMOTT

53 Wymott is a debate, so we don't need a seconder.

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WYMOTT : Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, motion 53, that this Conference debates the grossly unfair pay scales which sees member of staff doing exactly the same job but we're seeing huge differences in remuneration. In 2008 we saw the closure of what we know as the Prison Officer rank; very shortly after that we saw the Officer 2, the very short-lived Officer 2, and then following on from that within a couple of years we saw the F&S, Fair and Sustainable Officers. Definitely an oxymoron. Neither fair, and I would contend, sustainable. The F&S grade was brought in on the back of the austerity budgets. This is politically driven, it wasn't an economic decision, it was politically driven and one of the benefits for the government was that it imposes differences in pay scales for people doing precisely the same job. It's divisive, it creates tension amongst colleagues, it's designed

along with restrictive trades union legislation, to try and break up unions from within. So that's a bit of the history there. I did have the opportunity to speak to Michael Spurr regarding this last year when he visited HMP Wymott. We'd had a problem in that a quarter, roughly, of our F&S Officers had left the job within three to four months of joining and arriving at the establishment. They realised that the job wasn't for them and they left. A further quarter of those remaining were actively looking for work and had gone within 12 months, so this was of great concern to us. So I spoke to Michael Spurr and I managed to stop him on a landing, introduced myself, and I just said to him, 'What are we doing about this? Because it's obviously a pay and conditions question. If the pay is right, if people are working in decent conditions, they'll stay. People are voting with their feet and they're leaving, so it's obviously a pay and conditions issue.' Michael Spurr said, 'No, it's not, it's a recruitment issue.' I said, 'I beg your pardon?' He said, 'It's a recruitment issue, we are recruiting the wrong sort of people.'

<Laughter>

The people that we were recruiting, I reminded him, were generally speaking, graduates, young, keen, fit, interested, go-getters, people who saw this as an opportunity for a career and wanted to move on. Apparently this is what we don't want in the modern Prison Service and this gives you an indication that the guy at the top doesn't have two brain cells to rub together but that's another story. So that leaves us now in a situation where we have staff doing exactly the same job on different terms and conditions and the problems that it causes with retention and recruitment. It is only right and fair that the F&S staff get an uplift in pay. They need to be earning what we are earning, it's right and it's proper and it's the decent thing to do and it will go some way to ensuring the right sort of people, the right sort of recruits, come into the service. Please join the debate.

<Applause>

PHIL BIRCH – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP SEND: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, completely support this debate brought to us by Wymott. We've got ourselves in a bit of a situation really at Send, we lost our LPA as a result of Fair and Sustainable but keep it for staff on old terms and conditions, so if you're an officer you take a pay cut to be promoted to SO or CM, if you're an SO you take a pay cut to be promoted to CM; hence we don't have very many people taking substantive rank promotions internally, it's all done on temporary promotions. But then we find ourselves unable to recruit and retain so they give us some market supplements, it's effectively and LPA by another name but they only give it to POELTs. So then we had somebody who was on old terms and conditions leave the service and then come back as a band 4. He's now earning as an SO on new terms and conditions around about £5,000 a year less than a POELT in probation, how is that fair, how is that sustainable? It clearly isn't.

The other issue we've got is that because of the Offender Management Model that they're bringing in, so we're told, we're actually being staffed above our benchmark, but then we're being told we've got to send staff on detached duty into under-staffed London gaols. So we challenged this, we said, 'Why are you recruiting above our benchmark?' and they've said, 'Because of the Offender Management Model.' So we raised that back and said, 'No, this is unacceptable because you're sending our staff on detached duty to gaols who are crying out for staff, but the staff that go there from our place, they don't get the local pay allowance. That then means they're not getting the pension benefit on a career average pension of being on detached duty in London.' So what HMPPS are doing is recruiting dishonestly, making staff suffer a financial detriment as a result, which we have now gone into dispute with, so more than happy to share that dispute with anybody who wants a copy of it to raise that with NOMS, but we all work in establishments where we have to walk past signs every day that says NOMS believes in equality and opportunity, we treat our staff properly. I'm sorry NOMS, HMPPS, whatever you want to call yourselves this week, you do not. You have no integrity, you recruit dishonestly and I'll go as far as to say you're institutionally corrupt.

Please support the debate.

<Applause>

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP BEDFORD: Mr Chair, the NEC, Conference, my only disappointment with what Wymott have done is that they've put it up here as a debate and not a motion, although I'm very confident that our colleagues on the NEC have this probably one of the very top items on their agenda on any given day. It's not a secret. I wholeheartedly agree with what has just been said by the previous speaker. I would just like to add to that that Bedford is a bright, red site, in that we get the £5,000 allowance as opposed to the £3,000 allowance which some of the other 31 sites, which have been identified, are getting. The problem with that is, as has been slightly eluded to already, is that POELTs coming in the door there now earn more, especially on a 41-hour contract, earn more than all the closed grades, they earn more than band 4s and £100 a month less than their line managers, who are band 5s. We have already made representations about this because quite clearly this is, as has been said, a dishonest practice.

The other problem which we see with this if we all, as we probably had, in looking around at the 31 sites, this is an attempt by NOMS to drive regional pay through the back door, by giving allowances to people in the areas like where we are, where it is difficult to recruit. For how long are they going to continue to pay £5,000 a year to POELTs to come and work at Bedford? They have to pay that because the POELT prison officer pay in our area you will earn exactly the same in McDonald's, where one of our committee members' daughters is working. So clearly you will not attract people to a Prison Officer's job with all the dangers and the problems that go with it. I would only ask the NEC to very seriously look at this issue of this regional bonus which is being given and make sure that NOMS drive up the bottom line of the salary and using this new Advanced Prison Officer is definitely not the way forward.

Colleagues, please join the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis to join the debate on behalf of the NEC.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Conference, welcoming the debate and the contributions that have been made, so I don't intend to take up too much time but the delegates who have spoken are right. This is high on the NEC's agenda, in fact it never goes off the NEC agenda because it's a complete and utter debacle. The way that HMPPS, NOMS as it was, introduced the bonus payments on 31 sites, amber and red, was over a 15 second conversation: 'This is what we're doing and we're doing it tomorrow.' So that was the conversation, no consultation, no collective bargaining, we were just told by Martin Beecroft that's what they were gonna do. And then when they'd done that they even went back on that because they then said, 'It doesn't apply until April.'

So yes, we've got major, *major* problems in relation to 1) Is it about regional pay? Well, they had an opportunity to bring regional pay in and didn't; is it about recruitment and retention? Absolutely, because they're not over recruiting in establishments and then asking those individuals to go and work on two and three-year fixed-term contracts in establishments in the South, with a guarantee to go back to their establishment. And just so there's no... anyone within the room or anywhere under any illusion, this Executive have gone to NOMS and asked them to bring pay alignment in across the board, so that everybody who's an Officer, whether you're a band 3 or a Prison Officer on a closed grade terms and conditions, you earn the same money. The answer is *no*.

Phil Cople admitted in the talks in 2016 that they now anticipate it will take *20 years*, 20 years, colleagues, to bring F&S pay on the 37-hour base pay, up to a closed grade Prison Officer salary. *20 years, colleagues*. And they think it's fair and they think it's fit for purpose. Martin Beecroft, the new HR Director, is running out of plasters 'cause that's all he does, he gets a problem, he sticks a plaster on it so that he doesn't have to go and give bad news to Liz Truss. Well, my advice, colleagues, is this, if the pay situation doesn't improve and they keep trapping individuals in establishment that can't take promotion, can't move on with their lives, we are going to have a bigger crisis than we've already got and the recruitment and retention will just escalate from the 31 sites to the 51 sites until every, single prison has got a problem, because people will leave because they won't face the violence or anything else. These issues will be taken forward by the Executive but I want to be realistic with you colleagues, we'll go in and we're talking to somebody who simply does not want to listen to the unions' problems because when we gave them a structure to bring everybody in line within five years they poo-pooed it as it's not fit for purpose.

Thank you for the debate. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Conference for that debate. I now call emergency motion to Belmarsh which is at 53(a). Hewell, I'd like to invite you up to address your concerns with this motion, reference your motion 69, if this is carried your concerns will be incorporated. And Hollesley Bay your motion 70 will fall if this is carried. Do we have a seconder for Belmarsh? Feltham, thank you.

MOTION 53a

In light of the recently imposed pay rise on F & S staff within the 31 sites, that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate and impose with her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service that all closed grades irrespective of rank, have their working hours reduced from 39 hr to 37hr per week at no detriment whatsoever to any pay or conditions, as a reward for their loyalty and continued Service in extremely difficult circumstances.

BELMARSH

PHIL STANBRIDGE – HMP BELMARSH: Chair, NEC, Conference, emergency motion 53(a) reads: In light of the recently imposed pay rise on Fair and Sustainable staff within the 31 sites, that Conference instruct the NEC to negotiate and impose with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service that all closed grades, irrespective of rank, have their working hours reduced from 39 to 37 hours per week at no detriment whatsoever to any pay or conditions as a reward for their loyalty and continued service in extremely difficult conditions.

We believe that all closed grades, irrespective of rank, should be rewarded for their continued loyalty and commitment for remaining and working in the Prison Service. We do not think this is unreasonable and suggest that by reducing the working hours from 39 to 37 hours per week would be a welcome gesture from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service as a token of appreciation for the closed grades' dedication while working in difficult conditions over a number of years without being recognised or rewarded. We have had no effective and realistic pay rises over a number of years, this in real terms would be a pay rise, as each closed grade would be working 104 hours less per annum for the same amount of money. We seriously believe and insist that HMPPS should consider this and make it mandatory with immediate effect. This would not require any additional funding from the Treasury, it is just a matter of imposing it without detriment to each and every closed grade member. By doing this it will be rewarding a loyal group of staff who have continually remained committed to their employer when the situation without our prisons has become intolerable and frightening on numerous occasions. By giving staff this reduction in hours, without detriment, would indicate to us as a union that our employer is serious about our pay and conditions. This would also indicate to us that closed grades are valued and just as important as our colleagues on Fair and Sustainable rates and hours of pay, and rather than conquer and divide we should all be treated equally and fairly as prison officers, without prejudice.

Colleagues, please support this motion.

<Applause>

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion has stolen motion 69 from us, where the motion was: Instruct the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all staff of uniformed grades have a reduced working week of 37 hours at no detriment to pay, pensions or conditions.

This motion was brought by our branch because due to the lack of appropriate pay increases, especially for the now closed grades over the past decade, there is a simple but previously suggested solution which now carried significantly more logic and structured argument as time has progressed. Reduce all staff's working week to 37 hours and bring them into line with their newer colleagues. This will be at no detriment of pay, conditions or pension contributions and will go in lieu of a pay increase which they didn't get in years 2010, 2011, 2012, '13, '14, '15 or '16 and most likely '17. It can be NOMS' choice which year they want to do it. Call it an act of goodwill. The other side to this it helps with the planning of the establishments who now have to contend with the logistical nightmare of complicated detail of staff on varying hours of shift patterns. We're getting nowhere with pay increases and it appears we've now come to a stalemate on pensions. Derisory and demeaning increases are now being given and implemented which go nowhere near compensating the many staff who are now physically taking home less money in their wage packets than they were back in 2010. The adage is that you knew what money you were getting when you signed up for the job could be true, that there's always been expectation that pay would increase by the cost of living amounts each year which in turn make mortgage payments reduce over time.

Hewell branch fully believe we should be (INAUDIBLE) a 37-hour week with no reduction in pay for the now closed grade staff. We've heard for years that we're aiming for a 37-hour working week, new staff have it so it should be introduced for all staff. Closed grades are being discriminated against by it being conditional on changing to unfair and unsustainable terms and conditions and moving to the new, much-reduced pay scales. There was at no point an offer made to us about moving to a 37-hour week without change of conditions. The NEC, to my knowledge, have not broached the subject either. The membership of Hewell has spoken for this motion that they're more than happy to forego one of their costs of living rises from the years I've just mentioned, it can be NOMS' choice which year they choose.

Please support the motion.

<Applause>

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

JACKIE MARSHALL - NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking in support of the motion. We think Belmarsh and Hewell are spot on and we thank you for bringing this motion. If they don't wanna give us a decent pay rise then reduce our hours.

Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote. All those in favour of this motion? Thank you. All those against? That motion is carried. Hewell, your motion 69 is incorporated and Hollesley Bay, motion 70 now falls.

MOTION 69

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all staff of Uniformed Grades have a reduced working week of 37 hours, at no detriment to pay, pensions and conditions.

HEWELL CLOSED

MOTION 70

Conference mandates the NEC to seek a change in the contractual working week for Band 2 Officer Support Grades. Conference having recognised that the 37 hour contractual working week being offered to new entrant OSG's employed on nights does not cover the hours they are required to work.

HOLLESLEY BAY

Conference, I'm delighted to announce that our next guest speaker is Tim Roache, General Secretary of the GMB. Tim was elected General Secretary of the GMB in November 2015. The GMB is the UK's third largest union with over 630,000 members. It was formed in 1889. Tim started in the union in 1979 at the age of 17, where he worked in London Region's post room. By this time he was already a passionate trade unionist and proud of his working class roots. Tim originates from London, and is one of four children. For over three decades Tim worked his way through the ranks with GMB. He moved to GMB Midland and East Coast Region in 1984 as the legal officer becoming the youngest appointed GMB official at that time. He became a GMB organiser in 1989 and a senior organiser in 1999, during which time he negotiated, fought alongside and won a better deal for GMB members in every industry and section across both the public and private sectors. In 2007 he was appointed GMB Regional Secretary of GMB Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region where he put in place GMB At Work. Most notably his proudest moment was leading the victory of the refuse workers in Leeds City Council in 2009, when 500 workers were embroiled in the GMB's longest ever dispute that achieved equal pay for women across the local authority. Under his leadership, Tim sees the Union continuing to fight for jobs and the rights of working people as the present government continues to attack workers and their rights. He is the elected national chair and president of the Centre for Labour and Social Studies and continues to work to promote policies that deliver for working people. Time spearheaded the End Foul Play campaign, requiring multimillionaire football clubs to pay a decent wage to their staff. He is married with a son and two daughters. When he's not busy with GMB he follows Arsenal FC and coaches his local football team, Kippax JFC. I'm delighted to let Tim address our Conference. Thank you.

Address by Tim Roach, General Secretary GMB

TIM ROACHE – GENERAL SECRETARY, GMB: Mark, thank you so much, that was a bit long and thank you, that was very humbling for me. Good afternoon Conference, friends, colleagues, first of all I'm very proud to be here addressing you today and to bring fraternal greetings, and thank you both to Mark and to Steve for the very kind invite. Steve addressed GMB Conference last year in Bournemouth and Steve, if I can go down half as well as you did, mate, and I mean this, then I'd have done a very good job this afternoon.

It is an honour to be here to share some of my perspectives and thoughts on the trade union movement today with you, POA members. There's never been a more important time for trade unions to talk and to work together and to look at the challenges that we face through our members together. There's so much I could talk about today but want to really focus on two themes, increasing workers' voice in society and how we shape the future in these very uncertain times. Everywhere you look at home and abroad, things are unsettled but the job of trade unions to provide security, fairness and a voice for members has never been more relevant. What POA and GMB have always had in common is that we have a clear determination to really understand the actual experiences of the people we represent. Wouldn't it be really encouraging and refreshing if we had a government that did the same? Imagine if we had a Health Secretary that listened to NHS workers or a Minister for Justice who actually cared about the experiences of those like you who work in the Prison Service. Instead of trotting out the same clichés and soundbites, imagine if they actually listened to the real people and then did something about it. Now of course we're in the throes of a general election campaign and that's the reason I wasn't able to be here last night, and can't stay here this afternoon, colleagues, because there are some silver linings, the Tories announced the general election right in the middle of GMB Congress in June, so I'm now trying to condense our five-day conference into two days so I need to get back.

Now I know the POA don't affiliate to the Labour party and I know, like the GMB, there will be people here in this room, and your members, of every single persuasion, I get that, and understand that. But my plea to all of us in the trade union movement is to make our political representatives really work for our vote. If they won't support us, then we should not

support them. This is an election in which public sector workers could make a huge difference to the outcomes in different constituencies up for election. If we're not going to make a song and dance about the conditions facing our union members, then who on earth will? The Tories want the selection to be about their favourite slogans, not about sharing ideas and plans to improve the things that matter to our members and working people. Everyone in this room knows that the public sector is in a state of real crisis. The politicians who have tried to underfund it, privatise it and fragment it have to be held to account. To be blunt, if we want a government that takes a different approach to the Tories right now, then we have to work for it and we have to vote for it. But whatever happens in the general election, our unions will continue to highlight to the public the experiences of our members. I think the Prison Service is one of the public services that is least understood by the members of the public, so we have to find new ways to tell that story together. What prison officers have to go through right now is frankly horrendous. The official figures POA have gathered for the last year are jaw dropping. Forgive me if you've heard this before but ... over 18 assaults a day on prison staff, assaults on staff up 36%, serious assaults on staff up 26%, assaults with weapons up 41%, sexual assaults on staff up 58%, fighting up 29%, spitting up 87%. Colleagues, that's a world that my 630,000 members don't even have nightmares about and I pay tribute to every single one of you, but no one should have to put up with that ever. These are the signs of a system in complete and utter crisis. It's no wonder that it's so hard to recruit and retain people in your sector, and the fact that judges state that you are unable to take industrial action because of the '94 Criminal Justice Act is a reminder that legislation needs to be changed. I've always said if a worker doesn't have the right to withdraw their labour, then frankly they're a slave. Legislating against industrial action simply masks serious problems which need addressing in the public interest. For as long as it continues, ministers should be treating your members with greater respect and should be treating the system with more respect and looking to improve things, but just please know you're not alone. The government is waging war right across the public sector. This is a government that got midwives to go on strike for the first time in their 133-year history and while the 1% pay cut won't apply to everyone in this union, it's the most corrosive and cynical attack on ordinary working people. The GMB has calculated that in real terms that 1% pay cut has cost ordinary working people, since 2010, £9,000 a year. That's money that could be spent on people's families, on a proper holiday or replacing something when it breaks without having to sign up to debt or payday loans. It's a scandal that has to stop. And to make things worse the Conservatives plan to continue marching our public sector down this path of despair. GMB has calculated that in the next three years as things continue and inflation rises, that will cost our members on average another £4,000 a year, money that they simply can't afford to lose. They want our public services to collapse, that is their intention, we've seen the trick before undermine and underfund public services and then privatise it and enable the big businesses to come in and cherry-pick. You know it in your sector. They've done it in Royal Mail, they've done with the NHS and they'll continue to do it if they get away with it.

As you heard from Mark's kind introduction, it's only my second year as General Secretary and it's been a pretty bumpy ride. Just after I took over we had the trade union bill that's now an act, then we had Brexit, then we had the new Labour leadership campaign, then we had a new Prime Minister that was elected by the Tories and frankly by less people that are in this very room, and now of course we've got the general election. And all the time we see a wider world that is uncertain in the least and frankly dangerous in the extreme. Donald Trump, leader of the free world who's got his finger on the nuclear button. That's a frightening and sobering thought in itself. Political swing to the right across many countries, not least in France but other European and countries further afield. And Brexit here in the UK. People have voted to come out of the European Union for very many reasons but I've tried to analyse what I think were the real reasons, and I'll tell you one thing colleagues, it was years in the making. I think for me the first indicator was the Scottish devolution debate where 90% odd turned out to have their vote, mainly because it wasn't for them about devolution, it was for them about disillusionment. We got to the stage where politicians of any colour, Labour, Tory, UKIP, doesn't matter, didn't look like them, didn't sound like them, didn't have their experiences, didn't understand what their challenges and plights were. We've suffered years of lack of investment in working people, lack of investment in the workplace on skills, lack of investment of our kids in their education, doing away with the Education Maintenance Allowance, now introducing tuition fees. I remember when I was a kid, as you heard from Mark's kind introduction again I was one of four kids, and when I got to 16 you heard I started with the Union in the post room at 17. When I got to 16 my old man didn't say to me, 'What university are you going to, boy?' He said, 'Where are you gonna get a job and help pay the board?' That's how it was. And now with £9,000 tuition fees that's where it's going back to. The only kids who'll be able to afford to go to university are the kids of the rich and wealthy, and that's a scandal because education has become a commodity and not a right of our ordinary working people's children. So it has to change.

We've seen hurtling towards us this fourth industrial revolution. It sounds very sexy, the robots are coming, the gig economy, automation – but where does that leave us in the future? Because I'm all for automation coming in if it means that my members and you get to work a four-day week rather than a five-day, but does that mean on the same pay? Of course it won't. Does that mean less jobs? Of course it will. So we have to think about the challenges for us as a union but also the whole casualisation of the workplace, zero hours contracts, mini-hours contracts, flexing up and down, literally on the same day. These might not be the issues that affect you as Prison Officers Association members but they certainly will affect your kids, your families and your communities, because they're the sort of jobs that our young people have to look forward to. If you don't like it, then bugger off to the next McDonald's or the next Burger King where if they don't want you and you're on the bus on the way to work they'll text you and say, 'We don't need you today'. No wonder

our kids can't even dream of getting a house. I've got two daughters as you heard, and I love them desperately but I wish they'd bugger off and buy their own house! But they can't afford it.

<Laughter>

So we have to look at the issues and we have to look fundamentally at inequality. Because we live in 2017 Tory Britain where the 100 richest people have the combined wealth of the bottom 19 million. Colleagues, that's frankly outrageous. And all of these issues, through Brexit and why people voted to come out, it is about disillusionment and people wanted someone to blame. And yes, they turned on migrant workers. Now again you'll have very different views and I respect them entirely, but let me tell you what my take on it is. That many of the people in and around where I worked in Yorkshire at the time were saying, and some of it was anecdotal, some of it was very real, that if migrant workers weren't over here I'd be able to get in my doctor's today or tomorrow rather than next week ... my daughter or son wouldn't be in a class of 40 kids, they'd be in a class of 30 kids ... my employer would give me a good old pay-rise like they used to. A lot of it bullshit frankly, but some of it very real. But you can't blame the individual. You have to blame the unscrupulous bosses and this is my point for today. It's employers who undercut our members' terms and conditions, undercut the conditions that you've worked so hard to build up, but they can do it at the stroke of a pen because it's not unlawful and it's not outlawed in this country, so of course people will look for someone to blame and look for scapegoats. Well let's turn on the very people we should be blaming and that's the greedy employers. That's our battle, colleagues, but in order to meet these challenges we need a collective voice more than ever before. Alongside this we need greater joint working and understanding between sister unions. I think this really must be a core part of the TUC's work going forward. Unions who are prepared to stand up to unfairness and injustice will have enough on our plate without having to keep one eye on other unions and whether they're looking to swipe our members. There will always be issues where unions rub up against each other but they can always be resolved, just like the GMB and the POA did with the Wolds Prison thing in East Yorkshire. It was returned to the public sector and we returned the membership and the agreement back to yourselves. That's the world of difference between how we work and how other parasitic unions look to be unprincipled and nick our lunch.

So it's not our job to, as trade unions to sit back and predict the future. It's our mission to help shape the future in the interests of ordinary working people. Whoever you plan to vote for this election, however you voted in the EU referendum, whatever you think about another Scottish independence referendum, we have to remember above all to paint that vision for a fair and decent society. Remember what we share in common. That means properly funded public services, fair pay, security, safety at work, enough money for a decent life for you and your family, an economy that's sustainable with a safety net that's there when we need it. These are bread and butter trade union values and principles that are as relevant today as they were 100 years ago.

And I want to conclude by paying tribute to all of you, because whilst he's a bloody good bloke, people in the POA don't join the POA because of Steve Gillan. They join because of you. And it's exactly the same in the GMB. They don't join the GMB because this cockney bloke is now the General Secretary. They join because there's an activist in their workplace who understands their issues, who they can turn to in their hour of need, who they know will represent them because you're skilled and confident and competent to do that. And I take my hat off to you, every one of you, because when people talk about 'the Union' that's not this table, that's those tables. Be proud, be strong, walk tall. Thank you very much for listening.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you very much for that speech Tim. You mentioned a few things. You mentioned that unions need to work together a lot more. You couldn't be more right about that. So isn't it about time the TUC called a general strike and let's just get on with it and take these on?

<Applause>

You said why don't ministers listen? Ministers don't listen because they've got bad advisors, and when you've got the likes of Martin Narey advising the Secretary of State, who's failed in the Prison Service, failed at Barnado's and is now a failed advisor, what do you expect? You need trade unionists to advise them, then the world would be a better place.

Public services are a mess. They are. So why don't all the public service unions band together and we'll all walk out on the same day? You know what? That won't put us off, 'cause we'll be there, we'll be taking our protest action and we'll be supporting you as well. And you're quite correct that legislation does need to be changed. We are getting used as slaves, we're strangled by section 127. Well let me tell you, Tim, this Union will not be slaves and we will take action and we will take on section 127 and if that means the ultimate, and we hit the nuclear button, then you know what, we'll have to do it and bring it on.

<Applause>

But you now what? We do have joint interests, we have members working in prisons as do the GMB, so it's about time we started learning off each other and forging closer relationships and let's all take them on together. Tim, no one leaves Conference without a gift and judging by the size of that box, we've bought you a pair of stilettos.

<Laughter>

So on behalf of the POA thank you very much, Tim.

<Applause>

TIM ROACHE – GENERAL SECRETARY, GMB: Thanks everybody. Thank you so much. I'm sorry I've got to shoot off but thank you so much. Have a great rest of Conference. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Tim Roache!

<Applause>

Conference, we have the result of the card vote which was motion 52. Number of votes in favour, 11,386; number of votes against 9,377. That motion is carried.

I now call motion 57, Lancaster Farms. If carried motion 58 from Pentonville falls, so I invite Pentonville to address their concerns to this motion. Do we have a seconder for Lancaster Farms? Scrubs, thank you.

MOTION 57

The NEC negotiate a consolidated minimum of 5% uplift on pay, for all operational grades, closed and fair and sustainable to be implemented by April 2018.

Should this be refused the membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

LANCASTER FARMS

MOTION 58

That Conference instructs the NEC to achieve an above inflation pay rise for all grades regardless of terms and conditions and use any and all means they deem necessary to achieve this motion.

PENTONVILLE

JOOLS NEWBOLD – BRANCH SECRETARY, LANCASTER FARMS: Chair, NEC, Conference, the motion reads: The NEC negotiate a consolidated minimum of 5% uplift on pay, for all operational grades, closed and Fair and Sustainable, to be implemented by April 2018. Should this be refused the membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

Initially my branch wanted a minimum of 20% as a starting point for pay negotiations but after some debate they decided that a minimum of 5% was an achievable starting point for the NEC to negotiate from. The branch suggested words like strike action and withdrawal in the second half of the motion but again, after debate, they decided it was best to leave that decision in the hands of the NEC and let them decide what decision should be made should we not get a minimum of 5% uplift in pay. They believe they've given the NEC an achievable goal and hope that Conference agrees. Please support the motion. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Pentonville, would you like to address your concerns?

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, speaking against this motion. We've heard over the last day or so some discussions over the challenges we face, the ways we have to face those challenges and the consequences of some of the methods we could use to challenge and after advice we've been given I think handing over the decision of what means are necessary, when we've been told that some of those means

could mean the death of this union, I think is wrong. Please reject the motion.

STEWART McLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. Yes, it's about the NEC take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal. Well, if they come back with a 4.5%, do we return next year to attack the NEC on their failure to achieve this motion or do they take the view that whatever action deemed necessary, the NEC? Well, what about us, what about us as trade union reps? Everyone writing to their MP. Your entitlement is writing to the MP, 'cause they're the ones who sit in parliament and direct the treasury and the government. Our money comes from direct taxation. If the NEC are mindful for taking whatever action they deem necessary, I think they need to put it on our shoulders as branch officials, to motivate the members to deliver this kind of motion. Just keep that as a thought as the discussion continues.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Good after Conference, with an open mandate before we can actually make our mind up I'd like to see what Steve is going to say. However, there is an issue with this, it's currently this union has a mandate not to engage with the Pay Review Body. This says negotiate a minimum of 5% uplift, are we therefore saying that we're now going to go back on that mandate and go back and talk to the Pay Review Body or is this saying that we have to negotiate with our employers? At the moment as far as I understand it the legal process that we go through is the Pay Review Body, so bear in mind when we're voting on this and perhaps Steve will address that fact, is to who, exactly, do we negotiate on this? We are currently mandated, we have no trust in the Pay Review Body, they have never, ever done us any favours. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Chairman, Conference, on behalf of the National Executive Committee we're asking you to support the motion. We think there's been some very good points made and I'll try and address some of them on behalf of Swaleside.

You've just heard from the GMB General Secretary giving his figures for the losses that his members and public sector workers have lost over the last seven years. We're no different. We are no different but, you know, Swaleside have got a very good point, actually. We haven't got collective bargaining for pay, we forced the employer to the table in relation to that last year but Dave is right when he says that we don't give evidence to the Pay Review Body anymore as a direct consequence of the policy decision, quite rightly. But we never did negotiate anyway with the Pay Review Body, it was only a submission and oral evidence that we gave, so we'd no direct negotiations with the Pay Review Body anyway. So the reality is we will, if this is passed, which we hope it is, we will open up a dialogue with the employer for collective bargaining on pay to reach your aspirations and attempt to do it. Now bearing in mind there's a 1% pay cap imposed on all public sector workers by this government 'til 2020, so it will make our task extremely difficult but it doesn't make it impossible for us to aspire to the cuts that you have suffered and I think anything less than 5% uplift would be derogatory anyway. So the reality is this Executive will take this mandate, if passed, and we will try and negotiate an uplift in pay. But Conference we're not making any promises and I hope you don't come back and give us a kicking if we can't achieve it. The reality is the second part of the motion says, 'Should this be refused the membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal,' and, of course, that gives us a whole variety of options, which I won't go into detail here today, but rest assured, the Executive will consider every option available to us, including working with other trade unions in the public sector as well, in order to try and achieve on your behalf.

Thank you Conference, and support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That's carried. Pentonville your motion 58 falls. I'll now call Durham, motion 59. Do we have a seconder for Durham? Holme House.

MOTION 59

That we mandate the NEC to seek an urgent meeting with NOMS ref 17% uplift Uniform Staff receive for unsocial hours and seek a review as it does not equate to being fair and appropriate.

DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Conference, motion 59 reads: That we mandate the NEC to seek an urgent meeting with NOMS, reference 17% uplift the uniform staff receive for unsocial hours and seek a review, as it does not equate to being fair and appropriate.

This has come from Michael Spurr's web chats that he has conveniently, but he doesn't always answer the questions, so

one of our new committee actually sent him a question:

Dear Michael, I submitted a question to your recent web chat, however, we did not receive a response on the day or later via the Word document. I was wondering if you'd be kind enough to answer my questions directly via email? During your web chat on 10.06.13, you state a question which was asked below.

Pre-submitted: Can you clarify what exactly red hours are as a percentage of hours worked and what the split is between weekend and mid-week, if any? Thanks (Somebody from Askham Grange).

Michael Spurr: Brian, no problem, those staff in receipt of unsocial hours allowance should be working between 20 and 30% of their hours outside the hours of 07:00-19:00 Monday to Friday, Bank Holidays are classed as outside of that too. There's no specific formula in regards how these hours are worked.

Michael, reading above your statement, would it be correct in determining the direct link between 20 and 30% unsocial hours and 17% in payment? In relation to that, can you explain the formula relating to the two aspects of your grade, unsocial hours and working, and the calculation which determines the link between the 20 and 30% of my hours as unsocial in accordance with the 17% payment?

He received a reply from Emma O'Toole on behalf of the Chief Executive:

Keith, staff who routinely work unsocial hours receive the 17% uplift in salary. All prison staff who routinely work weekends and are rostered nights qualify for this and will continue to do so. The 20-30% red hours figure reflects work done during the development of the Fair and Sustainable proposals to demonstrate the extent to which operational prison staff work outside of normal hours and provide the justification for an additional payment programme a higher salary than that offered on non-operational colleagues working at the same band. The level of operation pay element was 17% base line. This was determined as a fair and appropriate level of differentiation. It represents an allowance for routine unsocial hours worked, not an additional hourly rate for individual red hours worked, therefore there is no direct link to the 20-30% and this means if red hours reduce (which has been the case for many staff over three years) the unsocial hours allowance is maintained as long as weekends.

What we will say is we don't think it is fair. The equation that we see is, if you work more than 6.63 hours a week, you're getting underpaid for 17%. It needs to be re-looked at and the 17% needs to be uplifted for everyone. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis for the POA.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, the National Executive Committee seek rejection of the motion and I will try and explain why. Firstly, unsocial hours only applies to Fair and Sustainable staff. Any officer on closed grade terms does not attract unsocial hours, never has, never will. The red and green hours that used to be there for officers still exist under Bulletin 8 in relation to alternate weekends, nights etc. What Craig's talking about, the level of unsocial hours being set at around 20-30%, we're aware that some establishments have got unsocial hours as high as 47-50%. Staff's shift patterns make them work more and more red hours so it's certainly not fair, but we've also got people who qualify as an F&S grade for the 17%, that don't do any regular hours but occasionally work unsocial hours and therefore they still qualify 'cause it's if you work any unsocial hours and it's only the average of the 20-30%. In relation to the financial element of this 17%, that has been the subject, and if Michael Spurr says that it was calculated ... I'll tell you how it was calculated. It was how much money they had left in the cash envelope. The amount of money that they had left, they turned round and said, 'Well, we'll put that and we'll attract it to the 17%. We, as an executive, have been to NOMS and asked them to look at how we can address the issue of Fair and Sustainable, bring back fair pay and the 17% isn't issue isn't there. The danger of going with the prescriptive motion means that we may end up with forcing individuals to do at least 20-30% and therefore because of that reason we ask Conference to reject. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Durham to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? Those against? That motion falls.

Motion 60, Durham, do we have a seconder for this motion? Scrubs.

MOTION 60

We mandate the NEC that in the future we do not accept any forced endorsement from any pay body or employer.
DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Conference, we mandate the NEC that in the future we do not accept any forced endorsements from any pay body or employer. It comes out reference the last vote we had reference prison reform. It appeared that if the NEC didn't support it then it would be withdrawn. We don't think that's correct. We shouldn't be forced into that. The NEC are bigger than that. They should say, if it's gonna happen like that we'll not be putting a ballot out. Simple as that. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, NEC, responding on behalf of the National Executive. I'm confused. The reason why I say that is that the motion says: We mandate the NEC that in the future we do not accept any forced endorsement from any pay review body or employer. Does that mean everything that the pay review body comes out with? So if they came out with a 5% pay award, that's imposed on you, are you now saying that this Executive has to reject that on your behalf because they are gonna impose it on you? So that's where I am confused. Because you should never ever give that power to a National Executive. Never give that power. It is down to this membership whether or not they accept any pay rise or any offer from the employer. Conference, please reject. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Durham to come back?

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Joe, it's not about that. What we're saying is that the employer turned round to the NEC and said if you don't support it, you can't have the pay rise, or you can't have whatever the ballot was gonna be about. That's the problem. I was sending emails back and forth to my governor while I was on nights about the governor going to give an address to the staff trying to sell it. And he had half the story wrong. It got to the point where I was putting things in, the next night I come in, I've got a question and answer with Robson in brackets. The next day I sent one back and I addressed it as Robson in brackets as well, that's what I'm saying it's about. It's about the NEC being forced to endorse something that the NEC actually accepted that we shouldn't have voted for in the first place. They accepted that we should have rejected it. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? All those against? That motion falls.

62, Feltham. Permission to withdraw from Feltham. Can you show permission to withdraw? Thank you Conference. That's withdrawn.

MOTION 62

POA NEC engage with NOMS to increase the standard PP rate to £30 per hour.
FELTHAM

MOTION 63

That the NEC challenge NOMS to pay payment plus or a re-introduction of overtime for any establishment to cover the short falls created by staff being sent to other establishments on detached duty.
FORD

63, Ford, do we have a seconder for Ford? Grampian

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 63 reads that the NEC challenge NOMS to pay Payment Plus or reintroduction of overtime for an establishment to cover shortfalls created by staff being sent to other establishments on detached duty. Colleagues, due to the chaos caused by NOMS, loyal staff are now being asked to support colleagues in other establishments. Although this is voluntary, staff are being sent from prisons which are short on staff themselves. A lot of this shortfall can be covered with reintroduction of overtime, which I feel staff would welcome due to lack of a pay rise, or that Payment Plus was used more constructively to cover shortfalls and not staff going on detached duty. Please support the motion.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: That must be rejected. Durham can't get people to do PP, they don't want it. We've got an email at home saying they're expecting to send 30 staff on detached duty. If we send 30 staff on detached duty we're not going to be able to open the gaol, we've got no staff, 'cause 30 staff go off duty. So if you're saying to us now, 'We'll pay PP overtime' that's great. Durham staff will not take it. We're getting them from all over the place doing PP at our place. We've got a hard core of a few but that's it. Myself and the Chair never done it Please reject.

<Applause>

JOHN BRISCOE – BRANCH SECRETARY, WOODHILL: Chair, NEC, Conference, we have more PP available than we can spend. It's used in every conceivable way you can imagine. What we need is staff. We have colleagues that come on detached duty, we've got First Deploy, they can fill their boots, some of them do. We have staff working excessive hours to the detriment of themselves, their health, the safety of themselves, the safety of other members and non-members. We don't need more PP. We don't come anywhere near to spending the budget that we've got. We need staff. That's what needs addressing. A lot of you will be sending staff to us on detached duty. We'll take anybody! We are so desperate. But it doesn't fill the void. I've got to ask you to reject this please, Conference.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to support this motion for all the reasons so eloquently laid out by my colleague from Ford. But Conference, this is about the opportunity to be offered PP, it's not about you having too much. That's what this motion calls for. In order to address that we have to support this motion. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ford to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? All those against? That falls.

64, Ford. Do we have a seconder for Ford? Feltham, thank you.

MOTION 64

That the NEC challenge NOMS to reward loyal experienced Uniformed Staff including all closed ranks that are currently working for NOMS are treated as fairly as the new recruits and rewarded with a deserved pay rise to help towards staff retention so they remain in post to guide and mentor new recruits.

FORD

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates, motion 64 reads that the NEC challenge NOMS to reward loyal, experienced uniformed staff, including all closed ranks that are currently working for NOMS are treated as fairly as new recruits rewarded with a deserved pay-rise to help towards staff retention so they remain in post to guide and mentor new recruits. Colleagues, since the creation of Fair and Sustainable, the staff have been divided into Fair and Sustainable on one side and closed ranks on the other. Yet we're all doing the same job. NOMS think that by giving loyal staff who have kept the roofs on prisons for the last 20 years plus a 0.6% pay rise, when the cost of living rises tenfold every year, wiping out this pittance in an instant. NOMS needs to start looking after the loyal staff they have rather than chucking money at new staff in the hope they will apply for a very difficult job, which we are already doing, and staying when they are employed, which we have been doing over many years. New recruits are only as good as the staff guiding them. Please support.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to reject this motion. We thank Ford for their well-meaning motion but this motion isn't inclusive, colleagues, we have members in G4S, Tascor, Serco, Sodexo, Mitie, this motion doesn't include them and after reconfiguration we may well have members in Uncle Tom Cobley and All, and on that basis I would ask you to reject. Please reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ford to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? Those against? It falls. Ford, you're on a roll, 65. Secunder for Ford?

MOTION 65

That the NEC pursue an agreement with NOMS and MoJ that when a member of staff reaches 30 years long service, they are awarded 1 week's extra leave in recognition.

FORD

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates, motion 65 reads that the NEC pursue an agreement with NOMS and the MOJ that when their member of staff reaches 30 years' long service they are awarded one extra week's leave in recognition. Colleagues, senior members of the service have come up with a total of 8,000 new frontline officers required to make the prison estate safe. Actually Michael Spurr's words, they were, on Radio 4 I believe. Sadly the service is losing experienced staff and long-serving members of staff quicker than the rate that they can recruit.

So by giving members who have done 30 years plus service an extra week's leave as reward, it's a pittance. Please support.

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to reject the motion again because this motion isn't inclusive. I'm not gonna go over the ground I've previously covered. It's a well-meaning motion but it doesn't include our members in the private sector. Please reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Ford to come back? Straight to the vote. All those in favour? Those against? That falls.

Now call motion 77 Lancaster Farms which has been moved to 66b. Do we have a seconder? Feltham.

MOTION 66b

The NEC negotiate that all staff who hold an additional qualification for example ACCT assessor, C&R Advanced, Hostage Negotiator, Care Team and First Aid are given a consolidated yearly retention bonus per Qualification.

Should this be refused the membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

LANCASTER FARMS

SARAH RIGBY – BRANCH CHAIR, LANCASTER FARMS: Chair, NEC, Conference, the motion reads the NEC negotiate that all staff who hold an additional qualification, for example Act Assessor, C&R Advanced, Hostage Negotiator, Care Team and First Aid, are given a consolidated yearly retention bonus per qualification. Should this be refused, the membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

Staff who volunteer for additional duties deserve to have their efforts acknowledged and recognised appropriately by our employer. There are elements of these additional tasks that put the individuals who perform them at increased risk of harm and our employer so far has failed to acknowledge this in any way. These additional qualifications can be incredibly challenging, both mentally and physically, which is why we should no longer continue to do them if our employer is not willing to pay us for doing them. Our employer has actually gone as far as to say that we cannot withdraw from volunteering from these additional duties. We ask that you support this motion to enable the NEC to open negotiations with NOMS and pay staff who are willing to go the extra mile what they deserve.

<Applause>

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to support this motion, and for Conference's information, we sent a team in to negotiate the First Aid Policy and at that meeting we requested a substantial consolidated payment for all members that were undertaking first aid, and let me tell you that once the paramedics had put the defibrillator away and the NOMS team had regained their composure they agreed to consider our option. Unfortunately NOMS have now responded by writing the First Aid requirements into the new band 4 Roboscrew job spec. And good luck with that.

However, you might well consider, why would the new band 4 grade, when they're being paid for their first aid, would somebody else that's outside that pay grade undertake that work? Certainly I wouldn't. So I would ask you to support this motion, Conference, for all of the reasons so eloquently laid out by my colleague from Lancaster Farms. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? Against? That's carried.

67, Feltham. Permission to withdraw Conference, do we have permission to withdraw motion ... thank you, that's withdrawn. 68, Hewell Closed, seconder for Hewell? Send, thank you.

MOTION 67

With the imposition of PSI 1/2017 Attendance Management. POA should not support any Operational staff recruitment campaigns

FELTHAM

MOTION 68

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS the restoration of the Supervising/Senior Officer's First Line Management responsibility.

HEWELL CLOSED

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 68 reads that Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS the restoration of supervising senior officers' first line management responsibility. It is very clear to the membership of Hewell that the current crisis in our prisons is in part as a consequence of implementation of benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable. The consequences of this on our membership on both a personal level for some, and the ability to perform our duties in a manner which fits the Prison Service statement of purpose has been disastrous. Benchmarking must be deconstructed and Fair and Sustainable must be deconstructed, not only for the sake of the public purse but to give our hardworking members a fighting chance to perform our primary role which is reducing reoffending by being an effective workforce. To help NOMS out the mess which they have created the solution proposed by the membership at Hewell is to restore first line management responsibilities to the supervising senior officer grades. An issue that has become very prevalent to me as a branch official supporting our colleagues through very difficult periods of time has been the low standard of first line management. CMs are rarely on the units as they would like to be, due to a variety of reasons such as OSG duties, nights and now have unrealistic expectations set to them. Senior officers have a better understanding of their staffing group as they work a lot more closely with the rank structures below them and a darn sight better than the CM group are in a position to. The senior officer rank used to write up SPDR reports for those whom they worked alongside and the close-knit residential units, watched how they interacted with both prisoners and their colleagues, how they did the job, performed the role and were best placed to give a credible and effective guidance to our members who were either learning their role or required a fresh impetus of motivation. The SO and band 4 position has been devalued by the loss of too much of its managerial capacity. We used to conduct return to work interviews after sick absences, maintaining contact when their people are off sick. The majority of CM grades do not know they have people off work and with an ever-increasing managerial role they are lacking in the support that is required to maintain contact and offer appropriate support. The amount of staff who've gone through the sick absence process in the past few years since benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable has been introduced has increased significantly. So much for a more for less policy. Quite rightly, senior officers at Hewell have contributed to the healthy, democratic debate on this subject and questioned why would our branch put forward such a motion, which puts work onto a rank that has been devalued and tossed into the NOMS rubbish bin? Those hard working professional staff who were previously part of that rank provided unquantified amounts of positivity impacting positively on the running of a Prison Service, but have been humiliated by benchmarking and Unfair and Unsustainable, not to mention being devalued and demotivated consistently by the yearly pay review body and devalued in responsibility. The question from them is why should they give the proverbial when the system changed by NOMS doesn't give the proverbial about them? However those individuals accept the current system which NOMS implemented does not work efficiently, effectively or provide value for money. It's now time, Conference, to turn the clock back, reverse the glaring errors of benchmarking and Fair and Sustainable and restore first line management responsibility back to the senior officer rank.

Benchmarking is dead. Unfair and Unsustainable is having a Mamba attack. Our prison value our rank. It's a shame that NOMS don't. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall, NEC. Oh ... there you are Andy, carry on!

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, NEC, Conference, Andy Baxter, Holme House, closed grade senior officer. I think our role should be to get our closed grade senior officers out of the closed grade. The way to do that is to get them to CM. Get them promoted. Why would we bring a motion to Conference that asks us to deliver work that's outside of our job specification? They JES'd it. They put it there. I agree with a lot of what Hewell said. They've really demoralised the senior officers. We need to find a way to get those senior officers out of the closed grade, back to getting a pay rise. One example at Holme House, the minute they started to (inaudible) benchmark hadn't worked, after a huge, long national battle over night staffing levels they came to us and said, 'We want to put band 4s back on nights.' They thought we would jump at it. We said, 'Yep, what you paying us extra for all that extra responsibility?' They went, 'What?' We said, 'What you gonna give us extra for taking on the responsibility on a night?' They didn't expect it. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC against the motion. Andy is correct in everything that he says. Whilst we understand the sentiment of the motion, we cannot agree to it. The motion states the restoration of the supervising senior officers' first line management responsibilities ... not all the supervising officers had

line management responsibilities. Since the introduction of F&S the service has allowed band 3s to be promoted to band 4s with no qualifications, which was just a slap in the face for the closed grade SOs. Management responsibilities were stripped from the closed grade SOs. Another slap in the face. But Conference, through the JES system, HMPPS have determined that first line management sits with the higher paid CMs. So why would we negotiate with them the restoration of extra responsibility for no financial reward? There are around 1,000 closed grade SOs still left in the system and Andy's correct again, what HMPPS should do is promote those that want it to CM. They qualify to do the job because they've got a JSAC. They've done the job. The SO took over as orderly officer when the service introduced the debacle of the DPSM programme. Conference, don't give the SOs another slap in the face. If they're to be managers they should be paid as managers. Please reject the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell to come back? To the vote. All those in favour please show? Those against? That falls. Thank you Conference. 15 minute break, back at 3:35.

<Break>

Thank you Conference. We will reconvene. Motion 71, Hewell Closed. Do we have a seconder for Hewell Closed? Ford.

MOTION 71

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS in order to re-instate just one separate pay scale for each individual Uniformed Grade and which also recognises length of Service.

HEWELL CLOSED

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 71. The Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS in order to reinstate just one separate pay scale for each individual uniformed grade and which also recognises length of service. This motion is a follow-on to the excellent debate brought by Wymott, Motion 53. For retention of staff purposes and listening to the membership of Hewell the message from our branch is absolutely loud and clear. We should have one pay scale for all OSG grades, one pay scale for all prison officers, one pay scale for all senior supervising officers and one separate pay scale for all custodial managers. Colleagues have fallen out with each other over being on different pay grades. When I first joined the Prison Service I accepted the fact that my experienced colleague alongside me was earning potentially 50% more than myself, but also had the comfort and confidence of knowing that in time and with experience gained I would in reality be earning the same rate of pay for doing the same job when I gained that same experience. The same can now not be said for our newer colleagues and members. Colleagues, let's set the tone and help NOMS improve staff moral by bringing pay parity and equality back to the workplace. Pay parity structured on fair wage expectations. There is no confusion over what constitutes a fair and equal pay scale at Hewell. The membership universally believe that all staff should be paid the same rate for doing the same job, no favouritism, no extras for sucking up to the gaffers, the same! NOMS seem to think their unifying the pay scales by offering us the opportunity to move into the new terms and conditions, the opportunity to reduce the standard of living by accepting a lower wage, the opportunity to throw away your inner/outer city living allowances, the opportunity to sign up to having to work a percentage of red hours. NOMS and trusts state quite clearly they're employing 2,500 new officers, 400 ex-service personnel and graduate students to help assist establishments who find it difficult to recruit. They're not looking at the main problems. There's nothing attracting 2,500 people to join the service, they do nothing to retain people in position. They do nothing to keep the staff they currently have and they do not warn staff about the conditions they're entering. I say to NOMS, the MOJ, Liz Truss and whoever replaces her for the next election, that to retain current staff, improve the moral and to interest the public in joining and retaining new staff, then pay a single structured pay scale which provides proper, decent living wage, maintain the LPAs as they do in other industries and public sectors and provide safe, decent working conditions. Conference, please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd, NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, the National Executive ask you to reject this motion. We don't negotiate pay with NOMS or HMPPS as it is now. We do not have the right to collective bargaining in pay terms. The instruction contained within this motion could also be detrimental to it. If we could enter into negotiations, as this motion instructs us to do, NOMS or HMPPS would probably rub their hands together to bring everybody down rather than up as we would expect. Conference, on those points the Executive ask you to reject the motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell to come back?

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: We should be after one pay scale which nobody should be at any detriment. This is what the motion's about. All one pay scale, no detriment to anything. The sliding scale is the same as it currently is. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote Conference. All those in favour please show? Those against? That motion is lost. 72, Hewell Closed. Secunder for Hewell? Send.

MOTION 72

The NEC negotiate with NOMS that absences which are as a consequence of assaults and injuries sustained in the workplace will be automatically exempt from the Attendance Management Policy sanctions and procedures.

HEWELL CLOSED

LES DENNIS, BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 72 reads the NEC negotiate with NOMS absences which as a consequence of assaults and injuries sustained in the workplace will be automatically except from attendance management, policy sanctions and procedures. The current process of having to apply and hope your governor is in a good mood or more to the point the external HR advisor instruction on how to proceeds in absolute nonsense and a demeaning experience for many. At Hewell we've seen many different ways of approaching this subject, from treating individual's cases with dignity and morality to downright offensive and outrageous. If the line management structure truly cared about their staff rather than adopting Victorian workhouse style human resource policies led by NOMS individuals, most of whom have had no credible knowledge of how working as a prison officer in today's violent and confrontational prison system is. Staff who have been assaulted have to go through several different emotions and mental states and often are in no fit state to rightly challenge any thoughtlessly dubious HR motivated decision that could affect them in the present or the future. The fact that the current system provides such a high degree of uncertainty and worry for the individual while they're recovering from their injuries at work, and exacerbates and fuels either physical or mental health symptoms or conditions. There are many days lost through sickness and injury and the shifts have to be covered by other staff. How many staff and colleagues do we have to lose under capability hearings, how many staff and colleagues are considered medically inefficient to continue with their current employment. How many unfairly thought of as workshy, or malingering staff have we got? The answer is too many. Staff have been subjected to assault or injury in the line of duty and are being subjected to capability hearings designed to do only one thing, which is to get rid of them. They say, 'Come in for an informal chat,' but use the findings against you and pressurise you into returning to work too early and promise restricted duties etc. They send you to ATOS or Occupational Health, they say to benefit you to ensure that everything is being done for you. What they really mean is they're sending you there to see what can be done to get rid of you. Line managers are already besieged with additional work and are not coping with people who are off sick due their own workloads. In particular those who require specialist input and one-to-one talks, and all the additional paperwork that is now involved. They do not distinguish any difference between someone who's had a heavy night, a cold or a sickness to anyone who's been injured by work, slip, trip or fall or has been assaulted in the course of their duties. All in the line of duty, all for the employer who states we are their best asset. All staff injured in the line of duty should be exempt from these insulting and often vilifying reviews and hearings. They should be treated with dignity and respect, as per the injury sustained, with a view to ensuring that the injuries have been treated, that any mental health scars are dealt with through counselling, and invited back to the workplace to get a feeling for it and meet with work colleagues to get a sense of wanting to come back. As a branch we fully accept the benefits of getting staff back to work at the earliest opportunity, which protects the individual from accusations. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the National Executive. The National Executive, Conference, is seeking your support with this motion. Hewell Closed have got it absolutely right. Every employer, not just NOMS, every employer that employs our members should have a proper occupational health scheme in place from day 1, when one of our members is assaulted on duty or is injured through the line of duty and we shouldn't accept anything else. Why is it, or how can it be right that when one of our members is assaulted in the workplace, should be bullied, harassed, and badgered to come back to work?

It shouldn't happen, and the sick absence policy that they've got in place is absolutely draconian. Why? Quite simple. They starve our members back to work. They come back to work, they're not fit to be at work, they come back to work because they're gonna go onto half pay, they come back to work because the employer just doesn't care. Conference, please support this motion. It will be difficult to achieve but this National Executive wants the chance to go for it. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll go to the vote. All those in favour please show. All those against? That's carried. 73 Hewell, do we have a secunder for Hewell?

MOTION 73

That NOMS recognise continued long service, by additionally awarding staff with a long Service Bar for each and every five years service after being awarded their 20 year long service medal.

HEWELL CLOSED

LES DENNIS, BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference, short one this one. Conference, 73 motion, that NOMS recognise continued long service by additionally awarding staff with a long-service bar for each and every five years' service after being awarded their 20-year long-service medal. This is a motion requested by a branch member. As a democratic branch that listens to its members, this is being presented to Conference. For some members, further recognition of length of service is important to them as individuals and the introduction of enhancements to the long service medal would further instil pride and potentially motivate them to remain in service. Please support the motion.

TERRY FULLERTON, ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair. Conference, Terry Fullerton speaking to motion 73 and asking Conference to reject the motion. Conference, I've never been in the military but I've always been moved by seeing Remembrance Day parades and you see those in the military with their medals with bars on and that indicating that they've been on tours of duty. I'm not sure that putting a bar on because you've done 20 years would have that same level of meaning. The other thing is, that's not lost on the employer but when long service medals were handed out and the Jubilee medals were handed out, there was a shedload ended up on Ebay as well. So that hasn't gone down very well with the employer either. So we're asking Conference to reject this. If you can last 25 years in this job, then we should be looking to maybe reward those staff that can last that long, maybe financially rather than a bar on a long service medal, so we're asking Conference to reject.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Hewell to come back?

LES DENNIS, BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: This motion matters to one of the members. It's not for everybody but it matters to one of our colleagues. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour please show? Those against? That motion is lost.

74, Hollesley Bay. Do we have a seconder for Hollesley Bay? Thank you.

MOTION 74

This Conference welcomes the introduction of the living wage. Conference further mandates the NEC to work with all relevant parties to ensure that our members receive the living wage; plus any relevant unsociable hour's payment.

HOLLESLEY BAY

ROB SMALLWOOD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HOLLESLEY BAY: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 74, this Conference welcomes the introduction of the living wage. Further, Conference mandates the NEC to work with all relevant parties to ensure that our members receive the living wage plus any relevant unsociable hours payment. Conference, I don't think many of us here today would want to applaud a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer; however, we must listen and not just be doing this for the sake of it, must listen carefully and see what's in it for our members. The Tory party might not want to listen to us, or take note of trade unionists, but we need to show that we are listening. We need to consider the implications with £9 an hour living wage by 2020. Conference, as trade unionists we should hold the government to their word. The present salary paid to a band 2 OSG starting in the prison service is just over £15,000 a year. This is equivalent to about £7.72 an hour. When you add the 17% shift allowance to that, it comes up to about £17,500. By 2020 an OSG earning £9 an hour would be earning £17,316 a year. Add the 17% shift allowance to that and that'll take it to over £20,000. A band 3 prison officer joining the service today earns equivalent the same including the shift allowance. This represents a 13% uplift in pay. It's not a great victory for staff who have been at the sharp end of the government's policy to persuade the public that we're public enemy number one for working in the public service. If we got a 13% pay increase a (inaudible) would start on approximately 23,500. The sooner we can get this the sooner we can close the gap between the closed grades and the new (inaudible) who are joining us today. Effectively it will give all the (inaudible) the £5,000 that's been given to some. The motion asks for the NEC to work with all relevant parties and in preparing this motion I was thinking that we may have to engage with the Pay Review Body again, who have done us no favours in the past. Well as (inaudible) explained today, we don't have to engage in dialogue with them, we're going to open dialogue directly with the employer.

The government's set the direction of travel, they want a living wage of £9 an hour. As I said earlier, the Conservatives might not want to listen to us. As trade unionists we will listen. We represent our members and will act in their best

interest. The government's pledged £9 an hour. Let's start pulling their strings, give the NEC a mandate on behalf of the membership. Let's have a pay rise. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, speaking against this motion. Conference, the motion reads Conference further mandates the NEC to work with all relevant parties to ensure that our members receive the living wage plus any relevant unsociable hours. If this motion is passed, you'll be mandating us to go to HMPPS and ask for a pay reduction for almost everybody. Pay rewards section at Clive House have already told us that no one will get less than the living wage. Please reject this motion and protect your current salaries. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Hollesley Bay, do you wish to come back? To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion's lost.

75, Hollesley Bay. Do we have a seconder for Hollesley Bay? Feltham, thank you.

MOTION 75

Conference mandates the NEC to engage with the employer to ensure that no Operational Support Group member is disadvantaged by the use of 'Prison Officer Support Grades'. Further Conference mandates the NEC to explore the development of such a grade for those joining the Service as Prison Officers or no longer able to carry out the full range of duties of a Prison Officer.

HOLLESLEY BAY

ROB SMALLWOOD – BRANCH SECRETARY, HOLLESLEY BAY: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion 75 reads Conference mandates the NEC to seek clarity and direction from the employer, for members currently temporarily advanced, whether these be temporarily promoted from CM to governor grade or from band 4 to CM. This is to identify avenues of career progression in regard to further training and accreditation for those wishing to become substantive at the higher grade. I think most of us will recognise that temporary advancement has an important part to play in the development of staff in the exposure to working at a higher grade and in the smoother running of establishments. However, we seem to have reached an impasse. Those who are temporarily promoted from CM to governor grade, when they attempt to gain the accreditation to be promoted the exams are seemingly unpassable for the vast majority of those that are putting themselves forward. You might ask if the old system of development and promotion is fatally flawed? Once you had to sit an exam and pass a JSAC to become an SO. Now it's based on the ability to do an LASIS and the vast majority of those applying for promotion are on the F&S terms and conditions. At Hollesley Bay 75% of the band 7 governor grades are temporary advanced from CM to governor. When campaigns have been run to fill these positions on a permanent basis, there's no applicants. Either Hollesley Bay is such an unattractive proposition for those holding the qualifications or there's no eligible candidates out there. Last year only a very small percentage of the candidates who sat the necessary exam for governor grade passed. This begs a number of questions. Is the bar set too high? Is it set at such a level that hopeful candidates are set up to fail? Does it suit the employer to have staff on temporary advancement? After all the pensionable pay of members on temporary advancement remains at their substantive rank. Gone are the days of seeing SOs TP'd up to PO to give them a PO's pension. When members are temporary advanced to governor they become all hours worked, any uplift in pay is quickly lost when you're having to work hours in excess of your contractual working week. If candidates cannot pass the necessary tests to gain promotion, then what training is being offered by the employer to improve their knowledge and ability? Another question we should ask, possibly cynically, is if they can't pass the exam, should they be in charge in the first place? There seems to be no light at the end of the tunnel for the temporary advancement. Whilst there seems to be an accreditation process, when people engage they fail. For every band 5 acting up as a governor there's a band 4 acting up as a CM. These members find themselves in seemingly impossible position as there's no opportunity to seek promotion. Members see what they think is pathways to progression through the ranks. When they start to travel these pathways they find themselves back where they were in the days of DPSM, trapped. Conference, we seem to have gone full circle from when we had SERCO developing Prison Service managers being trained for non-existent vacancies, to the situation we have now. Lots of vacancies but nobody holding the qualifications. If this motion is carried it will allow the NEC to see the training and development necessary for those temporary advanced to pass the necessary exams. This in turn will give us a prison service with opportunities for progression and let us be led by CM and band 7 governors that have been trained and passed the required exams. Please support the motion.

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

IAN CARSON – NEC: Chair, Conference, responding on behalf of the NEC asking you to support this motion. NOMS or HMPPS or whatever they may be known by next week should be providing on-going support for all temporary advanced members to ensure they get the opportunity to progress, and Rob's covered all the issues. I'm not going to go over them

again but what I would say is this: we need to be careful what we wish for because under deregulation, colleagues, prisons may well become in effect baronial fiefdoms where governors are doing their own thing and I've heard of a recent story where a band 3 officer was temporary promoted to band 5 and was loving the fact that he was suddenly a PO. When he disclosed I believe on one of these websites that the number one governor was having an affair and the following day found himself back down to band 3 again, so they're just acting ...

<Laughter>

I thought that might get a laugh but that actually happened, Conference, so we need to be careful what we wish for. So we'll seek clarity and direction. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: We'll go to the vote, Conference. All those in favour please show? Against? That's carried.

Hollesley Bay, 76. Conference, do Hollesley Bay have permission to withdraw their motion? Please show. Thank you. That motion is withdrawn.

MOTION 76

Conference mandates the NEC to engage with the employer to ensure that no Operational Support Group member is disadvantaged by the use of 'Prison Officer Support Grades'. Further Conference mandates the NEC to explore the development of such a grade for those joining the Service as Prison Officers or no longer able to carry out the full range of duties of a Prison Officer.

HOLLESLEY BAY

MOTION 78

That Conference mandates the NEC to negotiate with NOMS that all non- consolidated pay awards are pensionable payments.

LIVERPOOL

Liverpool 78.

Conference, do Liverpool have permission to withdraw their motion? Please show. Motion withdrawn. 79 Liverpool, seconder for Liverpool? Farms, thank you.

MOTION 79

That Conference mandates the NEC to negotiate with NOMS, a pensionable pay, Payment Plus rate.

LIVERPOOL

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Motion read that Conference mandates the NEC to negotiate with NOMS a pensionable payment plus rate. Quite a simple motion colleagues, any monies that we earn in the workplace should be pensionable. We've just heard this afternoon that many gaols in this country are reliant on PP. Now is the time to press the issue. Support the motion, colleagues.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Responding for the NEC, Andy Darken.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Afternoon Conference. Speaking on behalf of the NEC. It's ages since I spoke up here, innit? A simple motion deserves a simple response. Please support the motion. Thank you Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Let's go to a simple vote then! All those in favour please show? That's carried.

80 Liverpool. Secunder for Liverpool? Nottingham, thank you.

MOTION 80

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS to have a full time local rep on site due to ever increasing demands and levels of violence in the prison estate.

LIVERPOOL

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Conference, the motion reads that Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS to have a fulltime local rep on site due to ever-increasing demands and levels of violence in the prison estate. Colleagues, we're all branch officials here, we all know how much time it takes to represent our members properly. All I'm asking for is give us facility time back. Colleagues, support the motion please.

MICK PIMBLETT – BRANCH CHAIR, RISLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking in support of the motion. However we believe that this can be achieved by local branches without the need for the NEC. PSI10 of 2016, NOMS Health and Safety Arrangements for Consultation on Matters of Occupational Health, Safety and Fire has been in place for nearly 12 months. It outlines the arrangements and structures in place to ensure effective cooperation on health and safety matters between staff and managers, including violence. One mandatory instruction contained within the PSI is that union safety reps must be given such time as necessary to undertake their functions. These reps have functions, as opposed to duties and their responsibility is to their members and not to the management. Their duties can include investigating potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the work place, whether or not they are drawn to their attention by the employees they represent, to examine causes of accidents at the workplace, to make representation to the employer concerning complaints, to carry out formal inspections of the workplace and to represent the employees they were appointed to represent in consultation at the workplace with HSE inspectors or other inspectors enforcing health and safety. This list is not exhaustive but I think that we can all see that the functions are many and varied. It's the responsibility of governors within establishments to ensure that safety reps are allowed such time off with pay as is necessary to carry out the functions that I've just mentioned. With the current state of our prisons, I can't see how any governor can refuse to grant fulltime facility time for this very important function. Conference, support the motion... but don't wait on the NEC to get your fulltime facility time. Get your suggestions for change in, get on your profiles and fight for it locally.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Andy, your wish is my command. Please respond on behalf of the NEC.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Andy Darken responding on behalf of the NEC. I might speak a bit longer on this one because the NEC are asking you to reject this motion. Although we understand fully what Liverpool and Risley have said, Risley speaks more about health and safety rep, the motion doesn't actually ask for health and safety rep, it says 'a full time local rep' but also Conference, and I've noticed this throughout this Conference and it is a bit frustrating sometimes, that we always forget a section of our membership, which is the private sector. So it's OK negotiating with NOMS or HMPPS as it is now, but shouldn't I also be negotiating with G4S, with Sodexo, with Tascor and all the other organisations? We mustn't forget those members. But this issue about fulltime facility time is the Cabinet Office guidelines, I accept that they're wrong about 50% facility time and this NEC and this Union does and most other public sector unions accept they're wrong, but if we've got the means and the need to have extra facility time, we should be badgering our employer for that at local level, because what they'll want at Liverpool and Risley is not necessarily the same at Ford Open Prison and one of the issues is, if we get a mandate to go on a fulltime local rep and they say, 'What, in every prison? In every place that we work?' Well yeah, 'cause that's what the motion says Mr Spurr. Well that's not going to happen. And that is one of the problems with the motion. If there is a need for facility time please at a local level ask for it and put the application in and put the dispute in and make the case for the employment tribunal, but also let's not keep forgetting that 10% of our membership in the private sector. Let's also ask for facility time for those. Conference, please reject this motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Liverpool to come back?

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues, I've listened to what the NEC have had to say. As far as I'm concerned our members deserve the best possible representation. The level of representation they get shouldn't be decided on the whims of any individual governor. Colleagues, please support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? All those against? That's carried. 81 Parkhurst, do we have a seconder for this motion? Thank you.

MOTION 81

That the NEC seek resolution with NOMS that if at any time a member is forced to work above their normal shift time, and there is no operational necessity, then they are given the choice of either pay or TOIL, at the same rates specified in NTS/47/2010
PARKHURST

GLEN HOLMES – BRANCH CHAIR, PARKHURST: Chair, NEC, Conference, really what this motion's about is that when we don't follow the orders of working a normal day we actually have our money taken away from us at source from your pay. What we're saying is if we have to work longer than our shifts, and you don't get out on time, you should be reinstated the same amount of money as what you have taken off you when you don't work normally. So what we're saying is if they take a day's pay off us 'cause we don't go into work on time, then we should get a day's pay if we go in late. There's no mechanism in there for money to be paid into your account. All they give you is PP. So please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton for the NEC.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, Terry Fullerton speaking to motion 81 asking Conference to reject this motion. I'm not sure ... I heard what Parkhurst had to say and as far as I'm concerned and as far as the NEC is concerned, if there is no operational need for you to be late off duty then it must be a timing issue with the core day that you have in that establishment, if it means you're constantly getting off late off duty, so that needs to be addressed through your local SMT meetings to do that, but for us to go here with the specifics that's in this motion, it would and could open the door to the employer to seek to renegotiate Bulletin 8 because anything in that with TOIL and everything else is in Bulletin 8 and we've been trying to keep NOMS' hands off that or HMPPS's hands off that for quite some time. So we're asking Conference to reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Parkhurst to come back?

GLEN HOLMES – BRANCH CHAIR, PARKHURST: I understand what you're saying Terry. I think where the problem is is that it's not always ... there's not any operational reason, what we're saying is that sometimes ... I've put in, or there's 26 grievances gone in and it's all about policy. The grievances aren't dealt with at the right level, they can't be dealt with at the right level 'cause they try and deal with them in-house. There's no one in-house that can change policy. This needs a policy change. It can't be dealt with through the grievance procedure, the only way it can be dealt with is through Conference. So please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour please show? All those against? That's lost.

82, Nottingham. Conference, do we have permission to withdraw this motion, please show? Thank you Conference, that's withdrawn. 83 Sudbury. Do we have a seconder for Sudbury? Elmley. Thank you.

MOTION 82

That Conference mandates the NEC to negotiate with NOMS for all TOIL balances to be paid in cash after an 8 week period if not paid back.

NOTTINGHAM

MOTION 83

We as a branch ask Conference to mandate the NEC to pursue negotiation rights for non-Operational staff who work within Prison's and NOMS buildings.

As Fair and Sustainable grouped staff into Band's and not operational abilities, we as a Union should be representing every individual that works within prisons or NOMS buildings. Helping to promote and protect our Union members.

SUDBURY

MARK MERRISON – BRANCH CHAIR SUDBURY: Chair, NEC, Conference, we as a branch ask Conference to mandate the NEC to pursue negotiation rights for non-operational staff who work within prisons and NOMS buildings. As Fair and Sustainable grouped staff into bands and not operational abilities, we as a union should be representing every individual that works within prisons or NOMS buildings, helping to promote and protect our union members. Colleagues, NOMS are quite forthright in their statement, 'You may join any trade union which will admit you into the membership, but only recognise trade unions for particular trade or work area have the right to represent the collective interests of their members or to negotiate on your behalf.' In this multi-diverse world we live in, the evolution of Fair and not very Sustainable, and not forgetting JES, our members are subjected to unfair practices. When we, as branch officials, are called upon to act on their behalf, most concerns are working conditions, disciplinary, attendance management hearings and too many more to mention. This motion, if carried, gives us a stronger position when representing our members and would also give a positive way of recruiting new members. In our branch we have non-uniform members who deserve to have full negotiation rights. They want to be part of a union who have the same rights as unified grades have and if this means we have to apply to the Central Arbitrating Committee, then that should be the way forward. We should not stand

aside and allow any management to use this as a wedge to enforce bad practices on our non-uniform members.

To give you an example, our catering department includes band 3s, band 4s, non-operational grades. A recent event occurred when a shift pattern was imposed on staff and the majority are in the POA. When these members came to us for support, help and guidance they were told by management that the POA do not represent the catering staff. As you can see, these members are band 3s and band 4s. Surely because they are a non-operational grade, does this give them only the right to have a certain amount of representation? Colleagues, as branch officials you're the best people to represent everyone that walks through the gates and wishes to join our Union. Help to make sure that all members are offered the same professional service that you experts provide every day. I'm sure nationally branches up and down the country have members who've been subjected to regrading through medical or disciplinary reasons. The removal of the operational post puts them in job positions that the POA do not have collective bargaining rights for. Therefore staff are being disadvantaged by being put in this position. We can't stand aside and allow our members to be treated this way. Let us get together, support this motion and give all our members the correct assistance they deserve. Make our union grow from strength to strength. And as it says up there, belong to be strong. Thank you very much. Support this motion.

<Applause>

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

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, National Executive support this motion. If Conference mandate the NEC then we shall rightly apply on making the request for the recognition rights for the non-op staff within our workplace. We will need to offer the following information to HMPPS: the name of the union, describe the group of workers the union wants to represent, state the request is made under schedule A1 of TULCRA. The employer can then, if they wish, give us the right. However, they may state that there is already union recognition in place. The employer *can* recognise more than one union for the purposes of collective bargaining. The employer has ten days to respond to our letter. If they offer to negotiate there's a 20-day period to do this. If the employer fails to respond or rejects the request, we can make an application to the Central Arbitration Committee. The Union can apply to CAC for recognition as long as we meet the requirements under the qualifying letter on the application form. There are a number of qualifying conditions that we need to meet. CAC will ask the employer to complete a response form which will be copied to the Union. The panel will then look at the information sent by the POA to the employer to decide if the application meets the qualifying conditions to continue. The process should be completed within 20 days of the date CAC receive our application. The panel will formally decide if our application has been accepted. If it's accepted we'll proceed to the next stage. If not you may be in a position to resubmit your application form. Sudbury, genuinely the NEC thank you for bringing this motion as it's never been done before. Thank you Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour? Any against? That's carried.

85, The Verne, do we have a seconder for this motion? Sorry, 84 Swaleside. Secunder for Swaleside? Preston, thank you.

MOTION 84

That Conference mandate the NEC to maintain and improve the professionalism of the membership, by challenging the employer in their drive to de-skill the operational prison staff through diluting the processes for promotion and advancement.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Thank goodness for that. I was hoping to get at least one through! Good afternoon Conference, first of all I'd like to apologise to the private sector, because in putting this motion out I'm not aware of the processes for advancement and promotion within the private sector, so this is geared mainly towards the public sector prisons. However, in saying that, this is about challenging the employers. Now I was a bit surprised when motion 75 came along because it actually cut across a lot of what I wanted to say. But it's about mandating the NEC to maintain and improve the professionalism of the membership by challenging the employer in their drive to deskill the operational prison staff through diluting processes for promotion and advancement, which kind of flies in the face of motion 75, 'cause we're talking about the fact is that the JSAC process is so difficult to get through. Quite honestly I feel it is easier to get into the SAS than it is to actually pass the JSAC in the Prison Service.

Now over the years the employer has actually watered down and diluted the promotion and development processes for our staff. When they brought in band 4s and band 5s they also brought in with that Inspire and Aspire programme, that people who then went into a band 4 or a band 5 would have to complete those programmes before they then become

qualified within those grades. That didn't last until the ink went dry. They've introduced over the years NVQ Custody and Care, alright, and at the end of the day they failed dramatically to put resources into that and that died very quickly as well. They brought in the debacle which they called the DPSM programme and yet again that failed. They've now brought in new challenges for promotion to band 5 and above if people want to do this. The thing about this is that if we allow them to de-professionalise this service and people can get promotion at the drop of a hat, exactly as Ian Carson said when he replied to 75, you get the fiefdom on this whole thing where people promote those that they like for reasons that are all wrong. But more importantly it's our members that actually pay the penalty, and whilst our Acting Chair was challenged on his opening speech about the crap decision-making of some of our managers and those at higher grades and everything else, it could also be the fact is that some people, because they watered and diluted down the system to such a degree that we haven't invested sufficiently to ensure that these people who are getting developed and are promoted and moving forward, have the skills and knowledge to actually do the job they're being asked to do. They brought in the band 4 with JES and everything else in that, and suddenly band 3s were promoted to band 4s, suddenly called supervisors. They brought in the dual role for band 4s and this sort of stuff and now some of these band 4s are now running residential units or supervisors of residential units for which they do not have the skills to do. When challenged and everything else and no doubt the NEC was part of the negotiation of the development of this, the Aspire and the Inspire programmes were brought in to give them the skills required to carry out those roles and jobs. But they didn't put the investment in place and it died, it died very, very quickly. so now we have people carrying out roles without the investment in their development and prospects. Now in all grades, *all* grades, you get the good and the bad. Within the governor grades there are those who have come from the shop floor, worked their way up, more than likely a lot of them came through this forum, and they're now governor grades and they are pretty good at their job. But you also got the ones who got parachuted in from Dorothy Perkins and places like that, without the skills and knowledge that is required to carry out the job and that is putting our members into danger. That is endangering our health and safety and everything else. It's not giving our members and our staff the correct skills and knowledge to do the job that we require them to do. We're asking that we've got to stop this, we've got to stop our employers doing this on the cheap, and start investing in the development of our staff. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: You don't speak for ages and then up and down like a yo-yo now, I can't believe that's going on. Motion 84, on behalf of the NEC, urging Conference to support this motion. Support everything that's been said by Swaleside. And there's no need for Swaleside to apologise for the private sector on this one because the motion says to challenge the employer, and interestingly, straight at the end of Conference today the fringe meeting, two of the senior directors from G4S and Sodexo are here, so I can take on the challenge straight away if you pass the motion, so please pass the motion and we'll take the challenge on. Thank you Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote then. All those in favour please show? Any against? that's carried.

Conference, we have our last guest speaker of today and I'm very pleased to allow John Clinton, the General Secretary of the Irish POA, to send his fraternal greetings. Please show your appreciation for John Clinton of the Irish POA.

Address by John Clinton, General Secretary POA Ireland

JOHN CLINTON – GENERAL SECRETARY, POA REPUBLIC OF IRELAND: Thank you Mr Chairman. Once again it's a great pleasure to be able to come over here to give fraternal greetings on behalf of your colleagues in the POA in Southern Ireland. For me as the General Secretary it's a Conference that I really like to go to because the issues you're discussing here today, we've done exactly this two weeks ago, and all the same problems exist in our system that you have here at the moment, with the exception of overcrowding. We have actually managed to get a handle on that and for the first time in decades we'll have a level of what we would call a level playing field, where we're actually not overcrowded currently, and it does make things a bit easier. However, all the other problems you spoke about here, staff shortages, violence in prisons, drugs, PPA equipment, we have all them exact same problems as you do and all your colleagues in prisons across Europe have exactly the same, because as well as being the General Secretary of the POA in Southern Ireland, I'm actually the Vice President of EUROFEDOP, an organisation that you were in for many years, well represented either by Brian Caton, my good friend, and I'll talk about Brian a bit later, and Mark Freeman, but I can tell you that they all have the same difficulties like you do.

It's been two years since I've been at this Conference. I couldn't make it over last year due to a family bereavement. However, in that time we have seen some very big changes in the environment. Brexit, the election of Donald Trump that I never thought would happen, I have to say, and now you have the snap general election here and by all accounts your national media is quoting a party landslide victory. And as an outsider looking in I have to say this: I can never understand how a worker in this country would or even could consider voting for the Tory party. It's just amazing to see it as an outsider, I have to say. And if they do get their landslide victory, I don't ... I have to say, fancy what you are going to be

looking at and I think the NEC is going to have a really challenging time over the next five years, and in that regard I wish us all the best, and you'll always have a good, strong ally with us across the water.

Moving on in relation to Brexit, we are very concerned in Ireland because we're the only country with a land border with the UK. We certainly would not like to see a hard border come back between Southern Ireland and Northern Ireland. We don't think that would be very beneficial to anybody and as a man trading partner with the UK we hope that common sense prevails in the Brexit negotiations, but I'll just say this: I don't think that workers' rights will be given any credence during the discussions whatsoever, and I think I'll be confident that following leaving the EU, and if you're looking at a five-year term of the Tory government, I don't see workers' rights improving here for workers any better than anywhere in the EU. And I know in our country we certainly wouldn't have good working rights if it wasn't for the EU. If we were waiting on the good will of the Irish government we'd have no workers' rights. So difficulties lie ahead.

We're coming what I would say, seven to eight years of extreme hardship in our country. Everybody will know we were one of the economies that crashed. Prior to that was very difficult to take because prior to that we were in 20 years of social partnership. We were used to getting pay rises and we were used to very good working conditions in the public service. When our economy crashed, they introduced emergency financial legislation which attacked our pensions, our working conditions and our pay, to the tune of your average public servant getting the hit of about 14%. However, our economy has now recovered, it's now working very strongly and thankfully this year for the first time, from 1st April all public servants that were under 65,000 pensionable pay got a pay increase of €1,000. With a pay commission that's reporting this week, and I would say in two weeks' time it will be back into a round of public sector pay talks. We collectively bargain as a public service with our employer, with the government, and we're going into pay talks and the figure they're talking about bandying about is 6% over the 3-year period. What the unions are calling at home is we want pay recovery. We want our money back to the levels we were before the crash and thankfully we're now moving in that direction. However, I think the package will be difficult enough to shape because different parts of the public sector have different ideas and there is very big expectation out there amongst public service workers. So it's not gonna be an easy course but I think we'll get there.

In relation to our prison system, we have a lot of staff shortages during the financial crash our employer brought in an embargo on the public service so we haven't had any recruitment really since 2010. We're now commencing to recruit again but recruitment, like you're talking about here, our level of recruitment is not matching our level of retirement so there's a natural staff shortage there that we have to address. And hopefully we'll get there again. But I watched a programme recently on *Panorama*, an undercover journalist went into Northumberland Prison, I don't know if you've anyone here from Northumberland Prison? Well I have to say this; we have nowhere as bad as that in our system, nowhere and I have to say I was really taken aback by how bad things can get and I really feel for the people working there, and that's why you really need a strong union. That's why activists like you are here and that's why you need to be here. The guy from the GMB said it, the issues you were talking about that were there 100 years ago are still here, they're not getting any easier. In fact it's getting harder as we know, and your NEC need your full support, as do your members and I'd like to thank you, the activists here today, because I know you deal with this on your own time and without that unions just simply can't work.

To conclude, Mr Chairman, I'd like to send my best wishes to my good friend Brian Caton. He was spoken about here yesterday as being a stalwart of this trade union. Brian is not only a stalwart of the POA over there; he's been a very good comrade and friend to us in the Republic of Ireland and also he's been a very good comrade and friend that brought your message to Europe when he was there and he's highly thought of by his European colleagues and behalf of EUROFEDOP I'd also like to wish Brian a speedy recovery.

I'd also like to say it's great to see Colin back here. Colin hadn't been well as well and it's great to see him back on his feet and at Conference. I'd like to just conclude by wishing you all the best. Stay very strong, stay working on behalf of your members because they really need it. Thank you very much colleagues.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: John, thank you very much for those words. Just to pick you up on one point. You did mention that we've got a long five-year fight ahead with government. Well that's correct, if the Labour party get in we will be insisting they adhere to their promise to restore our trade union rights because we're not falling for the Jack Straw Judas trick again. And as for the Tories, well they'll try and crush us no matter what, they'll try and run us into court, 'cause they don't like what we say or what we do. Well I'll tell you what Conference – we will show them, as a membership, we won't be crushed. We'll stand up to them and we'll show them exactly how united we really are! Thank you John.

<Applause>

Moving on with business, 85, the Verne. Do we have a seconder for the Verne? Dartmoor, thank you.

MOTION 85

For the NEC to seek Specialist Pay for Tornado and Negotiator trained staff in recognition of the frequent courageous and dangerous work they carry out for the benefit of the Prison Service and their colleagues.

THE VERNE

BEN DUARTE – BRANCH SECRETARY, THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, esteemed observers, motion 85 reads for the NEC to seek specialist pay for Tornado and negotiator trained staff in recognition of the frequent courageous and dangerous work they carry out for the benefit of the Prison Service and all of us and our colleagues. Firstly, and above all this, this would show appreciation for this work. A word which many of us feel is lacking in recent times. The result of this appreciation would produce quality. Why? Instead of POELTS who are being bullied by managers to attend C&R advanced courses, we will then get volunteers who want to be there with a queue of staff wishing to join because they feel valued. This motion would improve the quality of our service and provide recognition of work which does not get enough credit. Please support the motion.

MICK PIMBLETT – BRANCH CHAIR, RISLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference, in 2015 NOMS agreed that a joint submission with the PGA to the Prison Service pay review body, that governors should be paid a retainer to do C&R. The recommendations were supported by the Prison Service pay review body and were contained in their report of 2016. However, NOMS have still not paid this and have not repeated that recommendation in their evidence to the PSPRB this year. The justification behind this recommendation in 2015 was the resilience that governors provide when covering staff walkouts or other occasions such as flu pandemics. Now forgive me if I'm mistaken, but I'm not aware of any flu pandemics taking place over the last couple of years in any of our prisons and although there have been a number of walkouts, for health and safety reasons, recently, I'm sure that the POA, as a responsible trade union, has always stated that we would respond to any incident in a prison which would affect anybody's health and safety. What I'm also aware of is that prison officers in my establishment are getting kitted up on a daily basis to deal with refractory and sometimes even rioting prisoners. Prison officers up and down the country are busting a gut to keep the lid on a service that is crumbling. There's an increase in self-harm, deaths in custody and serious assault's at an all-time high. All this whilst it appears that HMPPS are busting a gut to make sure that you're not rewarded for it. A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it the superficial appearance of it being right and so it is when prison officers continue to do these voluntary tasks for no remuneration. This is not right. If it's good enough for governors, it's good enough for prison officers. Many prison officers enjoy carrying out C&R training and they also enjoy going to work. However, how many prison officers would go to work for no pay? These voluntary tasks provide a skill and a service and these skills and services have a value. That value increases if it is provided at short notice, particularly if it can only be delivered by a handful of qualified individuals. Providing these services are not built into a prison officer's salary those voluntary tasks are not a term or condition of employment and since they're not a term or condition of your employment, if HMPPS want you to do any of these tasks, they should negotiate a remuneration package with this Union, or to put it another way, HMPPS need to reach an agreement with this Union on what value is placed on this work and the operational resilience and peace of mind which prison officers provide, which up until this point has been taken for granted. Unfortunately if previous behaviour from HMPPS is anything to go by, I believe that they'll refuse to negotiate on this. Why should we, when we've always done it for free? The fact is that being taken for granted is something that we all now take for granted and HMPPS appear happy to oblige. Some of our members may believe the current situation is acceptable because that's what we've always done and the resilience that we provide is important. They may believe that it's not moral or ethical. But I'll tell you what's not moral or ethical: expecting prison officers to undertake these voluntary tasks without fair remuneration is not moral or ethical. Conference, support the motion.

<Applause>

DAVE TODD – NEC: Chair, Conference, invited guests, the NEC support this motion. We believe that it's been achieved through the band 4 prison officer role. It's now up to each individual member if you think it's enough. Thank you Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour please show? Any against? That's carried. 86, the Verne. Do we have a seconder for the Verne. Thank you.

MOTION 86

For the NEC to seek to update and reword the OSG Agreement 42/97 to include the word detainee alongside prisoner.

THE VERNE

GARY LAST, BRANCH CHAIR – IRC THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion reads for NEC to seek to update

and reword the OSG agreement 42 of '97 to include the word 'detainee' alongside prisoner. This is asked for on behalf of the members and all operational support grades that work in this environment as they need the support and protection of this agreement that they don't have at present. Our staff indeed need to belong to be strong. Please support this motion. Please support brothers and sisters out there working hard for you. Thank you.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: There is a danger within this as well and that is we're asking the employer to go back and update and reword an OSG agreement and to be honest the employer doesn't like it. Well I know certainly in our prison our governor absolutely hates it because we use this against him almost on a weekly basis when he tries to do stuff that he shouldn't be doing, and I believe the experience is that when we go back and we're asking to renegotiate or to look at a document that it's alright us going there and saying we want it reworded to include detainees, but they will come with their list of what they want to review as well, and the chances are we are going to lose a lot more than we will by actually rewording this. I just think that that is a danger when we ask them to go back and review agreements that they really don't like. Thank you.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC, speaking against the motion. And Cookie's right again, there is major danger in this motion for our OSGs. HMPPS would like nothing more than us to ask for dialogue on the OSG agreement, because they won't let us change that wording and only that wording. They'll want something in return. As I said earlier, they've already tried to put this document through the deregulation process and we had it removed. Colleagues, don't force us into a position where we give HMPPS the opportunity to make changes to PSI 42 of '97, the OSG agreement. Protect our OSGs and reject the motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: The Verne, do you wish to come back?

GARY LAST, BRANCH CHAIR – IRC THE VERNE: Yep. NEC, Conference, Chair, yes, there is a danger, yes we accept it's real, does that mean we do not try? Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. Conference, all those in favour please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

Conference, just a few announcements, as we leave the hall at the close of today's proceedings, there will be a collection bucket for the hospice Francis House, please give generously. There's also a fringe meeting at 5 o'clock till 6, Private-v-Public. That's in the Waterfront Suite. You're very welcome to attend.

And also on Thursday morning at half-seven till half-eight in the same room we have a fringe meeting on pensions. So if you don't drink too much tonight, you might be able to make that one as well.

There was a question, colleagues, about what number circular was our branch secretary circular to you about the OSG ballot. That was 2 of 2017.

And finally on leaving the hall, can I speak with the delegates from Leeds?

Thank you for your attention today. It's been a long day. Thank you for your contribution. Nine o'clock tomorrow morning please.

POA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2017

Tuesday 9th to Thursday 11th May, 2017

Thursday 11th May

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference, good morning, I'll bring you to order. While we're waiting for people to settle down you might wanna get your raffle tickets out, I've got the results here. Starting with the winning ticket for the bottle of Jack Daniels – 462. We've got two bottles of posh wine on offer, which I don't know how to pronounce so they're bottles of wine, that's 107 and 415. I've just been told it's Château neuf-du-Pape.

<Laughter>

Apparently oldies special. That's 107 and 415. The biggest prize on offer, for a signed Stoke City shirt – 799. I hope it's not Peter Crouch's, it won't fit many people if it is. 799 Stoke City shirt. And then finally we have the Sophie Thornhill GB cycling team signed top and signed photo – she's quite alright here, I wouldn't mind this myself, she's alright – 19. Let us know if you're a winner.

On with Conference then. Before we go onto the order of the day I'd like to introduce Doug Nicholls from GFTU, that's the General Federation of Trade Unions, of which we are members, to address Conference. Please welcome Doug to the stage.

Address by Doug Nicholls, GFTU

DOUG NICHOLLS – GFTU: Thank you, Chair, General Secretary, colleagues, brothers and sisters. I can't tell you what a massive honour it is for me to be with you for your Conference. I was first elected General Secretary of my previous union in 1987; I was General Secretary till 2012 when I was elected to this job. And over the years I was always aware of the brilliant work of the POA and the strong positions that you put forward at the TUC and in the media and elsewhere. And of course over time I got to know Brian Caton and Colin and they would tell me about the work you do and the problems you face, and in more recent times I've had the privilege of having many discussions with Steve and Joe and Glyn and others about the horrendous situation that you've faced. And it's clear from the outside, as it were, that the thing that's been standing between the meltdown of the prison system and anything else is the POA and you should be congratulated for the absolutely tremendous work that you've been doing which has been so obvious to the British public over the recent period.

Now you've joined the General Federation of Trade Unions, one of the friendliest most practical supportive families of unions in the movement; there are 26 unions now affiliated, 6 more joined us over the last two years so I like to think that we're getting something right. And you'll get a massive welcome there this weekend when you attend as a POA, your first conference of the GFTU. And we are proud also that in our membership we've got the National Association of Probation Officers, so now we've got the two key union players in the criminal justice system and that puts us in good stead, because in the GFTU we're not just 100% behind your key demands, we're 1000% behind them. It is an absolute disgrace that there is no proper collective bargaining for this sector, and of course, paragraph 127 in the Prevention of Strike Action and so on is a blot on the industrial relations landscape for the whole country, and you are one of the few groups of workers in the world to be denied that right. So we will stand 1000% behind you if you ever call on us for practical support in your endeavours.

Now, the GFTU does many things. I put out a little brochure yesterday which covers some of our activity. All of the many education and training courses in this brochure, well, most of them except a couple which have qualifications, are free of charge to your members. You'll see the range of the offer that we have in here is extensive, from the law at work, health and safety organising, public speaking to some higher end stuff on advanced pensions and so on. And importantly in here there's quite a lot of stuff on trade union history; trade union history has been wiped out of the schools, taken off the university agendas so the next generation is not aware, as perhaps our generation was, of how much our trade union movement has contributed to our society and our democracy.

So there's a whole range of things in here that I hope you'll have a close look at, take that to your branches; you're part of this family which offers these free services to your members. We've got a wonderful hotel and conference centre in Leicestershire where you've already done some training, and I think it went very successfully there. Every penny we make in that hotel is ploughed back into the services that we want to offer you, so the principle that we're working on is that no union really should pay us more in affiliation fees than they actually get in return from the services we've got. And

at the weekend we're offering and launching a whole range of new services to be of practical benefit for specialist trade unions, which form the bedrock of the British trade union movement. There's been about 5,200 trade unions in British history – all of them except six or seven have been like the POA, specialist trade unions that know their trade, understand their industry inside out, have a close connection between the leadership and the membership where every member counts and where democracy prevails. And in the uncertainty of the political climate that we're in whatever happens on June the 8th it's gonna be turbulent, it's gonna be turbulent. We return to the old truths that workers strongly organised in the workplace will need strong independent trade unions and the GFTU is committed to playing that role and absolutely delighted that you're with us. Thanks very much, good luck with the rest of Conference.
<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Doug. On with business, we're now onto motion 87 – Swaleside and we have a debate so no seconder required.

MOTION 87

That Conference debate the concept of State Pension age minus (X) years as an acceptable alternative to that of providing a determinate retirement pension age. Is this something that the POA as a trade union and member of the wider trades' union movement should be considering?
SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning, Conference, what a way to start the day. In December last year when we got all the paperwork out for the very first time it was noted that our pension was going to be tied, or was trying to be tied, to a state pension age minus three years. This came out of the blue to us because it's the first time that I'd actually heard that our pension age had actually been tied to the national state pension age. In actual fact that's a slight mistruth on that one because they actually did that when they increased our pension age to 68 in line with state pension in the first place. But the thing that is worrying us is the fact is it's state pension age minus X number of years.

Now, anybody who's been around for a little while, over the past decade our pensions have been attacked on two occasions. One of the first occasions was when they actually changed the pension age for prison officers; we agreed it, where we then agreed that any person that joined the prison service after a certain date would have a pension age of 65. The current pension age at that time was 60. We, this union, agreed that anybody that joined this union after a certain date or joined the prison service after a certain date would have a pension age of 65. So that was the first attack on our pensions and the second attack of our pensions was when the Con Dems decided that pensions were too expensive. The biggest bill in the welfare fund or the welfare bill in this country is pensions, and if they want to save their money and everything else they attack our pensions.

So, what they did then was they decided, and you look at the two reasons that they used to justify moving our pension age, and one is because you sods, you're living too long, alright? Because of all the national health and all the health improvements and science and everything else we're living far too long. And secondly, there's not enough of us to keep going on and keep paying for it, so it's unaffordable. That was the reason that was used to move our pension age to 68, as a nation. Reality at that time was the government in power at that time wanted to move it to 70, and if you read the media and listened to the media at the time it was being bandied around – 70 was the target age. However, it was felt by the government on the day that that was too much so they reduced it to 68. However, whilst they reduced it don't ever think that they've actually got rid of that, because at the end of the day we are still gonna live longer and there's not enough people around and working to pay the bill to feed the state pension age. It was even said at the time that for young people starting work today or the next few years, 'It's unlikely that they'll have a state pension at the end of their working life', because of the affordability.

So let's get back to it – pension age minus X number of years. First time it had ever been mentioned, in December, just before Christmas and we were being asked to ballot on it. And this is one of the things, if you look at the motion, it says on there, 'Is this something that the POA as a trade union and member of the wider trade union movement should be considering?' Do we want to tie our pension age to rollers? Because as time goes on the pension age is going to be increased in the future. That's reality. Fail to learn from history and you fail to learn. History shows us that the pension age is going to increase as time goes on because of all the reasons I've already said.

So we believe, and maybe we should believe as trade unionists and as the trade union organisation, that workers have the rights to a determinate pension age. We should be able to say to somebody, 'If you continue to work and pay into your pension you will have the ability to retire at this age.' OK, your state pension age may move, but your working, your workplace pension will pay up at this age. Not be rolled back as you get further and further and closer and closer to retirement, because as you get closer your pension will be rolled further away. Is this something that the trade unions and the trade union organisation should accept? I don't believe it is. I believe we should be fighting for a determinate pension age for the workforce.

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. The state pension age which is often advertised at 68 is something of a sliding scale; because of my date of birth my state pension age is actually 67. So I'm not entirely sure how the X part would help, meaning that I could collect it three years earlier at 64, which curiously enough would bring it below the 65 which is currently set for some people. Again, I'm not entirely sure how achievable 60 would be, but I welcome any attempt and any efforts to bring our work pension down as quickly as possible to the age of 60.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson, NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference. Thank you very much for that full and frank debate on your pensions. Conference, we are the only trade union that has been successful in actually opening the door up to reducing the pension age or the retirement age, the retirement age of POA members in England and Wales in the public sector.

Now, as you are well aware the National Executive Committee have been in negotiations with prison reform. The state pension age minus three was the first part of those negotiations to come through. NOMS, or whatever they're called now, I'll call them NOMS 'cause I'll forget to call them whatever. NOMS agreed to pay those contributions in order for those members to go back from, which would be 67 to 64, on the understanding that in the second round of reform talks that this trade union wanted to return to 60 for *all* POA members. All POA members. So it was just the first stage.

As I always say at branch officials training, 'How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.' That was the first bite. Then we would've gone on for the next bit, then the next bit and before you know you've ate the elephant and we are back at 60. That was, and still is, the goal of your National Executive.

Then we talk about a determinate retirement age. Well, as you know a lot of you, I've been in your establishments, I've walked round, I've spoken to staff, what's the number one question that I get asked? 'Can I go part time at 60?' Right, so, and I say this everywhere I go, I say it at branch meetings, I say it to individuals, 'The trade union needs a grown up conversation', and the conversation is this: do you want to retire at 60 and leave or do you want the option to retire at 60? That's the main difference. And when you look at the following motions that are coming up, what you determine today in those motions is what your National Executive is gonna take forward. Is it gonna be easy? Nah. Because the membership rejected, and it was quite right that it went to the membership, because the membership rejected that it's gonna be very, very hard to open that door up again. But we are gonna go for it. In fact the General Secretary and the previous National Chairman had seen the Secretary of State because we want to go back into talks on pensions. Unfortunately we couldn't do anything because Teresa May called a general election so therefore we're in purdah and we're gonna have to wait.

Conference, you've also got this is your pension, it's our members' pension. This cannot be just left to the National Executive – our members have gotta start getting involved politically, they've gotta start visiting their MPs, inviting them into the establishments so they can see the work that you're doing. They've gotta understand that to retire at 67 is just not feasible for the work that we do for, and on behalf of, the public.

Conference, thank you very much for the debate.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Conference. 88 – Ford. Do we have a seconder for Ford? Thank you. I'd like to invite Leyhill to address their concerns to this motion.

MOTION 88

That the NEC actively pursue methods with MoJ and NOMS to achieve a reduction in the Alpha Pension Scheme so the pensionable age is reduced to 60 years in line with CSPS "classic" at no loss of contributions or additional cost to employees.

FORD

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Chair, NEC, delegates. So far this week I've lost all four, I expect to lose this one. However, the motion reads: That the NEC actively pursue methods with the MOJ and NOMS to achieve a reduction in the Alpha Pension Scheme so that the pensionable age is reduced to 60 years in line with CSPS 'Classic' at no loss of contributions or additional cost to employees.

Delegates, I'm one of these sad people that come to Conference every year and bring a pushbike, I've just cycled 105 miles this week and while I was sitting and thinking riding out last night I thought, 'I've lost all four this week, we'll try a different tactic.' So the script of it would be ... the member that asked me to put this one up said, and I quote, 'I expect

you to go to this year's sideshow (crossed out), Conference, and stand up there and rigorously defend my motion.' So I will to the best of my ability, and I ain't that good.

All I've got to say is I want to retire at 57, for personal reasons, but please let everyone have the option of retiring at 60. Please support.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference, I'm picking up on what Joe said when he was replying on the debate, and that is about the option to retire. And looking at these motions and everything else it's almost saying that we're deeming that we have a retirement age of 60 so therefore, just as you were in the police, once you reach 60, that's it, you have to leave. And I imagine that during the reply that Joe will actually turn around and ask for this to be rejected on that basis because of the wording. Do you know what? That is politics. At the end of the day if we want to play politics let's go to parliament. We know what these motions are about; it's already a mandate of this union to achieve 60 anyway, so whether these stand or whether they fall on that one, we've already mandated our NEC to fight for a retirement age of 60. However, bear in mind, as I said before, we accepted a retirement of 65 for some of our members; those members are rapidly becoming the majority of this union.

Who in this room remembers or is under the terms of Fresh Start? A couple of hands, yeah. When they first brought that in they were the majority and they looked after themselves. For anybody that's outside of Fresh Start, and as they've fallen off and they've become the minority, if they start attacking the rights of the Fresh Start people are we gonna take action, are your members gonna go out and fight for their pension and their rights? The answer is gonna be absolutely not! We can't even do a ballot, we can't even vote on our pensions. The two things that I thought would actually reinvigorate this union is pay and pensions. And we can't do it. So are we gonna stand up and fight for the Fresh Start rights? Absolutely not.

As our membership have a retirement age of 65-68 are they gonna start fighting for me who has a retirement age of 60? Because I was one of those who was here at that time when we agreed a retirement age of 65 for Officer IIs. And so on, and so on, and so on. We cannot, we must not lose sight of the fact we fight for all of our members, for everybody. We accepted 65. Reach for the stars, you may end up getting the moon, but if you don't reach out we're gonna end up with nothing. We have to fight for 60. I imagine that this is gonna get turned down on the wording, let's not play politics, let's get this through. We want a retirement age of 60. Please support.

<Applause>

STEVE SEYMOUR – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP LEYHILL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Our motion is two down from the one that we're currently discussing.

Last year at Conference, colleagues from north of the border mentioned the fact of the Alpha Pension Scheme and looking at your first report that you get from it. This arrived duly late last year and a lot of our members read it and then suddenly found out that their retirement age, and their pension contributions, had all increased and they were gonna get very little out of it, they were gonna have to keep working and working. We asked the membership what they thought about this and certain members came back and said, 'We need to ask the question, "Can our rights be go back to 60 as with the Classic age?"' Rather than the Alpha Pension which they thought had been imposed on them. We as a committee discussed it and thought we'll take it to Conference and ask Conference to have a look and make a decision on this.

The pension age for 60 is something that most of our colleagues at Leyhill are aiming towards. They've now had this Alpha Scheme imposed on them and it has thrown retirement plans into disarray. They are not happy and they've asked us to come through and see if it's possible for their rights to go back to those in the Classic Scheme and to have their age back to 60. It may be it's a case of shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted, but unless we ask we don't know. I echo the comments and fully support the comments of Swaleside and of Ford – we must do something about this, if it's possible let's do it, let's take it forward and let's show our employer that whatever they impose they have to get our agreement first before they try and force it on us and we have to have a reason and a grown up talk about the pension age.

Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MICK DANBY – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HUMBER: Chair, NEC, Conference. I, like many in here, had a previous life before I joined the Prison Service; I spent 22 years in the British Army. How can a 68-year-old, or an infantry battalion

of an average age of 60-68, do an advanced to contact across one of the Arabian desserts? It can't. So how do they expect 60-68-year-old men and women to man landings with the increasing violence that is happening on the landings on a day-to-day basis? NOMS, MOJ get a grip! It can't happen. It physically can't happen. I am 53 years of age, I am at that dodgy age where if I fall in a rough and tumble, in a C&R incident and I end up going down stairs and I break a hip, I'm knackered. I am not gonna recover from that, along with many other people in this room and up and down the estate, because our bodies physically can't take it.

60 – I would settle for the option to retire at 60, 'cause then it's *my* option, it's *your* option. Unlike the police where, whatever age it is, I think it's 55, isn't it, 55-60, when they finish they go, simple. Worst case scenario we should be given the option to retire when we feel fit or if we have an ailment that shows its ugly head you make a decision on how and where you want to go with it. 68 is bang out of order, let's get that age down and give us the option when we retire. Support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee. When we get our documents, like you do, and it says, 'NEC recommendation', in this one it's got, 'Listening brief', and we trust you. So here we go.

Conference, I've been listening to the debate and I'm still not sure what you want. People are coming to the rostrum and saying, 'Wanna retire at 60; I want the option to retire at 60.' Until we make that decision how do we go forward? How do we go forward? So we look at the Ford's motion and see where it is and it says, 'So the pensionable age is reduced to 60 years.' Pensionable age and retirement age are two different things. At present you can retired from the age of 55, that is your pensionable age. Your retirement age, if you are pre-Fresh Start, is 55; if you remain in Classic and you're protected it's 60; 65 for Novos and if you've crossed over into Alpha it's 67. The argument that we get from government, because when you look at it all those who went over were in a pension scheme beforehand, you already have the option to retire at 60. You have that option to retire at 60 and take the pension that you've accrued, if it was in Classic, Classic Plus, whatever. If you then wanted to take your Alpha then you can do because you're over the pensionable age which is 55. The problem that we've got is the actuarial reduction that you would suffer to get from 67 back down to 60.

Now, I know members in the hall have been telling me that the FCA have come out with something new on the 1%, until I get and look at that, along with Neil, so we can get some legal advice and see if it's something that is gonna benefit us, which I hope it will, then we will do a circular and tell you our actions. But until that time, Conference, to go and take your Alpha pension at 60 is going to cost 31% of that second pension, so you already have.

Now, the recommendation from the National Executive... because I'm confused, and I am confused, and if I get wrong off the National Chair I get wrong off the National Chair; there's other motions on the order paper, right? Now, if you want the option to retire at 60 then I would say vote against this motion; if you want the option to retire at 60 then vote in favour. Over to you, Conference, thank you.

If you want the option to retire at 60, sorry, vote against it.

<Laughter>

What?

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: We're all confused as well now.

<Laughter> <Applause>

Let's take this point of order, Joe.

<Laughter>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I think what he's trying to say is if you want to have to leave and retire at 60, alright, if you want to have to leave and retire at 60...

<Laughter>

Sorry, if you want the option to retire at 60 vote for this, but if you want to be forced to retire at 60 then you have to go against it. Is that right?

VARIOUS: No, other way round.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Or the other way around?

<Laughter>

I drank in the same place he did.

<Laughter>

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: If you want the option to retire at 60, vote in favour. If you want to retire at 60 and leave you vote against it.

<Laughter>

Thank you. I've been up since half-seven!

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: And now I have to rule on a point of order that nobody, including me, understood.

<Laughter>

So I'll rule it as – out of order.

This is gonna be an interesting vote. Scrutineers and tellers, get ready.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: abstaining.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah, abstention might be a good option.

Motion 88 – Ford, do you wish to come back and confuse us even more? Come on.

KEVIN JEPHSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FORD: Can you just clarify, I'm confused, and I didn't even write the motion. I think I've got it in my head but I'm not sure. All I've gotta say is, delegates, you're gonna have to decide this one in your own merits for the individuals. I know where I'm voting, I know where my members wanted you to vote. Please support it.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour of this motion, please show? All those against? That is lost.

89 – Lancaster Farms. Do we have a seconder? Thank you, Littlehey.

MOTION 89

The NEC continue negotiations with the Government over the current pension age and that they inform them the retirement date for all operational staff must be set to 60 years of age. The membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

LANCASTER FARMS

SARAH RIGBY – BRANCH CHAIR, LANCASTER FARMS: Chair, NEC, Conference. The motion reads: The NEC continue negotiations with the government over the current pension age and they inform them the retirement age for all operational staff must be set to 60 years of age. The membership instruct the NEC to take whatever action they deem necessary to achieve this goal.

The members at Lancaster Farms wanted a motion brought to Conference regarding pension age following the prison reform agreement. The agreement was endorsed by the NEC but the wider membership voted against it. Pension reform arrangements were proposed as part of the agreement and we had many discussions as a branch around this particular aspect of the offer on the table. The majority of staff who I represent planned for a retirement age of 60 when they joined the Prison Service, the same as most people in this room. The introduction of the Alpha Pension Scheme in 2015

increased our retirement age by linking normal pension age to state pension age. The reform agreement proposed that prison officers would have a normal pension age of 65 or state pension age minus three years, whichever was the highest, obviously. This was unacceptable to the members at Lancaster Farms who want nothing less than what they originally signed up to – a retirement age of 60 with no additional conditions or detriments attached. The reform agreement did make it clear that any staff with lower pension age protections would not be affected. It goes without saying the intention of this motion is not to change their terms or conditions either.

This motion was proposed with the intention of sending a clear message to the NEC, to our employer and to the government that our retirement age should be returned to 60 years of age. It should not be linked to state pension age and it should not cost us anymore in contributions, anything less than this is not acceptable.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I think I've just been told I've gotta retire in two-and-a-half years' time. I'm pre-Fresh Start. I'm a retired pensioner, a re-employed pensioner. I think people need to look at what it means to be a re-employed pensioner. My basic wage as a prison officer, before I left, take-home pay was 1800-quid. I took the bigger lump sum, I couldn't take it all apparently, it was something to do with tax position. I don't pay high rate tax or anything like that, but because they have a mythical tax figure you can't do it, so I ended up cashing £2,100 of my lump sum in.

I am presently on the same wage as my Branch Chairman, I come out with, you'd think a half pay, you would think 1800-quid you'd come out with 900, I come out with 1,050 because you don't pay national insurance contributions on your pension once you take your pension. It makes a big difference. I've got lads who's coming to me, and lasses, who are saying, 'I want to go early.' It's not for me to tell them what to do, how to do it because I don't know anybody's financial situation. What I say to them is, 'You need to look at that, because some people after they've gone below 60...' for instance, I can give you one example, there's a lad came up and said he's 58 and he wanted to go early, so we had the actuarial pension thing, he's went early, exactly the same as me, 58, I says to him, 'How much are you worse off a month?' 'I'm £200 a month worse off going at 58. I don't look at it £200 a month, I look at I was working for £3 an hour.'

I think the way forward is if you can afford it that you may want to take your pensions with that actuarial loss, then do it, but at the present time if this motion comes through, as I say, we need to make that decision. Do you want to go at 60 and you must go at 60, because at the present time where am I gonna get a job that pays us £1,050 to come out with for working 19.5 hours? I'm working 12 shifts in the next two months, that's all I'm working on my shift pattern. I follow the shift pattern of everybody else. I don't know what we're gonna do about it but there's an awful lot of people out there who has a pension age of 65, they joined the job with a pension age of 65, I don't know how we're gonna change that one back. They signed up, they joined the job at 65. You've got people who's joined the job now, you've seen them all coming in, all these new starters – 67, they're signing up for that. Who in their right mind would let them go back as far as 60? I think we've got a hell of a fight, I wish you well but I don't know what we're gonna do with it.

JIM MCCABE – BRANCH SECRETARY, BARLINNIE: Chair, Conference. Against this motion. I get the sentiments, however, when we're saying the operational staff must be set at 60 years of age, is that saying that we're forcing staff to retire, which would lead us into a potential lawsuit against this union for breaches of the Age Discrimination Equality Act. Because to telling somebody they cannae work and they can use age to say, 'Well, actually I can', and then take us to court. So on that basis, I like the sentiments, but I think we've got to reject this motion.

TERRY MCCARTHY – BRANCH CHAIR, LIVERPOOL: Colleagues. It needs to be mandatory that prison staff retire at the age of 60. Staff need to be honest with themselves – 63 and 64 years of age is no time to be roaring round on a landing. Colleagues, be honest with yourselves, 60 needs to be our retirement age. Support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe-confused-Simpson on behalf of the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive. I've been up since half-seven, I done a pensions thing this morning so my head's full of fluff, and I live and breathe this as well.

Conference, the NEC are seeking support of this motion because it gives us a clear mandate from you to go forward and achieve a retirement age, mandatory retirement age, of 60 for everyone frontline POA member. Now, when we're talking about frontline we're not just talking about officers, we're talking about our colleagues in the special hospitals as well and our colleagues in the private sector, because although they're not prison officers they work in a custodial environment, except our colleagues in the special hospitals also have that caring side as well because they're classed as patient, but they *do* C&R exactly the same as every other one. So that's what we're gonna say, is it gonna be difficult? Oh god, aye! Will we see it in my lifetime? I certainly hope so because the work that you do, it doesn't... we can come here and tell

each other exactly what we do for a living, well, I don't do it now actually, I mean I'd like to C&R some of the NEC at times, but I don't do it for a living, you do. You're not here to convince yourselves how hard the job is, we've gotta convince the public, we've gotta convince politicians and we've gotta convince the next government that comes in to say the job that you do is hard, difficult and at times very dangerous. How do we do that? You invite them in. You attend parliament, you attend your MP surgeries and you tell them exactly what it is.

We have got lots of stuff on our website, the last one that we put out was the violence document and in the corner it had 'beware' there is graphic pictures in it. I gave that to my MP when I was walking through Portcullis House, and as I was walking along all I heard was a thud, 'cause when I turned round he'd fainted because he'd opened up the book and he saw the injuries that had been sustained from one of our colleagues at Frankland. We all know that case. They don't know what you do. They don't know what you do and we've gotta tell them. But the most fundamental thing that we have to get into politicians' and into the next government's head is we need to retire from frontline duties at 60. Colleagues, please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote then, all those in favour please show? Against? That is carried.

Leyhill, your motion at 90 fell to motion 88. The Verne, motion 92. Do we have a seconder for The Verne? Thank you.

MOTION 92

For the NEC to commission Thompson Solicitors to make a legal challenge against the Government with regard to age discrimination for our members who have had their pensions forcibly amended to a new Scheme in line with the successful outcome for the Judiciary system and be recognised as a Uniformed Service with a retirement age of 60.
THE VERNE

SIMON JOSLIN –THE VERNE: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 92 reads: For the NEC to commission Thompson Solicitors to make a legal challenge against the governor with regard to age discrimination for our members who have had their pensions forcibly amended to a new scheme in line with the successful outcome for the judiciary system and be recognised as a uniformed service with a retirement age of 60.

Apologies for reading off a script; our members want a legal challenge. Patience in regards to challenging this has now gone amongst the membership. The Hutton report clearly states uniformed services will retire at 60. Since when are we not a uniformed service? Let's fight this as our ultimate challenge for our members, let the membership take pride in what the POA are all about. We may not be able to legally take industrial action but we can fight this without fear of an injunction. What if we lose the challenge, colleagues? We would've tried and done the very best by our members and given them hope and a chance, as a result we would've won their respect and sent out a message to all prison officers, 'We will fight for you'. Support our members, support this motion.

<Applause>

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR: ASHWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. I've had the pleasure of being part of three pension schemes in my 30 years as a nurse. None of them when they've changed have actually been of benefit to me. This motion talks about uniformed grades, POA members and retirement at 60. It was good to hear Joe actually acknowledge that we have another pension scheme, the NHS one, and that our private sector colleagues are in a different scheme again. Because I think when the NEC go into negotiations they all too often forget about us. My pension age is now 67 and I will be going at 60 and I will be taking an actuarial reduction because I cannot stay any longer than that, but I am gonna have to take a hit in my wallet to do that.

I can't see the NEC changing anything for anybody in the NHS. The POA are a very small fish in a very big pond in the NHS. I do believe that they have a chance to change things for you, and I think that one way of doing that is to fund some kind of legal challenge to this. Matter of fact I think it's the only way of doing it. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee seeking rejection of the motion, and why are we doing that? For the simple reason we are, at present, reviewing the legal advice that we've had, we've been doing it with Neil Johnson and the barristers.

The National Executive will be debating this and in the next six weeks we'll be putting out information as to the challenge that we're gonna do, because the advice that we've got is not dissimilar to what the judges have got. The judges won their first hurdle, the first hurdle at an employment tribunal. Now, who did the judges go in front of? Another judge. I'm not saying that it was biased or anything like that but if the bloke who was sat at the desk was in one of them protective carapaces he's not gonna turn around and say no. However, we are constantly in touch with the barristers who were running the judges' case and who were running the FBU's case 'cause the Fire Brigade's Union have just lost theirs, and they're both the same case, so how can one employment tribunal rule in one and rule against the other? The advice that we've got is to put ours in and do what they call 'a stay' i.e. it sits there and waits for the outcome from the others.

Conference, the legal challenge is not lost on us, what I'm asking on behalf of the National Executive is to trust your National Executive to make the right choice. This would tie our hands because we wouldn't use Thompsons, we would go through specialist barristers who deal with pensions, which we have done on our behalf. So please, Conference, trust your National Executive, reject this motion and see the legal challenge that we put forward. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Verne to come back?

SIMON JOSLIN – THE VERNE: Yes please, yeah. Chair, NEC, Conference, the FBU challenge is completely different to ours. The membership rejected the minus three year pay deal nonsense, they do not want it, they want a legal challenge and what they were promised. They want what they signed up for, how long do we have to wait for this, another year, another five years? The membership want action – 68 is absolutely ridiculous. They do not want the pay deal what the pension was linked in with which the NEC endorsed. Support and listen to the members, they want some action and the NEC to at least try. Support the motion, thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion is lost.

Scrubs, your motions 93 and 94 fell to motion 89.

MOTION 93

That Conference instructs the NEC to negotiate with NOMS a reinstated full, but not mandatory retirement age for Operational Support Grades of 60 at nil cost to the member, further any offer of a reduced retirement age for Operational Support Grades which does not meet this criteria or contains caveats or additional proposals from NOMS be put to the affected membership for ballot.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

MOTION 94

That Conference instructs the NEC that should NOMS be unwilling to negotiate a reinstated full, but not mandatory retirement age of 60 for Operational Support Grades at nil cost to the member then the NEC will ballot the OSG membership for escalating industrial action up to and including strike action.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

We're now onto motion 97 – Dartmoor. Do we have a seconder for Dartmoor? Thank you, Exeter.

MOTION 97

That Conference instruct the NEC to start legal action into the inequality and unfair pay differences between closed grades and fair and sustainable grades. To take into account the different pay scales and incentives that are being used around the estate.

DARTMOOR

DANIEL ATKINS – BRANCH SECRETARY, DARTMOOR: Chair, NEC, Conference. The motion reads: The Conference instruct the NEC to start legal action into the inequality and unfair pay differences between closed grades and Fair and Sustainable grades. To take into account the different pay scales and incentives that are being used around the estate.

Conference, we debated this on motion 53 which NEC supported us, wanted us to push this forward. The situation with pay has become blurred to say the least. I have always believed a punch is a punch, be it in an open prison or high security prison, whether it is in London, Dartmoor or Durham. We have a situation now that a new member of staff can join Dartmoor on £17,736 and a new member of staff can join in London on £31,000. This cannot be right. We have, at

Dartmoor, members who have over 30 years' service that still have not reached £30,000. We have a situation where staff on closed pay and conditions are taking home less money than they did in 2009, no acceptable pay rises for at least eight years, an increase in national insurance and increases to our pension contributions.

Conference, there has to be some form of legal action we can take. If the judges can achieve changes in their terms and conditions under equality surely we can. At Dartmoor our new staff submitted grievances concerning the disparity in their pay and the pay other new staff received in other establishments, and those grievances got them nowhere. Is it not time to use our legal resources to get staff on Fair and Sustainable pay and conditions placed onto the original pay and conditions so that we have equality and then negotiate a suitable increase which takes into account the lack of progress in the last eight years? All the staff within their relevant grades are doing the same job but are not receiving the same remuneration. All we ask is that we receive a fair pay for a fair day's work. Conference, please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis on behalf of the POA.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Morning Chair, NEC, Conference, responding to motion 97. Two elements to motion 97, one talks about fair pay and one talks about equal pay. Equal pay is based on gender, either men getting more money than women or women getting more money than men as a general principle. Therefore, when NOMS, as it was, introduced Fair and Sustainable there was no equal pay claim available and there still isn't. We advised NOMS in 2012 that they were at risk of potential legal pay claims because we believed that the pay scales that they imposed were so poor that it would probably force more and more secondary income earners to join the service and that the imbalance of staff may, at one point, come to a position where a legal challenge on equal pay could be mounted. We are a long way, colleagues, away from that gender imbalance. And therefore the first element asks for a legal challenge on equal pay, so at this time and at this point because it says, 'to start immediate legal action', that is not possible and we ask Conference to reject the element.

The second point is a very, very valid and strong argument and that is about unfair pay. Unfortunately we can't take a claim for unfair pay to an employment tribunal as a collective and therefore because this has two elements the Executive seek rejection of the motion. But I would like to give some direction to all of the members out there who, quite rightly, feel absolutely aggrieved at the way the employer, HMPPS, Martin Beecroft, is using sticky plasters to resolve his problems and the problems of the government in staffing our prisons. So, all of the people who are outside of the 31 sites, are outside of areas that are now being given bonuses should immediately raise a grievance on the basis that the situation is unfair, unjust, because you do a job of equal value. And we should, by a week on Monday, have about 20,000 grievances lodged. And I welcome taking receipt of all of them. And when we do that your governor will not be in a position to respond to those because all the grievances will need to be resolved by the only person within HMPPS who can overrule the NOMS pay manual, and that is the wonderful, nice, Michael Spurr. So your grievances, all 20,000 of them, will tie him up for a little while while he gets a stock answer from somebody in pay and reward.

So, colleagues, please reject the motion. The motion on 53 was very pertinent because that talks about a decision of trying to reduce pay to rectify the injustice, which is why we supported that, but on this motion, colleagues, the elements are unfair, please reject. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Dartmoor to come back? Straight to the vote then, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion's lost.

98 – Durham. Does he have permission to withdraw, Conference, please show? That's withdrawn.

99 – Durham. Secunder for Durham? Littlehey, thank you.

MOTION 98

That we mandate the NEC to seek a review up to and including a Judicial Review into the differential of pay and pensions between ourselves and the Police Service.

DURHAM

MOTION 99

That we mandate the NEC to seek an Independent Review up to and including a Judicial Review into fraud committed in the Prison Service.

DURHAM

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Last night I was told could I sing it in the style of Frank Sinatra 'cause you might understand it better, I'm gonna save your ears for that and not. Motion 99: That we mandate the NEC to seek an independent review up and to including a judicial review into fraud committed in the Prison Service. Always save the best one to last.

This is endemic in the Prison Service, fraud is out of hand, from the top right down to the bottom. I'll refer to motion 12 again, as I said I would do. The incident that happened I wrote to Mr Copple:

I recently represented two members of staff in a Code of Discipline. From the outset I did not believe it should've went that far and a simple enquiry would've been sufficient. However, the Commissioning Officer thought otherwise and the investigation and the disciplinary hearing followed, both members of staff were found guilty and punished for their wrong doing. The staff accepted their punishment given to them without appeal by the governor Tim Allen. That should've been the end to the episode. However, their line manager decided otherwise and stated he could not have either of them working in the place of work due to lack of trust; one member of staff had worked in the place of work continually during the investigation. The result was one member of staff resigned over the draconian decision by the line manager to transfer him to a prison more than one hour away. You might think why I'm contacting you about this during the hearing, the Commissioning Officer was questioned.

I've already went into that about the ex DVC and he wouldn't do the investigation. So we carried on and Mr Copple didn't reply. I then had somebody replying on behalf of the area manager.

Craig, your email has been passed to me for response. You recognise yourself that the staff accepted the outcome of the disciplinary hearing...

They couldn't do anything else, 'cause if they appealed they would've got sacked.

And that the option to appeal was available to them. I am content and satisfied that the management action taken following the disciplinary appeal was appropriate given the particular circumstances. Furthermore, I am content that both the disciplinary hearing and the subsequent management actions adhered satisfactory to policy. I am also glad to know that you raised the concern you identified via the appropriate channel, confidentiality through the wrong doing line, which I always encourage staff to do. However, I am disappointed and concerned that you would choose to widely broadcast confidential information about your colleagues and their circumstances across the Prison Service and NOMS and to POA colleagues nationally, which is entirely inappropriate given the circumstances.

I'm fully aware what the Code of Discipline says, but unfortunately the person that did the Code of Discipline didn't tell everybody to keep their mouth shut because the whole of the office was talking and they were making jokes about these two lads, so I think it's fair game. So I took it a little bit further, in it I then found out that certain people in motion 12 may well have been... certain governors, were claiming RHA. Well, as you might know RHA equates to 15% of their base rate or a flat rate of 5,529. However, I would start from the bottom and go up. The incident I'm gonna recollect is I was at Durham one Saturday morning, sitting on B-wing and this lad walks through with a prisoner and the PO, I says to the lad that was with us, 'Do you know who that is?' 'No.' 'He must be a new starter, alright.' So anyway, he'd come to do a constant watch. The PO came straight down and says, 'Whatever you do, don't bollock me, it's not my fault.' 'What's not your fault?' 'The lad that's doing the constant watch.' 'What's the matter?' 'He's come from Scrubs.' 'Alright.' So anyway, when we unlocked I had a chat with the lad and I says, 'How are you here?' He says, 'I phoned your central detail up yesterday, "Have you got any constant watches to be done or bed watches 'cause I'm available this weekend?"' 'Yeah, you can do them.' So this lad travelled up from Scrubs to start at six o'clock on Saturday morning. I says, 'What you claiming?' 'Oh, mileage, subsistence.' I says, 'You wanna be careful, 'cause your responsible for your own actions.' 'Everybody's doing it!' That was me told, so I said, that's it, enough's enough. I said nothing.

Anyway, the next day he was there again, did his 12.5 hour shift, went on his way. The Monday morning or the Monday dinnertime, it was a bank holiday, I was on my own landing on D-wing. My governor come in, he says, 'Tell me that didn't happen this weekend.' 'Didn't happen Dep.' 'You know what I'm talking about.' I said, 'Well, you just told us it didn't happen.' 'Scrubs.' 'Oh, aye, that happened.' 'Tell us what happened.' I told him what happened. He says, 'How?' I said, 'Go and talk to central detail.' 'Alright.' The claim then came in, this lad claimed he travelled from Scrubs at, well, I don't know, he'd gotta be at Durham for six o'clock so I'll take it he travelled from one o'clock in the morning. He travelled up to Durham, he did a 12.5 hour shift, he then travelled back to Scrubs, had two hours in his house and travelled back to Durham again, had the 12.5 hour shift and then travelled back to Scrubs and went back to work on the Monday.

I'm sorry, the red light's going but I've got a lot more. I'm sorry, I wanna get it through with.

That is fraud. He never ever did the travelling, he stopped in the Travel Lodge, we know that! He hasn't been paid. I've spoke to our colleagues from Scrubs, apparently there was an investigation and he resigned.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Craig, can you wind up please before we all end up on 12.5 hour shifts, thank you.

<Laughter>

<Applause>

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I'll try and wind up but I'll go pretty... I'm sorry. Operational managers, I checked the logs and they've been claiming RHA, some of them from 2009 and they are not doing C&R. They are relying on a letter from that well known second hand car dealer Ian Mulholland. It's there and it says there's a thing going on between them and the PGA. Well, if you look at the required hours additions it states they must do C&R. It also has a (inaudible) on the back that tells you that. It also says on page 3 it is reviewed regular, it's not because otherwise they'd find out they're not doing C&R. Furthermore, I –

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Craig, thank you, you're gonna have to finish there, thanks.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: I'll come back with it then.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you.

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR ASHWORTH: Chairman, NEC, Conference. Fraud – as an outsider looking into your business probably one of the biggest elements of fraud that I can see is the amount of money that's borrowed off you, here, and our members every single year. You're probably thinking what the hell's he talking about? TOIL. All TOIL is money borrowed from you. Does your gaol declare that in its operating costs? I bet it doesn't. I spoke to an NEC member last night and I mentioned this and I talked about the private sector because they're responsible to shareholders, and it was put to me that they daren't not declare that. Well, I've just looked on G4S's 2015 accounts and at the staffing costs and I can't find anything about that liability. Now I'm not an accountant, it's probably hidden somewhere else, but if that's not there, the money they borrowed from the staff, that's fraud.

MATT CLARK – WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Chair, Conference, obviously I've gotta come up here and, not defend my member but, you know, put some perspective from our point of view. As soon as we found out this was happening obviously I spoke to the individual concerned, it stopped, it's not happened since to my knowledge. No fraud was ever proven, it wasn't investigated 'cause the chap's left, I think that needs to put into perspective. But thanks for listening and thanks for letting us know at the time, Craig, appreciate it.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Chair. Conference, speaking to motion 99 on behalf of the NEC. At these times, Conference, I'm always really happy that I come from the same part of the country as Craig.

<Laughter>

And I'm able to just pick out what the debate is. Conference, I've been copied into most of the emails that Craig talks about and there is lots of evidence, and Craig's right, that there's stuff going on out there that shouldn't be happening, stuff at the high level, stuff at the low level should not be happening and nobody's taken charge of what's going on. However, the NEC don't believe that the cost of an investigation into this should be borne by this trade union by seeking a judicial review. We get the evidence, we get all the evidence and gather the evidence the NEC, whoever is the next National Chair, will take that to the Secretary of State and ask whoever that is to carry out the investigation into the fraud that's going on in the Prison Service. But we do not believe that we should be bearing the cost of any judicial review into what's going on, so on that basis we're asking Conference to reject the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Durham, you are very welcome to come back.

CRAIG ROBSON – BRANCH SECRETARY, DURHAM: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I'll just tell you something, HR views that managers must do C&R, no ifs, buts or where about it, they must do C&R to get their RHA. I think you should support this. We told you today about what would happen if we took action and stuff like that, let's spend some more money now on a worthwhile cause. And staff doing these things, these fraudulent acts shouldn't have to do it, they should get a decent pay so they don't have to do it. There's no need. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Durham. To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion is lost.

100 – Elmley. Secunder for Elmley? Long Lartin, thank you.

MOTION 100

Conference mandate the NEC to publish to the membership, all information and documents regarding any legal challenges that have been made referring to the Government decision to increase Prison Officer retirement age to 68, within 3 months of the end of Conference 2017.

ELMLEY

ANDY HAMLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, ELMLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference. Conference mandate the NEC to publish, to the membership, all information and documents regarding any legal challenges that have been made referring to the government's decision to increase prison officers retirement age to 68 within three months of the end of Conference 2017.

Members at my branch have been asking this question of the NEC for the last 18 months and still don't believe they've had a suitable answer. They want to know what this NEC has done to protect their rights to retire at 60. All they are asking for is for this information to be put into the membership's availability. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson on behalf of the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee seeking rejection of this motion.

Conference, we haven't made a legal challenge, what we've had is legal advice and now the National Executive have got that legal advice and are now gonna start looking at a legal challenge. Now, we understand the frustration of the membership and I understand the frustration of the members at Elmley because I've been corresponding with them, but if we are gonna get legal advice and put it out into the public domain then we might as well just go and hand it to the employer. So on that, Conference, again, please trust your National Executive and reject this motion. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Elmley to come back?

ANDY HAMLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, ELMLEY: If that's the case, Joe, why didn't you tell my member that 18 months ago? Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion is lost.

101 – Feltham. Secunder for Feltham please. Thank you.

MOTION 101

POA hold a vote of confidence in NOMS Management Board

FELTHAM

LAK DOSANJH – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP FELTHAM: Morning, conference. Motion 101 reads: POA hold a vote of confidence in NOMS management board who are now renamed HMPPS. Chair, Conference, the original motion was POA hold a vote of confidence in the NOMS management board, however, NOMS have now rebranded itself to Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service. However, we still have the same management in charge. This unfit for purpose management board should be held accountable for the current state of affairs our prison system is in. We're in crisis. We're in absolutely crisis. Things have got from bad to worse, we have lost over 30% of frontline prison officers since the introduction of Unfair and Unsustainable, which I call it. And the final nail in the coffin – benchmarking.

Assault on staff violence within our prison estate has risen to an all-time high, we are under resourced and over worked to breaking point. We are entering dangerous and potential self-destruction of the Prison Service through the guise of autonomy, which is basically... I've heard of this word before 'deregulation' which is gonna make how we as a POA, as a union function, weaker through deregulation. Staff morale has declined to an all-time low. It's quite clear the current senior management are not fit for purpose, we are lions being led by donkeys. Comrades, let us tell our employer we have no confidence in the current management team. Please support the motion of no confidence.

<Applause>

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, I just want to get it clear, so a vote of confidence in the NOMS board would mean that we really want to reject the motion or to show that we have no confidence. Would I be right on that? Yep.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: OK. I said what I said yesterday about the state of the recruitment and employment policy of NOMS at the moment, to overstaff Send with no LPA, to send our staff into gaols in London on detached duty who have got a staffing crisis. I said that yesterday and as a result I believe that that policy makes them institutionally corrupt. I stand by that. Please reject the motion, vote of no confidence in NOMS board.

MARTIN FIELD – BRANCH CHAIR BEDFORD: Mr Chairman, the NEC, colleagues. Before I came to this country and before I joined the Prison Service I used to run my own business and it was a fairly successful one. And every day when I come through the gate, probably like all of you, I see a big board up there with a picture of our SMT, the governor, the Dep and all the rest of them, different gaols go down to different levels. And every day I want to put a sticker underneath at the bottom of that which reads, 'Would you trust these people to run your business?' To me the answer is a resounding 'No!' Now irrespective of whether there's confidence or no confidence, the situation is if the NOMS board were running a business and every one of our establishments was an entity within the business would we not have gone bust years ago?

<Applause>

They are clowns and they are not fit for purpose. Thank you.

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference. Just a clarification from moving branch and possibly the NEC speaker. The motion actually says, 'POA', it doesn't say 'Conference', it doesn't say 'POA membership' so is it actually something that Conference is deciding or the POA, which would be our membership?

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Terry Fullerton.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you, Chair, speaking on behalf of the NEC to motion 101. Nobody said it any better than Martin when he came to the rostrum there, it's an absolute mess, so in supporting Feltham's motion we're asking Conference to reject it, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. This may be a stupid question but is anybody in favour of this motion? Against? That motion is lost. Thank you, Conference, I am so looking forward to writing that letter to Michael Spurr.

102 – Feltham. Permission to withdraw; Conference, do we have permission to withdraw this motion? Thank you, Conference, that's withdrawn.

103 – Feltham. Permission to withdraw; Conference, do we have permission to withdraw? That's withdrawn.

104 – Hewell Closed. Secunder for Hewell? The Verne, thank you.

MOTION 102

POA hold a vote of confidence in Michael Spurr NOMS Chief Executive.
FELTHAM

MOTION 103

POA hold a vote of confidence in the current Tory Government.
FELTHAM

MOTION 104

That Conference condemns the Prison Governors Association for its lack of action and direct support over the current crisis in our prisons.
HEWELL CLOSED

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 104 reads: That Conference condemns the Prison Governors Association for its lack of action and direct support over the current crisis in our prisons.

Colleagues and members do not stand alone in being the victims of increased violence within our prison estate. There have been several high profile reported incidents over the past 12/18 months where members of the Prison Governors Association have unfortunately been victims of some vicious and unrealistically disproportionate violence.

So what constructive steps have the PGA done about protecting their member's interests? From where we stand at Hewell it's absolutely sweet Fanny Adams!

<Laughter>

PGA members at Hewell have raised their own concerns to me about the erosion of terms and conditions, they've been frustrated by the lack of solutions discussed and proposed by the PGA. They have also discussed their disappointments and questioned the motivation of senior PGA officials, who according to other branch officials in the POA, are creators of some of the causes in our crisis in our Prison Service.

So what could the PGA be doing? They could be bringing pressure on NOMS for the implementation of increased safety measures; they could've gone down to their local MP and spoken about drone jammers and an absolute necessity for it, because at Hewell that's one of our biggest problems. What comes in through drones? They could be talking about blocking mobile phone signals; the criminality that comes at Hewell from people running their businesses on mobile phones from their cells. The list of what the PGA members could propose they introduce as a professional body could be endless and are endless, but the policy of silence and refusal to challenge NOMS in a way that reflects a policy is akin to the Emperor's New Clothes fable. Instead the PGA go on an aspirational, self-righteous, sanctimonious media campaign about changing men's lives, in a way that treats them as victims – victims first, offenders second. And the same breath sucking up to senior NOMS and government officials making them complicit in increasing violence to both POA and PGA members in the hope that they get a nice cushy number when they move out of the establishments 'cause they can't wait to leave just like our POA members.

On the 15th November the membership at Hewell stood outside in protest over health and safety conditions within our establishments. So what did the PGA, as a staff association, do about highlighting the concerns? Nothing constructive whatsoever on this day. Their members came out with bits of papers to tell us we're breaking rules, to give us ultimatums to return to work, say we were going to lose pay, trying to bully us back, and at Hewell even the local constabulary turned up at 5pm ready and kitted up for action because we're such a threat to the establishment.

They have recently issued a statement referencing the state of our gaols, lack of staff, use of psychoactive drugs, saying that NOMS has let them down by not allowing them to run their gaols as they see fit and appropriate. Well, they haven't acted on the issues brought by local committees, otherwise reference drugs, drones and mobile phones, death in custodies and so on. Again, more evidence of blaming each other while contributing nothing to the constructive nature of the debate on how we really deal with the problems in our prison estate.

Well, shame on every one of you PGA. And to plagiarise the words of Delia Smith, 'PGA where are ya? Let's be havin' ya!'

<Applause>

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WYMOTT: Chair, NEC, Conference. Just a couple of observations. It's been stomach churning reading the opinions of governors in our press over the past 6 to 12 months as our plight has appeared to get more and more publicity, all offering opinions on where it went wrong, how we should put it right, how they sympathise with the staff. Where were these people over the past eight/nine years? I'll tell you where they were, they were sat in an office considering what they were gonna be doing with their bonus while flesh and blood, our members were getting beaten up, stabbed, spat at, potted and attacked on a daily basis. Where were they then?

Now, I contrast that with the actions of senior police officers. At the time when the austerity budgets first came out there was a deafening silence from governors, they just accepted it, they just cracked on with it. Senior police officers went on television and stood there and said, 'With the money that I am getting in my budget I cannot effectively police the streets of...' Lancashire or Merseyside. They had the professional integrity and recognised that it was their professional duty to let the public know that they could not effectively police their streets. Contrast that with the actions of the PGA – silence. Shameful. Support the motion.

<Applause>

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, NEC, Conference. I'd like to support the motion. Glen took the words out of my mouth regarding the police. If you'd watched the news last week the Association of Headmasters criticised the government for removing money from education. The PGA, they've never stood up, never issued an utterance around it. I have a nickname for the PGA, it's the Self-Preservation Society, that's all they are; they preserve their own interests, they're not interested in us. Support the motion.

JOHN CHAPMAN – BRANCH CHAIR, BRISTOL: Chair, NEC, Conference. I felt I really needed just to say a few words on this. We had Andrea Albutt who's the current Chair of the PGA as governor of Bristol; she was as silent at Bristol as she is now in the PGA. She ran us into the ground, took us apart, had her own interests at heart and then buggered off to be Chair of the PGA. So, yeah, I welcome this condemnation.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Dave Todd.

DAVE TODD – NEC MEMBER: Conference, Chair, invited guests. The NEC absolutely and completely agree with this motion. Let me tell you what the PGA have done. The PGA surveyed its members, in some of the results from the survey: 57.2% of the respondents felt that they worked between 38 and 48 hours a week; more worrying 41.3% on average over 48 hours a week; 53.2% state their working hours have increased over the past year; 94.5% work additional hours to keep on top of the workload; 19.2% of all respondents suffer stress over half the time they are at work; 61% claim they have suffered stress related ill-health; 60.3% of the respondents experienced work related stress claim their employer has not helped them cope with the causes of stress and members comments highlighted some of the barriers to securing a work/life balance in dealing with stress. Colleagues, what the PGA did for our members is wrote some strongly worded letters. Please support.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That's carried.

105 – Holme House. Secunder for Holme House? Durham.

MOTION 105

That Conference condemn the National Offender Management Service for using Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act to gain a court order to force Prison Officers to return to places of work that by NOMS own admission and NOMS own statistics were not and remain not safe places or work.

HOLME HOUSE

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, NEC, Conference. The motion reads: That Conference condemn the National Offender Management Service for using Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act to gain a court order to force prison officers to return to places of work, that by NOMS own admission and NOMS own statistics, were not and remain not, safe places of work.

In July 2015 NOMS published the Safety in Custody statistics, they told us:

16,885 assault incidents, up 12% against the same period in 2014; 2,350 serious assaults, up 38% against the same period of 2014; 3,887 assaults on staff, up 15% against the same period of 2014; 551 serious assaults on staff, up 48% against the same period of 2014.

In July '16 they told us:

After a prolonged period of stability in the time series of serious assaults incidents of all types there has been a clear quarter-on-quarter upward trend since December 2012 in serious assaults, serious prisoner-on-prisoner assaults, apparent prisoner homicides and serious assaults on staff.

So let's be 100% clear, colleagues, they confirmed a quarter-on-quarter upward trend from 2012 to 2016 and uptrend that showed serious assaults of all types have doubled since 2012. On the 15th November 2016 POA members said enough is enough; they held protest meetings at the gates about the health and safety issues that we face. Let's be clear and specific here, Conference, those protests were about health and safety, they were not about pay, they were not about pensions, we want safer places to work and safer places for those in our custody. The talks over health and safety had broken down, so we took our plight to the media. Our NEC to the member did a superb job in getting the message out there, we had public support at a time that assaults on staff and prisoners was running at 65 incidents a day. Liz Truss, the wonderful Liz Truss, described our protests as, 'Unnecessary and unlawful'. That's right, unnecessary and unlawful.

Our employers turned to the courts and Mr Justice Kerr heard our argument. We argued in court that the Secretary of State is in breach of their contract in failing to provide a safe place and system of work and as such any instruction to our members to continue working in those conditions, in this environment, is an unlawful one. The injunction was granted and we were forced to return to the daily dangers faced by prison officers. The employer's statistics have deteriorated further since our protest in November '16. Colleagues, what sort of employer uses the courts to put its staff in danger? If we worked in a dangerous factory or on a dangerous building site we would have real protections in law. Our employer continues to ignore the protections that law should grant us, they put up posters informing us that we are working in a violence hotspot, they tell prisoners they have zero tolerance to violence. I would argue those statistics clearly prove that our employers have zero clue! They have no clue how to restore order in our prisons. Instead of increasing the number of frontline operational staff in order to restore confidence and control, they use the courts time after time to force us to work in unbearable conditions that are destroying the physical and mental resilience of our members. Support the motion; condemn our employers for its use of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act.

<Applause>

MICK PIMBLETT – BRANCH CHAIR, RISLEY: Chair, NEC, Conference. During the first week of April POA members at Risley decided not to do Payment Plus. I think it may have been half-term or something like that. Coincidentally POA members at Risley were not doing Payment Plus last week or this week. It must be half-term again. Anyway, during that first week of April the governor at HMP Risley decided that she was gonna try and run a full regime without the provision of Payment Plus. We considered this regime that she was intending to run to be an unsafe regime. We then went and spoke to her, told her that we considered it to be unsafe, to no avail. We were therefore left with no option but to retreat to a place of safety and all the staff went to visit at quarter-to-eight in the morning. At eight o'clock in the morning we went and spoke to the governor to consider an alternative or restricted regime. She refused to speak to us. She refused to speak to the elected union in her establishment about running her establishment in a safe way that day. She continued to insist that she would not speak to us until the staff returned to their place of work, which they considered and we considered, to be unsafe.

We were continually in contact with Steve Gillan, Glyn Travis and Mark Fairhurst throughout the day regarding the health and safety disputes and they supported our branch 100%. I'd like to thank them for this. The point I'm trying to get to here, the governor refused to negotiate with us, relying instead on Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act to cover her obvious shortcomings as a prison governor. It's my belief that this dispute could've been sorted within half-an-hour. We ended up returning to work at 14:45 in the afternoon, once the governor was instructed by PERG to talk to us and come to an agreement. This was 15 minutes before Steve Gillan was due in the High Court for breach of Section 127. It really is pathetic and I condemn NOMS for their actions.

<Applause>

JACKIE BATES – BRANCH CHAIR, BUCKLEY HALL: POA, Conference, National Chair, speaking in support of the motion. It would be interesting if any of you could let me know if any of these things actually happen at your establishments, but at Buckley Hall we keep going on about safety. Well, our SMT caused part of our problems, they tell us, don't they, 'Deal with it'. I work in the Seg, is it learned behaviour that what they do is say, 'If you don't give me a smokers pack I'm gonna shit up'? Well, we argue and we say, 'You're not getting one', and then they throw stuff at us, and then along they come and they go, 'Well, give him a smokers pack.' And I'd be surprised if any of you... you know the spice thing? Let's all get in debt up to our eyebrows and then run for cover. Well, at Buckley Hall we have a debt management plan for our prisoners, whereby we provide them with their smokers packs, yes, and they are supposed to use the smokers packs and use the money to pay the debt back. I don't know which schools they went to these people but what happens is they sell the smokers packs and they end up where they were going to end up in first place. So I asked the governor, I said... and you're going to have to excuse my language now. I said to him, 'On my way home tonight I'm calling in Tesco, me, I'm gonna say to Mr Tesco, "I'll have a bottle of Bollinger, please, I've no money to pay you till next Friday but I'm sure you're gonna give it me." And when he says, "No" I'm gonna say, "Right, I'm gonna shit up your wine isle" –

<Laughter>

<Applause>

"... and I'll put a pound to a penny I'm not drinking Bollinger."

<Laughter>

So well done. Oh and where do we get 23-year-old governors telling 50-year-old armed robbers... they don't know how to talk to 'em. I just don't know how they expect these people to deal with some of these criminals what they've got. But they

cause half of our problems, then they tell us we're safe... <sighs> I wish they'd walk the landings with me. Anyway, support the motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you, Jackie, your language is excused. Dave Todd for the NEC.

DAVE TODD – NEC MEMBER: Conference, Chair, invited guests, responding on behalf of the NEC in supporting the Holme House motion. Conference, the statistics speak for themselves, there's been a rise in all forms of violence month-on-month with the exception of December in the violence diagnostic tool. There has not been a downward trend but HMPPS are trying to report there has been a 4% drop but that was for one month only. One month only.

I won't go through all the stats because Andy's brought most of them up, but I would like to highlight just a couple more. Sexual assaults on staff, up 58%; assaults with weapons, up 41% yet NOMS, or HMPPS, still refuse to entertain this Executive in negotiations about protecting clothing, stab proof vests. Shame on them. Potting up 77%.

Colleagues, HMPPS have not got a clue in how to reduce violence. This Executive have consistently and will continue to attack HMPPS in their meaningless attempts to reduce violence. The Executive are not afraid to protect you in your workplace. The Executive have put in place health and safety inspections which have been led by Chris Donovan, and latterly Ian Carson, to highlight safety control, safety concerns and put remedial actions in place to make you safe. We can't be everywhere, but those goals that we've been to please use those action plans, they're on the ball, they're well-thought out and they will make you safer.

The violence diagnostic tool offers a fantastic array of information to help you identify any trends and hotspots where and when violence is happening. Use it. You can batter the management with it, use it. So yes, Conference, condemn the employer for using the courts to get us back to work. Thank you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour, please show? Against? That's carried.

I call motion 107 Swaleside which has been placed at 105a, this is a debate so there's no need for a seconder.

MOTION 105a

In regards to the Prison Reform Ballot 2016, that Conference debate the prison reform endorsed by the NEC and presented to the membership for ballot.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Morning, Conference. This is in November or December suddenly we received a load of paperwork about Prison Reform and we were then expected to hold branch meetings, explain it to our members and then we balloted our members on the prison reform itself. But there is a distinct lack of information actually afforded to us and given to us about this, because exactly what is prison reform? I know what my governor thinks prison reform is; his shackles are going to be cut off and he's going to have freedom to do what he wants and how he likes in regards to his prison. And of course with that comes a degree of responsibility of which he is afraid, because the responsibility, especially since the white paper has now been put forward, is also borne in the legal consequences for him.

Anyway, it came out and it says all this sort of stuff in there and I've read it, and I've read it, and I've read it and I thought to myself, what do I actually say to my members when I'm at the branch meeting trying to explain what prison reform is about? Well, there must be some in this room who can also remember the JIRPA that we entered into as a union with our employer, and I've read the agreements and everything in here for local negotiations and also for national negotiations, and do you know what, I think I read the same thing when we were in the JIRPA. This union gave 12 months' notice and we pulled out of the JIRPA because our employer chose to ignore it, and yet we still have something that just reminds me of the JIRPA. The good thing about this is independent arbitration. Now, arbitration is one of these things that you can't pick and choose which piece of your dispute you take to arbitration, it covers the whole lot, it's pendulum arbitration, it's a yes or it's a no and whatever happens it is legally binding. So once you start your dispute you can't turn round and say, 'Well, we've agreed these three aspects of it but we can't agree the fourth aspect, therefore we're gonna go to arbitration.' The whole caboodle goes into the pot and it is then an independent arbitrator then has to do it.

When they did bring JIRPA out the Prison Service at the time laid on lots of training courses for branch officials and for governors and SMTs and that to go away and learn how to apply it. Nothing of that form was actually put forward in this

one. So I'm reading through now and I'm trying to figure out what is a local issue and what is the national issue? Unfortunately, with the paperwork that was sent out they put a little table there that tells us what's within the nationals thing and everything else, I'm assuming, falls to local agreement for local negotiation and disputes procedure should we need it. So things like the pension scheme, redundancy terms, management code, rates of allowances, payments like Payment Plus, sick pay, grading and pay bands, maternity pay, annual leave, public interest transfers, TNS, job evaluation, OSG, bulletin 8, prison reform agreement, all that sort of stuff falls under the national remit for negotiations. So what the hell does that leave us? Because most of my disputes with our governor is to do with the OSGs, it's to do with Payment Plus, it's to do with TOIL and everything else within there.

But anyway, I'm sure that would come out as time went by, but you must also remember when you enter your disputes is it's out of scope, the famous words used by employer, 'It's out of scope.' So therefore you couldn't discuss or negotiate or be consulted on something that was out of scope. This was why we withdrew from JIRPA in the first place, most of the stuff we wanted to talk about was out of scope.

The other frightening thing in here is the fact that it's a two-way saw, one of it's a good thing, the other one's a bad thing. If you go through the disputes procedure and arbitration and whatever you do, ACAS, whatever is decided at that point will only apply to your establishment and no other establishment. So any gains made by a local branch will only apply to your establishment and cannot be used by another establishment as an example to get the same improvements. Now, of course that comes into effect when we're talking about our health and safety, that's the danger point in that one. So what they're actually doing, I think, is my fear, because I don't know about this, no one's sat down and talked to us and explained this to us, is we're being isolated from the top table as local branches because they'll decide that is a local dispute and this is a national dispute and therefore the two shan't meeting in the middle. The only avenue towards the top table, of course, is your NEC representative, your area rep.

The other aspect of this is it's not only dividing us possibly from the top table and from our national leaders, but it's also dividing us from each other. Now, I'm sure you, as well as I, have been in there where the governors have turned round and said, 'At HMP such-and-such they're doing this and at HMP such-and-such they got rid of that and they've done this.' The reply I've always said to them is, 'We're not any of them, we're Swaleside, we have our issues.' But there are gains that are made on local level that are a benefit for this union as a whole union, and from reading this that can't be applied to us. So there was dangers in this, lack of information and everything else. Some parts of this is good. Somebody said to me last night, do you know what, they really wanted the independent arbitration. Yes, we fought and we wanted that as well because, do you know what, it was a good thing if we managed to use it. But the lack of knowledge, the lack of everything else made it difficult for us to actually consider and push it forward effectively for our members to be balloted on.

Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Glyn Travis.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Morning Chair, Conference, National Executive Committee, that we debate the prison reform ballot of 2016. Well, we can look at whether it divides, whether it unites, whether it provides good or bad, the reality is democracy said we didn't want it. So the reality of this is the fact that all of the negotiations, and I'll go onto that in a minute, were there, the membership were given a choice: do you want to accept it or not? And you rejected it, quite right. But how did we get to the position on prison reform and to actually engage, for the first time, in collective bargaining? 'Cause that's what we were doing with NOMS. You determined that this Executive would not give evidence to the Pay Review Body. We had told you year-on-year since 2001 that the Pay Review Body was not fit for purpose, that it consistently undermined you and the role that you do and that it consistently followed what the government said in its remit letter. So we had nowhere to go on pay.

Did you, as the membership, did this Executive introduce prison reform? Well, forgive me if I've missed this but I don't ever remember any of you coming here and saying, 'We want to have this new wonderful white paper on prison reform.' I don't remember any of you or this Executive saying that we want to give governors autonomy or executive powers to give them more influence. It was a government decision, to bring about change because they want to introduce fridges in prisoner's cells and make sure they can see a tree. Well happy days. Because the reality is prison reform will not, and did not, address the real problems that you face every day: violence, rubbish pay and a pension that has just been changed and changed and changed. But for once, not because of prison reform... and this is where people have lost where we were, *you*, the delegates out there, determined that we would get round the table by and with the employer, and you did that by standing in solidarity with this Executive when they went to town on health and safety, when they listed 128 failings in the prison system. It wasn't an exhaustive list, it was 128 points and NOMS had nowhere to go. They didn't know what to do because for the first time the Executive put forward a strategy on health and safety and you followed it to the letter and so therefore they wanted to talk about, 'Oh, well we'll give you more money, on a ring-fence basis, we'll address recruitment and retention, we'll address pensions.' And through all of those discussions we met with the senior officials of

NOMS.

There was a team set up by the National Chairman and we went in and we had our direction, as you do when you go in and you start talking with them, and we set out what we wanted as part of this deal. And if any of you out there think that the team that went in there, and I was one of them, went in there and said, 'Can I have three-year pay deal that gives us no pay rise', boil your heads! If you think we went in there and said, 'Can we have the pension deal that you've done?' Think again, because we wanted 60. We wanted 5% for one year, consolidated for all of you! Did we want a revision of the JIRPA that was coming? No. But we wanted something that was better than PS08525 and there was something in that. Did we want all of the exclusions that were included in there? No. But, do you know, when it came to the crunch and the lovely Phil Copple was stood across from us, and this was at ten-past-eight, and he turned round and he said, 'This is my final offer.' Now, I'm simple, those of you who know me know that I talk simple, right? 'This is my final offer, but I've got a better offer.' Hang on? Your final offer and you've got a better offer, where did that come from? 'Cause I'd never heard that. I deal in honesty across the table negotiating...

And I've seen the red light, please give me two minutes, Chair.

We looked at this and we said, 'Well, what do you mean?' He says, 'If the NEC recommend this offer there's more in it for you.' Now, being simple I thought that's a bit of blackmail, but hey, I'm a fulltime officer, the people who were round the table with us, we hadn't got the authority to say, 'Well, I don't wanna listen what this extra bit is.' 'Cause it might've been retirement at 60, no cost; it might've been 5% pay rise. It could've been anything. We need you to give us that, so we contacted the executive leaders, National Chairman as he was at the time, Mike Rolfe, and said, 'They want you to recommend this and they want you to do this and there's more to be given. What do you want us to do?' So we brought it all back.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference, Mr Chairman, I believe that the speaker is actually going outside the motion. This is a debate about prison reform, it wasn't about the pay or the other aspects of that. That is another motion that is coming up later. This is about prison reform: what is it, do we want it and is it good or is it bad and how are we going to defeat it? Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Well to be fair, Dave, the motion actually states in regards to the prison reform ballot, debate the prison reform endorsed by the NEC, and part of that endorsement involved all elements of that prison reform agreement, so ... I'm afraid Glyn's correct in what he's debating.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: OK, I accept that.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Carry on Glyn.

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you Chair. So ... you made me lose me thread, Dave, by the way. It's a bit like playing golf with you. Your shots go that far over that I never know where I'm going!

So colleagues, Mr Copple turned round and said this was on the table, final offer, but there was more if the NEC recommended it. We went to the Executive, Mike Rolfe, said, 'This is the position. Maybe you need to go in, Steve, and talk and see what's on the table. Because the negotiators will (inaudible)' There was nothing on the table that was there that was worth anything. The NEC debated where it was and the best that they would do was to say, 'This is the offer, £12 million a year for pension contributions' something that we didn't believe, we had the right as an Executive not to put to you the membership. And you quite rightly rejected it. 'cause you should never link everything. But in closing, Conference, this debate, it's this: negotiations are sometimes really, really difficult. When you're talking to somebody who doesn't listen, who doesn't care, and he's following a diktat from a government that is hell-bent on introducing prison reform, a white paper to make prisons cosy, lovely with technology and not care about your safety. That's the reality of what prison reform will do, and bring, and earlier motions in the agenda have identified that it's coming to us all, so let's get engaged, let's understand it, and thank you for partaking in the debate.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you for that debate. 106, Hewell Closed, this is asking for an explanation so need for a seconder or a vote.

MOTION 106

That the NEC explains to Conference why it was considered appropriate to endorse the Prison Reform Agreement, as communicated via POA circular 120-2016, when it included differing pay rises for differing grades, whilst the membership protested on 15th November 2016, over health and safety concerns.

HEWELL CLOSED

UNKNOWN SPEAKER - HEWELL CLOSED: Permission to withdraw, 'cause I think it's been answered.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do Hewell Closed have permission to withdraw, please show? Thank you, that's withdrawn. Conference, it's 11 o'clock, do you wish to take a comfort break for 15 minutes. If you do, can you please identify now, please show your cards. Back at quarter-past eleven please. Thank you.

<Break>

Conference, I call you to order and we'll continue with 108, Swaleside. Do we have a seconder for Swaleside. Ashworth, thank you.

MOTION 108

That Conference condemn the NEC for having endorsed the content of the Prison Reform Ballot 2016.
SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: This is asking for the condemnation of the NEC for having endorsed the content of prison reform ballot 2016. Condemnation, is it a harsh and is it a severe word that we're asking them to actually do? It depends. Because my understanding of the word endorse is that you're actually supporting something. Footballers and celebrities are asked to endorse certain products because they're supporting it and pushing it forward and all that sort of stuff. It means support. Terry Fullerton, in reply to a motion earlier this Conference actually said, 'We're asking you to endorse this and support this motion'. So therefore support and endorse are the same thing, which is very surprising because when they put the ballot forward and then they sent out a clarification afterwards which was a Q&A, and it said things on there, 'is this the best we can achieve? It is the best we can achieve,' so therefore what they're now saying is they can't achieve anything better than that. Do the NEC believe that the pay offers for three years is adequate? Absolutely not. Branch Secretary 17/16 suggests that the fitness test has been removed, no, that is not correct. The Ministry of Justice press release stated at note 1, 'The proposals endorsed by the POA leadership were on offer before the 15th of November.' No it was not. 'What happens if the package is rejected? They will withdraw the offer in its entirety' etc. etc. So they're going in there, they're actually saying, 'We've endorsed this'. They've then put a piece of paper out to us afterwards saying, 'Actually, what a load of rubbish it is.' Now the one thing is the NEC need to be aware of and that is the words that they use, because our membership are looking for which way they need to vote. They're looking for guidance on which way they should be balloting, because in all honesty they don't read a lot of this stuff, there was very little time in there, how many people stood at that ballot papers and were asked by their members, 'Which one do I tick, yes or no?' This is about their pay, their pensions, prison reform ... and they were asking us, 'Which way do we vote?' The only thing we can say is, 'Well it's been endorsed by the NEC.' Oh, therefore it's accepted, therefore it's supported. But the paperwork said something entirely different. Our Acting Chair, in his opening remarks, said right at the beginning, 'I personally thank you for rejecting the prison reform ballot'. But if you wanted us to reject it, why the sodding hell did you endorse it? They've also said on there as well, 'We're not going to allow the employer to dictate what we discuss at our Conference' but we'll allow the employer to demand that our NEC provide an endorsement before they come to us for a ballot. Our NEC are in place to support and promote the interests of our members, not NOMS or not HMPPS and everybody else.

How can you endorse something like this and then afterwards turn round and say no, it's wrong. I'm sorry, condemnation. I've got nothing against the people on this top table and then negotiators that actually went into this. Because at the end of the day it is a very difficult task and they have to do what they think is best for the members. But they also have to be aware that they're working for the members and be honest and open with us. Do not endorse something because our employers are insisting on it. Endorse it because it's right for the membership. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR, ASHWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, I'm actually neutral on this. We seconded it because it's really, really important that when a branch bring a motion to Conference that motion gets heard. No seconder means that motion doesn't get heard. I'm disappointed year on year seeing motions withdrawn that your branch told you to bring here and get withdrawn. So we second it. I'm neutral on it, doesn't affect my life, doesn't affect the special hospitals' life at all, but these motions need to be heard and that's why Ashworth actually seconded this motion. I'm interested in hearing what Swaleside have to say and I'm also interested in hearing the NEC's response. That's important. It needs to be there. It needs to be in the verbatim and it needs, the membership need to know.

<Applause>

GERRY LENNON – BRANCH SECRETARY, FULL SUTTON: Chair, NEC, Conference, asking to reject the motion, although I understand there's a lot of feeling that we didn't get a decent offer and it all went a bit wrong, the actual offer

given was a bit of a (inaudible), given that it brought in pensions and retirement age into a pay award, which to me they're three different issues. But the message that we got from the NEC after negotiations was, and I'm paraphrasing but I think it's almost verbatim, 'This is the best offer we can achieve through negotiation' and I think that's right. And I think the message we were getting from the NEC was, 'We might get something else but we ain't gonna get it through negotiation so what are we gonna do about it?' It was endorsed, not supported, not recommended, and yeah, endorsements from advertising etc. are a positive thing. Endorsements on your driving licence aren't. It's an unfortunate word that can be misconstrued but the fact was the NEC basically said, 'This is the best we can get *through negotiation*'. And they were asking for a message from the membership, are we willing to go forward and fight for better, or are we gonna take that? I think personally to reject that, as we did through the ballot, which was the right thing to do, because as I say it muddied the waters by introducing three separate issues into one. But I wholeheartedly support the spirit of the fact that we should not have said yep, that's it. We should have had a plan for going on. On that ground I want to say reject.

LES DENNIS – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP HEWELL CLOSED: For Hewell, November 15th was about health and safety. We gained a lot of public support from that. We wouldn't have had the same if we would have said we were outside for a pay rise. In the following parliamentary debate, which I watch closely, Ken Clarke sat on the back benches and went, 'Nya, they only did it for a pay rise' and this ballot, in putting this thing to the membership, let us right down into the Tory trap. The membership of Hewell have now developed a negative opinion of the NEC from the fact that they put this through and the words 'they endorsed it'. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, asking you to reject this motion. The Wandsworth branch voted in favour of the three elements they were asked to vote on, on the ballot last year. We held the branch meeting, which I'm sure you all did because that was actually part of the circular. So you would have been able to canvas the views of your branch, get the questions raised, and if there was any clarifications you could get them answered and returned to your own branch members with those answers that they've requested. So we didn't have a problem with the ballot paper and we didn't get too many questions when we ran our ballot. So the ballot has been done and dusted, the wider membership have spoken, Wandsworth has chosen not to bring motions against the NEC for not endorsing it more strongly so that we could have got our way. We accept the overall result. In terms of endorsement of anything ... well, George Forman endorses a grill with his name. If you plug it in and it blows up, you don't go back to him to say there's something wrong with the product you endorsed. As local branch officials, you will negotiate shift patterns. You will sometimes go back to your branch with the best that you've done and you leave it to your membership to decide whether they want it or not. The NEC, as far as I can see, are doing no more than what we do as branch officials. The vote's been taken, it's been rejected, I see no reason to condemn the NEC for that.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Chairman, Conference, it will come as no surprise to you that we're opposed to this motion. Conference, I'm disappointed that this in actual fact is on the order paper, but obviously attach no blame to the delegates from Swaleside because if they're mandated to bring a motion from their branch, then that's exactly what they do. We did consider, as an Executive, whether to hold certain motions in camera because we don't want the Union to be ridiculed in the media or by the employer to show that we're actually fighting amongst ourselves, but we're not embarrassed at endorsing the prison reform package ballot for 2016. We had a clear decision to make on your behalf because the negotiators that went in that was led by the former Vice Chairman, had done a very good job under very difficult circumstances with Glyn Travis, Terry Fullerton, Jackie and a legal advisor, Neil Johnson, as well, to look at the concept of the industrial relations procedural agreement in relation to it. So they done a good job. They were on a brief from us. Do we think it was a good deal in relation to the 1% pay cap? No we didn't, and we were honest with that and that's why we clarified issues. But we're realists. The pay cap is there until 2020, not just for prison officers and related grades; it's there for all public sector workers. It's a fact. Do we like it? No we don't. Did our negotiators go in, and by the way you want collective bargaining and then we've had collective bargaining on this and we come with motions of condemning the executive. It doesn't send a good message, it really doesn't. It won't paralyse me with fear actually even if you do condemn us, because we will always tell you the truth, but you know, when you've got a new-ish Executive as well, they need your help and your assistance, because they'll end up paralysed with fear of ever coming to you and recommending such issues again. We endorsed it to keep the package live, so as that our members could make an informed decision. Now I can't understand any member in our trade union that has to go and ask someone else what it means. You can sit and read it yourself. Our members need to start taking responsibility rather than listening to people on social media that tells them to shove it and different things. People that are sitting already on a pension in the security of their own homes, not working in the prison service, telling our members to do x, y and z; that's inappropriate. But the reality is, I wonder what would have happened had this Executive, when there was a £12 million on the table on pensions, I wonder what would have happened if we had turned around and said to the employer, 'We reject it on behalf of our members.' I bet you the same motions would be up to say, 'Who are you to reject money on our behalf? That should have been given to us in a ballot.' Conference, this Executive do their very best on your behalf. It doesn't send a good signal to the

employer, and they will see it in the verbatim report and it will be reported back to them, that Conference condemned their own Executive. If you don't like what we do, there's elections coming up this year and next year. You have the right to stand. If you think you can do a better job, and I'm up for election in 2020. At the end of the day you put us here, we're not gods or messiahs. We're ordinary people like yourselves that have come from the floor and we do our best so I urge you, Conference, not just to reject it but reject it unanimously.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I'm sorry Conference but that's absolute rubbish. Sorry. About the press embarrassing us and that, do you know what? What is the point in coming to Conference if you can't speak your mind, if you can't tell this NEC and this Conference what your members are thinking and what they're feeling, whether the press are up the back there or not. Is it embarrassing? Is it unity? No it's not. It's about actually sending the message. Do you know what? Your membership, your membership trust you. Alright? You are the leaders of this Union and that's why they elected you into that position. You are the representatives of your branch, that's why you and I were put into position. I don't go running to my branch over every single decision that I have to make. Yes, there are things about profiles and this sort of stuff, somebody mentioned about profiles, yes, I do, I go to my branch and I say to the branch, 'This is the best that we can achieve at this time.' I use those words. But what I also say to them is, 'I'm not gonna recommend them to you. You make your mind up. You tell me what you want us to do. If you want to rip these profiles up and send your negotiators back into the governor to renegotiate your profiles, that's exactly what we will do.' But if I endorse it then they're saying that I'm actually recommending it, that I'm supporting it. They provided an endorsement. They recommended it. Is this the best that can be achieved? Yes. So therefore as regards pension all this stuff we've talked about, this Conference, and in previous Conference about a pension age of 60 is rubbish because they can't achieve it.

It's not about embarrassing people, it's not about people being struck with fear. Sorry if you're struck with fear, don't put yourself in the top table. Don't put yourself in high office if you're gonna be struck with fear when you're representing our members. Because I know this much, if I were struck with fear at my branch I certainly wouldn't be their chairman. 'cause they'd get rid of me. My branch trust me. They have trust in my integrity to do what is right on behalf of my branch. That is expanded to that top table as well. I have trust that they will do the best for this membership, but at the same time I have the right to stand up here on behalf of my branch and turn round and say when you've got it wrong. Yes, condemnation is a big word, it's a powerful, it's an emotive word, but that's the anger that came from the floor. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour of this motion please show? All those against? That motion is lost.

109, Swaleside. Do we have a seconder? No seconder, that motion falls. Elmley second just in time.

MOTION 109

In regards to the Prison Reform Ballot in 2016, that Conference condemn the NEC for using misleading information provided by the employer, in regards to the Pension retirement age for the membership and then presenting this same information to the membership for balloting.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Conference, and I live in hope that maybe the NEC might support this one. In regards to prison reform ballot, condemn the NEC for using misleading information provided by the employer. Right, now then, there is an issue over this because at the end of the day it is worded very poorly. I did consider withdrawing it on that basis, because in actual fact they didn't, they actually didn't mislead us in many ways. They actually regurgitated, they actually put out what NOMS actually put forward, or HMPPS actually put forward. I understand why and the reason why I'm not withdrawing this is because I want the opportunity to turn round and say is this: I understand why it was regurgitated, because at the back of all this are our legal advisors. Now if you look at our NEC minutes, it's like reading code because you've got no idea who said what, what he's talking about or anything else. It's absolutely unreadable at times. You have real difficulty trying to fathom out what the NEC meetings are actually telling us, and that's deliberate because it protects the individuals and rightly so. So when they put this out, it comes out and they have to put it out possibly the way that NOMS actually put it out to us because it protects the NEC. Because, let me explain that, if the NEC actually told the truth to the members, and then a member took umbrage at that, followed that advice, took umbrage and then suffered some financial or some other detriment, it then leaves the NEC open to being challenged and prosecuted possibly against your name, so they put it out verbatim, what NOMS actually said.

Now within this, the pension age. NOMS put paperwork out, sent to us by our NEC, saying, 'You can retire at 65' so everybody's thinking, and I'll be honest with you, if this had actually said that our members could retire at 65 then I would

have urged them, urged them with all the thing to please vote yes for this, because that's what we're looking for. We're looking for a lower retirement age for our members, but it didn't. It said you can retire at 65. No it doesn't. It's actually state pension age minus three years, and as I said previously look at the reasons why the pension age was increased from 65 to 68 by the previous governments. Guess what? In a few months' time, for all the will in the world that I want it to be changed, I can see the same government coming back in. So therefore sometime in the future the 20-year-old, 30-year-old that joins the service today, by the time they get to their pension age it's going to be rolling backwards. So it's not 65, for the people on the day it's accurate in its thing. You can retire at 65. If you retire now! This retirement plan is for a lifetime. A lifetime only actually lasts for 25 years. That's what we were told years ago when they first looked at our pensions, when they first reviewed public-sector pensions and the review came back and someone said you know what? Public sector pensions are affordable until 2050. Didn't stop the Con Dems going in and changing our pension. So a lifetime is for 25 years unless the government then turn round and say, 'Oh bloody hell! You know what? We didn't know we were gonna enter Brexit at that time, so at the time we said that it was accurate. However, nobody foresaw the fact that we were gonna vote to pull out of Europe. And that's now had a massive impact on the financial implications of this country and therefore we can no longer support a retirement age of 68. We now have to push that retirement age back up to 70, 72 or 75.' So we're actually saying, what we're asking for is honesty, alright? Because whilst the NEC feel that they can't turn round and say, 'You can't retire at 65' for the majority of our members and our future members, you're not gonna be able to retire at 65, because of the challenges and everything else. You and I have to stand in front of our branch and give them the reality, and the reality is for a lot of the people, 65 is not going to be achieved. It's state pension age minus three years. All we're asking, and I expect this to fall, because of the wording and everything else, all we're asking for is honesty from our leaders. Tell us warts and all the truth of what we're actually being asked to ballot on. Thank you.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you Conference, Chairman, we would ask you to reject this motion, a further condemnation motion on the Executive, for using misleading information. I'm afraid the National Executive Committee have not mislead anybody. It was all in the documentation. The reality is though, and before I do start in reply to it, you might not agree with what I've got to say, Swaleside, but I don't talk rubbish on behalf of the Executive.

<Applause>

So in relation to it, we have told you the truth, we have been honest with you, we recognise that you have had the democratic right to reject. Our membership are the trade union. They rejected it. Just like when the junior doctors made a recommendation to their members they rejected it. Just like when ASLEF made a recommendation to their members twice on the same subject, they rejected it. But the reality is, we put out all the information that we had. The negotiators worked hard and by the way, it was a different scenario to the one that myself, Joe Simpson and Pete McParlin had worked on to open the door and it was with Michael Gove in actual fact, and then we all know what happened to him when he then went and so forth. There was, at that stage it wasn't based on state pension minus three. It was clearly based on working towards 60 years of age, but in any negotiation, and of course Treasury officials would be all over it as well, and that's where the state pension age minus three came into it. And of course we debated that at Executive level, 'cause that's not what we wanted and Dave, on behalf of Swaleside is absolutely right, Dave on behalf of Swaleside is absolutely correct, none of us have a crystal ball in relation to what's gonna come out of the John Cridland report in respect of state pension age or future state pension age, so the reality is that report was due out on 7th May ... my understanding is now due to purdah that that's been deferred till after the general election, so I don't know what's gonna come out of that Cridland Report, but whatever comes out the Cridland Report if it does put it up, the state pension age, to 70, it won't just be this trade union that's got a major problem with that, it will be every public sector trade union that will have a problem with it. So I would expect, through the TUC, coordinated action in relation to that 'cause it's got a knock-on effect then for everybody. What we were trying to do is to be one step ahead. Joe said, and I've heard others say it, 'You bank it sometimes as a step forward to get where you want to go.' That's what this Executive is doing. There was nothing misleading about it, and Dave's right again, sometimes it is very difficult to give pure advice on pensions, 'cause pensions mean different things to different people. And you've got to make your own choice about what you do in relation to pension retirement, abatement, all that different stuff, because we can't give you advice on that because if it goes wrong in your financial world as an individual you'll come back, and quite rightly try and sue the trade union. But this was different. This was about a collective agreement that they were funding of £12 million each year for a generation, that's what they said it was gonna be, for the next 25 years. That's what Francis Maude had pledged to parliament. Now I don't know what's going to be in the Cridland Report but at least if we've got it back to 65 – and I'm not trying to justify anything, the membership have chosen, you've rejected it – it would be very difficult to get pensions back on the agenda again, and we've already got a policy decision now from you, that you want us to go back and make sure it's effectively a mandatory retirement age at 60. That's what you voted for in motion 89. So we will do that but the reality is, there was no misleading information provided by this Union. We don't sit, we don't have the monopoly on all the information and all the stats. Neither did NOMS by the way, or HMPPS. They had to go away and get that information from Cabinet Office and the Treasury and when they came back our negotiators and our executive challenged that information because it wasn't accurate and they had to go away and do it again on a variety of different, 17 or 18 different scenarios. So I don't think we should have this condemnation from Conference. We put out all the information that we had that was negotiated through

collective bargaining with the employer, and you, as the membership, and your members, have done a democratic thing and rejected it. I don't think we can be condemned for that. Thank you Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Swaleside to come back? Go to the vote. All those in favour please show? Those against? That motion's lost. 110 Swaleside. Do we have a seconder? Brixton, thank you.

MOTION 110

In regards to the Prison Reform Ballot in 2016, that Conference condemn the NEC for balloting the membership on three separate issues combined into a single ballot vote.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I live in hope. This is about the fact is that we were balloted on three separate issues which were combined into a single ballot vote. Three separate issues, pay, pension and prison reform, and this was the difficulty that we had, and within this is the difficulty of the fact is you could not say yes to one and no to another, so if members were actually saying yes to pension they were saying yes to the pay and they were saying yes to the prison reform, and they are three separate issues. When this first came out and I contacted the NEC and I turned round and said, 'Surely this should be three separate ballots or a ballot sheet with three separate boxes on it so we could ballot against each one.' The answer I was given is that no, NOMS decided that they wanted it done as a single package. If you say no to one, then you say no to the lot.' The danger point of that is, did we throw the baby out when we threw the bathwater out? And listening, and listening to the NEC, clearly that's exactly what we did. Because within this there were some good pieces. Was it the pay? Absolutely not! Absolutely not! Was that a pay deal? Because absolutely not, we're already in a pay deal that is a multi-year pay deal, because the government have set a 1% cap on public sector pay, so there's no deal in there. There was nothing for us on that one. So what about the pension side? Actually yes, yeah, perhaps that pension was pretty good, and as Joe said, the way you get to eat an elephant is one bite at a time, and the paperwork did say that, it turned round and said that it's the start, it's the start of the downward drive to get our pensions to where we want it to be and the retirement ages to where we want it to be. But you couldn't say yes to that pension and no to the pay. The funny thing is we balloted our whole membership but there were people who were not affected by the pension, there were great groups, OSGs were not affected by that pension. They're allowed to vote. They were allowed to be balloted because it mentioned pay and it mentioned prison reform, which does affect them. So we've got externally other influences within there that did this wrong, and it was wrong, it's the fact is if we've got three separate issues, then ballot us on three separate issues, not as one. NOMS should not be dictating to this Union on how we ballot our members. We should have the power to turn round and say we understand that you're actually saying you want it as one package, but we will ballot it South Africa three separate packages and then you will decide whether ... if it's all thrown out or whether we're going to accept part of it or not. This ballot sheet was pendulum arbitration in its truest form, because you cannot say yes to one part and no to another. It's either a no or a yes. That is not what we deserve. And yes, yet again I'm asking you to condemn the NEC, I'm asking you to embarrass them and everything else and all that sort of stuff, but at the end of the day this is part and parcel of being in national office and local office. Sometimes you get it slightly wrong. Listen to the bad news from the floor and accept it. Don't be embarrassed by it. Accept it. Learn by it and move forward, 'cause that is what democracy is about! You will not always get it right. If you're afraid that this NEC is gonna be made to look embarrassed in the press, what's the point in turning up? Why are we spending members' money coming here and acting like robots just because at the end of the day we're afraid of not showing unity? No organisation has total 100% unity. No organisation! Take the punches as it comes. It's not acceptable. Please take this away. If this stands or falls, take this away; do not ballot our members on separate issues as one ballot. It's not democracy. Please support.

<Applause>

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, Wandsworth, my members didn't see a problem with the three items on the ballot paper. They really didn't. The one thing they didn't quite understand, because many of them were new in service, was this thing called arbitration: in terms of pensions, yes, money ... <laughs> my members are always telling me how they need the money, so there was no confusion there as far as my members were concerned. If other branches did have that issue, please come forward to this podium and let us hear about it. And also I think Steve Gillan touched on it, but of course there are a number of people wishing to stand for the NEC – please come forwards and let me know how you would have done it. It would certainly indicate to my branch how we would support a nomination.

JIM STARKIE - BRANCH CHAIR, PRESTON: Chair, Conference, NEC, asking you to support this. During the actual ballot back in December back at our establishment this caused a lot issues with staff, not being able to vote for what particular issue affected them most, and there's other things in here because it was also difference between closed grades and those on F&S. Please support.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan for the NEC.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, on behalf of the National Executive Committee once again we urge you to reject, we don't believe it should be condemned, but the reality was the negotiators did try and separate the issues but you know, when you're in collective bargaining the employer will want something as well, just as we do. That's the art of negotiation, but the employer had their hands tied as well, because Treasury officials and Cabinet Office were saying this needs to go as a package because we are putting a lot of money in, in relation to pensions and we need to get something out of it as well. So what effectively they were trying to do was tie us to the three-year pay deal in effect. So our negotiators knew that and that's why we did want to actually separate the issues. And at the final juncture, and I think Glyn has already alluded to that, when phone calls were made to Mike and myself, I decided on the last meeting that I would go in and try and get movement as well to try and get away from it being a package and get it into single issues. I couldn't achieve it. The negotiators had already tried. They were adamant it was remaining. And they said if it wasn't going to be a full package, then they would withdraw it all. So we wanted to keep it live so as that you had the final say and that's what we'd done. In any negotiation there's got to be compromise. Was it ideal? No it wasn't. But it's not worth condemning the Executive in relation to it. We had to make a judgement call. Otherwise they were quite clear that they would take it off the table. And that's what they do, employers. That's what they try and do. At the end of the day we will now go back to them, and we have, myself and the former National Chairman in January had a meeting with Liz Truss and we told her, and I'll be blunt with you, she says, 'I suppose you're disappointed that it was rejected.' I says, 'Actual fact, I'm not, because we did warn you that if you lumped them all together, it probably would go down, and if you put questions and answers out, as an employer, it would go down.' And I put a press release out to that effect as well. But the reality is she started to listen to what we had to say directly, she made no promises, neither did Michael Spurr, in relation to the way forward. But sometimes ... and I did read on social media 'Always reject the first offer because they'll always come back.' I've got news for you. They might not and we wanted you to make a decision on what was important to you, and you did. But again, yes we did try and separate and the negotiators tried very hard, on the last day when I tried to get movement as well that failed. It did have some cosmetic changes in bringing some of the money forward, but that was about it. They weren't going to breach that 1% pay cap. It was as simple as that. So I do get it, why people said, 'I might have voted for the pensions but I couldn't vote for the pay rise and I couldn't vote for that' and we totally get that and we warned HMPPS of that potential, but we wanted to secure those moneys to let you make an informed choice, and that's what we did, Conference. So there's no need to condemn us on that particular issue either. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Swaleside to come back?

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: OK, so when he was talking about this, Steve actually mentioned in reply to one of the others when we were condemning about how it would seem if we took to the members we've taken £12 million out of your pockets. Do you know what? By putting all these together you took £500 out of my pocket because at the end of the day when we threw out the pension and we threw out prison reform, you also took away £500 that I would have got from the pay deal and also 1% that we took away from the other members who are on F&S and whatever it is that all the other people were actually going to get. The fact is, do we accept that this Union will be dictated to by the employer on how we ballot our members. And the answer to that has got to be no. It's our ballot, we will take it forward and we will ballot our members according to the way we see is correct for the membership, not for NOMS, HMPPS or whoever else you want to call them. It's gotta be for the benefit of our members and the benefit of our members is that these issues should have been balloted on a separate issue and I understand that the negotiation side of it and everything else, and the difficulties and they have to make choices and all that sort of stuff. However, the fact is it was not beneficial for our members because we threw the baby out with the bathwater and for some people it was a different baby, but we threw it out. We shouldn't be putting our members in that position. Do not allow this Union to be dictated to by the employer on how we conduct our business. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, Conference. All those in favour please show? Those against? That motion falls. 111 Swaleside. It's a debate. We don't need a seconder.

MOTION 111

In regards to the Prison Reform Ballot in 2016, that Conference debate the meaning of "Affected Membership" when it relates to balloting the membership over issues that does not affect particular groups of the membership.

SWALESIDE

DAVE COOK - BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Swaleside ask permission to withdraw.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Permission to withdraw, Conference? That's withdrawn. 112 Parkhurst. Do we have a seconder for Parkhurst? Rampton, thank you.

MOTION 112

That Conference applaud the NEC and in particular the leadership for the way in which they have promoted the interests of this union over the last year, gained public support through the media, fought for our very existence and gave credence to all we do as a Service.

PARKHURST

DICK KNOX – BRANCH SECRETARY, PARKHURST: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion reads that Conference applaud the NEC and in particular the leadership for the way in which they've promoted the interests of this Union over the last year, gained public support through the media, fought for our very existence and gave credence to all we do as a service.

Colleagues, for years, you've probably seen me up here for the last three or four years, I've stood here, begged, pleaded and demanded that this Union get off its knees and become a union again. And for the last year that is exactly what I've seen, so it's only right and proper that Parkhurst come here and actually applaud them. Some branches I guess might find this difficult given recent events, but the facts stand and we would hope the current leadership continue the good work and momentum that we've gained. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

PAUL WRAY – BRANCH CHAIR, LINCOLN: Chair, NEC, Conference, I'd like to support this motion, it made me into a little bit of a megastar around Lincoln, the chance to actually get our word out, whether that was on social media or in the press ... people actually became aware of what we are putting up every day. People said to me, 'You go to work scared; somebody like you?' and I honestly said, 'Yes, at times I do. Because it's not a nice place.' I've seen several of my members, much stronger men than me, broken because of what's been going on and it needed getting out into the public domain. So I thank you, NEC, for your support and leadership, I think you did a grand job. Thank you.

<Applause>

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Morning Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC. On a motion like this, it would be wrong, would it not, for the NEC to say, 'Yeah, we support this motion', so what I have to say, Conference, having listened to the speakers, it will be a matter for Conference, so when I finish now if I hear a loud round of applause then I know you've supported the motion, so it's a matter for you, Conference.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour please show? Against? Thank you, that's carried.

114, Swaleside, a debate, don't need a seconder. Permission to withdraw, Conference, please show. That's withdrawn. 115, I've got an indicator for a seconder from the Scrubs and I call Pentonville to the rostrum.

MOTION 114

That Conference debate: An expensive diary- what does the POA do for me?

SWALESIDE

MOTION 115

That Conference instructs that the NEC should immediately engage openly with other Public Sector Unions, such as Unite and Unison, in order to formalise a nationally co-ordinated approach to negotiations with Government over the aggressive cuts to the budgets of public services which these unions represent. This partnership should seek to repair the damage to these services that the Government's austerity measures have caused, from which all of society benefits, and remove these services from the state of crisis they are now all in.

PENTONVILLE

DAVE BARTON – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP PENTONVILLE: Chair, NEC, Conference, this motion was brought to a branch meeting by one of my members. I've never really considered it too much but it reads as follows: That Conference instructs that the NEC should immediately engage openly with other public sector unions such as Unite and Unison, in order to formalise a nationally-coordinated approach to negotiations with government over the aggressive cuts to the budgets of public services which these unions represent. This partnership should seek to repair the damage to these services that the government's austerity measures have caused, from which all of society benefits, and remove these services from the state of crisis they are now all in. It's fairly self-explanatory I think. For the last two or three days we've

actually ... it's what we've been talking about. We are a small union in terms of union sizes, we do punch above our weight but I think it's gonna take a coordinated effort to get some real change, especially if indications are right and we do them with an empowered Tory government, which is probably gonna use Brexit negotiations as cover to do some pretty nasty stuff to the public sector. So I'd like to just ask all of you to please support this motion.

<Applause>

MATT CLARK – BRANCH CHAIR, WORMWOOD SCRUBS: Thank you, Chair, Conference, speaking in support of the motion. I like this motion and as I said I support this motion, I think it's a reasonable motion but let me ask you this, Conference: if your employer, if your government, are not being reasonable with you, then why on earth should you be reasonable with them? Whatever your political position, personally I think we can all agree, if next month goes how we think it's gonna go the likes of us, the working class and things for them are gonna get exponentially worse and the only people that would benefit from that is the ruling class. There are three words that I would have liked to have seen in this motion but if they had have appeared Pentonville would probably have been asked to withdraw it, and that's aggressive, coordinated fight-back. Prisons, nurses, midwives, junior doctors, the entire NHS, disabled, elderly, local authorities and many groups in society are living on a knife-edge. One example of this in my home county, every single residential street light has been switched off and the whole county plunged into darkness because of cuts. So let's go further than just sit and talk. Let's not only sit down with those public sector unions but sit down with unions like the RMT, the PCS, the Bakers' Union, and others like I mentioned on Monday, who are prepared to push back. Regardless of what some in this room or some of your members might think of our November action, you will not be able to name me another union that is prepared to take national action potentially defying the law, in the support of its cause for its members, and the reason you won't be able to find me one in living memory is because one simply doesn't exist. And for that, the rank and file of the trade union membership look up to us. Let's stop hoping that the TUC are going to fight these battles for us, let's grease the wheels and move it down the road. Please support this motion.

<Applause>

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: Just want to take a quick liberty in reply to Steve a little while ago. I do not think I can do a better job than any of these guys up here. I am not standing for national election and they have my trust and faith in them despite my motions. However, on this motion, the greatest opportunity that we have to achieve exactly what this motion's asking is next month. That's when we have to do this, alright? So if we're gonna pass this motion, get to your members and make sure they do the right thing next month. Thank you.

<Applause>

STEWART MCLAUGHLIN – BRANCH SECRETARY, WANDSWORTH: Chair, NEC, Conference, in support of the motion. Just to let you know, as trade unionists in terms of engaging with other trade unions, don't forget to affiliate to your local Trades Councils. They are not direct parts of the TUC, they are independent Trades Councils in local areas. My local Trades Council has RMT, PCS, GMB and other trade unions and they are always available to help support and organise. This is something that won't just be done behind closed doors. We will have to get out there and let people know outside the prison walls what we do for a living and that we need their support. So please support this motion.

<Applause>

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you very much Chair, Conference, this is a very important motion actually and one that the Executive fully support. So I thank Pentonville for bringing it and I thank the contribution from the other delegates in relation to it and it's not just liaising with other public sector unions such as Unite and Unison, 'cause we already do that anyway and have done for many years, and I'll comment on that in a second. We're also members of the Trade Union Coordinating Group with such players as PCS, Bakers' Union, Fire Brigades Union, RMT, URTU and UCU. So we're pleased to be involved in that. We're also instrumental, along with the RMT, in setting up the National Shop Stewards Network. Now I know they get a bit of stick from time to time, the National Shop Stewards Network, but we are happy to be affiliated to them and associated with them, and indeed I'm speaking at Conway House in July at their Annual Conference, so if anyone wants to pop along, please do so. I'm glad that Wandsworth mentioned Trades Councils, because Trades Councils, it's our policy for every branch to be affiliated to their local Trades Council, and that's where you will mix with other trade unions, as Stewart McLaughlin has identified. And while I'm on the subject of Trades Councils, I was having a chat with Birmingham this morning, Brian Clark and Aidy Watts were big players in their Trades Councils. It wasn't easy for them because when they first went there, there was that much suspicion about the POA wanting to be there, they held a meeting of the trade unions to determine whether the POA could come in or not, and they did obviously let them in. But let me tell you, that's how we were viewed in the trade union movement for many, many years. And you know what? We have broken those barriers down. I remember the days, at Mayday Rallies where people didn't want us there. They didn't want us there. They used to hiss and boo at the POA. I've been, as have others, Colin Moses, Brian Caton and others, to functions where you're speaking and they were hostile towards us. When I first went to

the Durham Miners' Gala they said, 'You used to lock up our members' and they were hostile. Now, they welcome us with open arms. In fact I'm speaking for the second time on the platform at the Durham Miners' Gala on 8th July, which I find a tremendous honour on behalf of this trade union. It hasn't been easy. But let me say, not just me, I've followed on the good work of David Evans, but let me tell you, Colin Moses, who was your Chairman, one of the longest serving chairmen, put lots of energy and work, along with Brian as General Secretary, and myself as Finance Officer, in getting involved in the Trade Union Movement so as that people trusted us. And when we walk into a room now, they welcome the POA because we've broken down the barriers. So please get involved in your Trades Councils, get involved in telling them about the work that you do. I know sometimes that you'll be doing that in your own time and I understand that your home lives are important, but it is the policy of the Union to be involved in Trades Councils so I would ask you to look at that, so as that we are getting the story across, 'cause at national level I'm involved nationally and I sit on that group in the TUC, the Trade Councils Committee. And we were instrumental, actually, because Trades Councils didn't have a voice at the TUC, and last year it was POA and FBU that forced the motion through that they're allowed to have a speaker from the Trades Councils at the TUC. So it's by engaging that we can win and go from strength to strength so I urge everyone to do that, so Pentonville, thanks very much for bringing the motion. We were doing it anyway, but I think it now strengthens the position. Thank you.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That's carried.

117, Feltham. Permission to withdraw? Conference please show. That's withdrawn.

118 Send. Secunder for Send. Feltham, thank you. Feltham you can also address your concerns reference 119; if this is carried, that will be incorporated.

MOTION 117

POA employ a team of up to six employment law qualified specialist legal representatives, these members of staff will be employed by the union and they will represent all POA members in cases of medical capability hearings, disciplinary hearings and performance management capability hearings. This will be funded by increasing the POA monthly subscriptions by £1.

FELTHAM

MOTION 118

For all NEC members and FTO's involved in direct negotiations with NOMS to be trained in business negotiations via either in house training or from an external training provider if there is no one on the NEC qualified to provide such training.

SEND

PHIL BIRCH - BRANCH CHAIR, SEND: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference, motion reads all NEC members and full-time officers involved in direct negotiations with NOMS to be trained in business negotiations via either in-house training or from an external training provider if there was no-one on the NEC qualified to provide such training.

Point of this motion is to equip those who negotiate on behalf of the membership with the skillset to effectively take on ministers and civil servants in negotiations. The current situation we have is that as soon as someone is elected to the NEC, or appointed to the position of full-time officer, we automatically assume that a magic wand is waved and they become expert negotiators. Clearly this doesn't happen, and I mean that with no disrespect to the NEC at all. I brought this motion two years ago and it was rejected on the grounds of you don't need to spend time in a classroom to know when something is right. Colleagues, knowing something is right does not mean you can negotiate it. They are a different skillset. How can we expect the NEC and fulltime officers to negotiate effectively on our behalf if we don't give them the skillset to do it? If you are happy with all negotiation results over the last few years, you'll reject this motion, but, if you believe in equipping those who negotiate with government ministers and senior servants, all of whom will be business negotiation trained, on our behalf, to get the skillset, to get the best possible results, then you'll support this motion. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Feltham, do you wish to address anything? Terry Fullerton for the NEC.

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Thank you Chair. Conference, Terry Fullerton speaking on motion 118 on behalf of the NEC, just for the benefit of the conference hall I've never been struck with fear working on your behalf on the

NEC. The only time I have been struck with fear is when the ex-Mrs chases me for money, so ...

<Laughter>

The NEC are asking you to reject this motion. Conference, the people that this NEC, this top table, negotiate with are not your Alan Sugars or your Sir Philip Greens or your Donald Trumps. They're mostly people who've come through the Prison Service that we sit opposite the table with, your Phil Copples or previously Ian Mullholland. So we don't think that we need to be sat doing business training in order to be able to negotiate on your behalf to the best of our ability. So on that basis we ask you to reject this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Send to come back?

PHIL BIRCH - SEND: Conference, how many motions do we have every year requiring the NEC to negotiate on our behalf? Let's give them the skillset to do that. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, all those in favour please show? Against? That motion is lost. Feltham 119. Permission to withdraw? Conference, please show. That's withdrawn.

120, Feltham. Permission to withdraw? Conference please show? That's withdrawn.

121 Frankland, do we have a seconder for Frankland? Scrubs, thank you.

MOTION 119

POA NEC be trained in professional business negotiations.
FELTHAM

MOTION 120

POA NEC to deliver a training course that is specific to attendance management, medical capability proceedings and medical retirement proceedings.
FELTHAM

MOTION 121

That Conference direct the NEC to refrain from making a recommendation to the membership prior to any workplace ballot.
FRANKLAND

DAVE FERRY - FRANKLAND: Chair, NEC, Conference, motion reads that Conference direct the NEC to refrain from making a recommendation to the membership prior to any workplace ballot. A lot of this motion was covered in 108 by Swaleside so I'm not going to dwell on that. The only thing I'd like to add is our employer and government also used this recommendation against us when the membership rejected the offer. Spurr and Truss were all over the media stating how greedy prison officers were by rejecting that offer, which our Executive recommended them to accept. In future ballots we would like the NEC to present the facts and the information to the membership in the most neutral way without any suggestion on how they would like their members to vote. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson, NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you Chair. Chair, NEC, Conference, responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee. We're damned if we do and we're damned if we don't. Now this motion, what it's asking you is very serious. In so much as when an employer comes along and says, 'Are you gonna recommend this?' and we say, 'Well we can't' and they take it off the table, just remember that. So as I said, 'We're damned if we do and we're damned if we don't.' So it's a matter for you, Conference. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Frankland, do you wish to come back? Vote. All those in favour please show? Those against? That motion's lost. 122 for the NEC, Dave Todd.

MOTION 122

That ALL POA officials cease to give free advice on social media platforms unless this is on the official POA site.
NEC

DAVE TODD – NEC: Conference, Chair, invited guests, Dave Todd, NEC. The motion reads that all POA officials cease to give free advice on social media platforms unless this is on the official POA site. Conference, this motion's merely about free advice. It's not trying to bind you, it's not trying to gag you, it's not trying to stop you running election campaigns or anything on social media. All it is, is we want paying members. Otherwise we won't have a membership. Thank you Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Conference, do we have a seconder? Wymott. Thank you. Anyone wish to speak? Straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? Against? That's carried.

123, Frankland. Secunder for Frankland please. Thank you.

MOTION 123

That Conference direct the NEC to refrain from making Official announcements, statements and releasing Branch Circulars on unofficial social media sites. Also that all announcements, statements, and Branch Circulars are promulgated via official channels.
FRANKLAND

DAVE FERRY - FRANKLAND: Chair, NEC, Conference, what we're asking for in this motion is simple. That all information is published in the first instance on the POA official website. Back in November a branch circular was available on various social media sites before it appeared on the official website. Not all members or officials have access to the unofficial forums or groups. We need one easily accessible place for all information to be found. Social media is a great method of spreading information but that information needs to come from an official source which is available to all. This motion is not about stopping NEC or full-time officials from using social media. It is specifically about the publication of official information which would be released in one approved place. Thank you.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC. We're asking rejection of this motion. The POA at national level don't put things on unofficial websites. Things are published on there and people put things on there, but that's not from the Executive. Now they do use Facebook and they do make some announcements on Facebook. Whether that's official yet or not I'm not sure. And again, why you would ask the most incompetent man on social media and IT to speak I'm not quite sure. I don't go on social media but please reject this. The information, if it's published out and you're saying circulars are going out on unofficial websites, that's not from us. That's not from the NEC. It may be from other members but not the NEC.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Point of order.

DAVE COOK – BRANCH CHAIR, SWALESIDE: I'll keep my fingers crossed I've got this right. I can't even use my phone. Point of order Mr Chairman is the NEC have just moved Motion 122 about free advice on social media. This motion isn't about what they've done in the past. This is about an instruction what to do in the future, and that is to prohibit the NEC from making official statements on social media other than the official site. How can you pass one and then reject this one?

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: I must say Dave, I'm going to uphold that point of order.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Well now the Chairman's ruled on that point of order ...

<Laughter>

The POA urge you to accept and support the motion. Thank you.

<Laughter and applause>

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

DAVE FERRY - FRANKLAND: No, I'm happy!

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour? Against? That's now carried.

124 Garth, do we have a seconder for Garth? Wymott, thank you.

MOTION 124

Anytime the POA take national action, dedicated phone lines are set up at Cronin House and are staffed for the duration of the action. To ensure communications or instructions between branch officials and the NEC are properly maintained and available.

GARTH

NEIL ROSS – BRANCH CHAIR, GARTH: Chairman, NEC, Conference, I've got to be honest, after Tuesday afternoon I was thinking of withdrawing this motion because it looked like this Union was never ever going to take any action again. But for the last two days I've listened to individuals speaking and it's clear there are still people out there that are willing to fight for this trade union and fight for our rights, no matter what the injunctions say, so I want to carry on and read it. Motion 124 reads: Any time the POA take national action, dedicated phone lines are set up at Cronin House and are staffed for the duration of that action. This is to ensure communications or instructions between branch officials and the NEC are properly maintained and available. So we brought this motion to Conference after our experience at Garth last November on our national day of action. We can all agree what a superb day that was for our Union, how the majority of us stood strongly together. We at Garth stood shoulder to shoulder for the day with our colleagues at Wymott and we were the last two branches out there in the country. Now I'd love to stand before you and say that's because we're a militant lot in the northwest. We are, but that wasn't the full truth. We were stood out there because we had no communication with any NEC official and we didn't know what was going on. Now at local level it's no walk in the park for branch officials. A lot of us were new to the role and this was new territory, especially as it's deemed illegal by the powers that be and we were getting into a barrage of official letters and threats if we stayed outside. We finished the day stood outside Garth and our governor came out with a POA circular stating that everyone had gone back in hours ago and that we were the only branch out in the country and that was at 7 o'clock, so that's when we went back in. That's great. I love taking the mantle of being the last branch out in the country, but it highlighted how bad the communication was. When we pursued the matter officially at a later date we were told that myself and Glen at Wymott had come very close to being busted for individually breaking a high-court injunction. Now for me that's unacceptable when it's purely down to bad communications. I've stood before Conference in the past about motions about communication and here I am again so please support the motion.

<Applause>

JOHN BRISCOE – BRANCH SECRETARY, WOODHILL: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking against the motion for a very simple reason. We went out that day, I believe that to have dedicated phone lines and for them to be staffed would involve bringing additional resources in and announcing earlier what the actions were going to be, and I would have concerns that the employer would learn about that in advance. From my experience on the day, we received a phone call to go out and we went out. I want my officials then to be busy during the day, which is exactly what happened. I only need one phone call back and that's the one telling me to go back in. We received ours at quarter-past-five that night. That's when we went in. We'd had our governor walk out waving his bit of paper, peace in our times, all the rest of it. We didn't care. Until Jackie told us we were going back, we weren't going anywhere and we didn't move. I think this would give us the opportunity of showing our hand early and that's my only concern with this. Information is important but at the end of the day I believe we need two conversations: you're out, and then you're coming in. Anything else, if we haven't heard from our official, we don't need it. I'm not interested in what a governor tells me, wasn't interested on the day, not interested going forward. The NEC tell me what to do. That's all, and that's the only reason I've got a concern about it, we could show our hand early. Thank you.

<Applause>

PAUL RAY – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP LINCOLN: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking in support of this motion. We stayed out. I've stood here at Conference for the past two years and told you that we wouldn't come out, well, I can tell you we went out and we stayed out. We stayed out till one-minute-past-five when I got a text from Ian Carson saying, 'It's time to go back in', despite all the bullying and everything else. But I would like, just so that we've got a line of communication if something that we need to know comes out, but please support the motion.

GLEN SHARPLES – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP WYMOTT: Mr Chair, NEC, Conference. As Rossy has said from Garth, we were stood together on that day and just to bring a little bit of clarity to this, I'm sure Neil will do that, it's his motion. All we're asking for is communication, that's all. I'd still be stood out there now, quite happily, until we'd made our point. Nobody's blaming anybody on the NEC, these lads and lasses, they've had to recharge their phone three or four times I believe. All we're simply asking for with this motion, I believe, is that there's effective communication. Yes, all we do need is two phone calls, 'You're out. You're back in again.' That's all we're asking for, just better communication because the implications were very serious, potential High Court action against myself and Rossy for breaching the terms of the

injunction. Support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Wymott, just on the point of communication, when you second you get the first chance to speak on a motion, just for future reference. Thank you.

MARK POULTON – BRANCH CHAIR, BRIXTON: Chair, Conference, everybody, speaking in support of the motion. We're the opposite to yourselves at Garth and Wymott, we weren't told to go out, but we went out and then we had to ring up and find out what we were doing out.

<Laughter>

So communication needs to be a bit better.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Steve Gillan.

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you, Chairman. Conference, and of course you know that we always put a verbatim report out of what's been said at Conference, but you know the recording system's been playing up all week and I think in this motion it might be inaudible when it comes to producing the verbatim report.

So, Garth, we're more than happy to support this motion and will do and use our best endeavours in the future. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour, please show? Against? That's carried.

125 – Holme House. Secunder for Holme House? Thank you.

MOTION 125

That Conference mandates the NEC to include as part of Annual Conference an update on National issues where it feels it has achieved a benefit for members commencing at Conference 2018.

HOLME HOUSE

ANDY BAXTER – BRANCH CHAIR, HOLME HOUSE: Chair, Conference, NEC. The motion reads: That Conference mandates the NEC to include, as part of Annual Conference, an update on national issues where it feels it's achieved a benefit for members commencing at Conference 2018.

As branch officials how many times do you hear comments from members such as: what have the NEC done for us; the POA's an expensive insurance policy; this is an expensive diary; they never achieve anything; what are the NEC doing about pensions? How many times a day do we hear comments like that from our members? How many times do you see the NEC being blamed or being prodded to respond on social media? One of my members asked me to tell him what the NEC had achieved in the last 12 months, for me, it was a difficult question to answer because our NEC rarely publish their achievements. My member sent this motion. I'm sure it'd be possible to write a small summary or report of each individual achievement of national importance as we work throughout the year. That document could be formalised and published annually as part of a Conference pack. It's a simple idea, no hidden agendas. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Jackie Marshall.

JACKIE MARSHALL – NEC MEMBER: Chair, Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC in support of the motion. We thank Holme House for bringing this motion, we think it's a really good idea and we're happy to provide. Please support the motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour? Against? That's carried.

126 – Leyhill. Secunder for Leyhill? Bristol.

MOTION 126

That Conference instructs that it should be indicated on circulars to which pay bands the circular concerns.

LEYHILL

STEVE SEYMOUR – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP LEYHILL: Chair, NEC, Conference. Motion 126 reads: That Conference instructs that it should be indicated on circulars which pay bands the circular concerns.

I struggled with this one with our branch. I firmly believe, and I tell all our members, that they should read every circular that comes out, regardless of who it is for. However, on listening to the branch, some of them say it would be easier if it was referring to Band 2 work, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5. I realise that this is a relatively short and simple motion, I can probably guess the response that I'm going to get from it, but I would urge that Conference give it some consideration and regards to our membership, some of whom don't like reading memos, circulars and if it's directly to their Band they will take it on board. Please support the motion. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee, seeking rejection of this motion. And why are we seeking rejection? When I go into branches and I speak to branch members and you say to them, 'We put out this circular on pensions, we've put this circular out on pay', and the answer comes back, 'Yeah, it was from the POA so I just deleted it.' The problem with this motion is if we start selecting the audience of our circulars then members will not know what's happening within the wider POA. As you know, myself and Glyn, teach branch officials and one of the things that came out there was a traffic light system: red, amber and green. Well, if it's green people are just gonna delete it. We want our members to understand what the National Executive is doing for everyone. We want you to know what's happened in Northern Ireland, we want you to know what's happening in the private sector. If you do this then people will not know because then you, and it makes a massive administrative headache because then we've gotta find out where the different pay bands are, because they're not just in prisons, we've got special hospitals, we've also got the private sector and we've also got smaller entities, in particular we've got members who work in the custodial sections of police stations. This would be impossible, Conference, so therefore we'd ask you to reject it.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Leyhill to come back?

STEVE SEYMOUR – BRANCH SECRETARY, HMP LEYHILL: No, thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: To the vote, all those in favour please show? Against? That's lost.

127 – Send. Secunder for Send? Thank you.

MOTION 127

The NEC is to produce a standard exit questionnaire, which is to be distributed to all branches, who will then conduct exit interviews on all members leaving the Prison Service and the information passed back to the NEC to be used as evidence in negotiations over pay, pensions and safety. As such, the questionnaire must include questions on Pay, Pensions, Retirement Age, Working Conditions and Staff Safety.

SEND

PHIL BIRCH – BRANCH CHAIR, SEND: Mr Chairman, NEC, Conference. Motion reads: NEC is to produce a standard exit questionnaire, which is to be distributed to all branches, who will then conduct exit interviews on all members leaving the Prison Service and the information passed back to the NEC to be used as evidence in negotiations over pay, pensions and safety. As such, the questionnaire must include questions on pay, pensions, retirement age, working conditions and staff safety.

Does exactly what it says on the tin, gives the NEC the information to be able to negotiate and prove why people are leaving the service in droves. Please support the motion.

<Applause>

GARY LYON – BRANCH CHAIR, ASHWORTH: Chairman, NEC, Conference, speaking against the motion purely on wording, 'The NEC is to produce a standard exit questionnaire.' What, to cover all of our employers? 'Which is to be distributed to all branches.' Well, we're not all NOMS branches. 'And to be used in evidence in negotiations over pay, pensions...' as such. We need the information, of course we do, but it can't be standard and it can't be sent to all branches. We need to recognise we're a diverse union, we're not all in the Prison Service and we're not all in the public sector, so on that basis I'd ask you to reject the motion purely on the wording of it.

RICH WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, HMP NOTTINGHAM: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking against the motion. Totally understand the sentiments of the motion from Send, but probably like many others, with the facility time that I get

I'm struggling to do my workload already, never mind having to go round the thousand-and-one members that leave on an almost daily basis to fill out a questionnaire to send back to the NEC. More disciplines and capability hearings and grievance hearings than what I can cope with at the minute, I don't need any extra workload on top of what I've got already so I'd ask you to reject the motion.

JOHN BRISCOE – BRANCH SECRETARY, WOODHILL: Chair, NEC, Conference, against the motion purely because I can't do it. We're well on the way to losing well over 50 members of staff this year, quite a number of those walk off duty never to be seen again. I would love to be able to get the information – I have no access to those people when they've gone, a lot of them don't want any contact from anybody as they're in such a distraught and fragile state when they leave us so it would be impossible for me to carry out the mandate of the Conference. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Joe Simpson for the NEC.

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, fulltime officer responding on behalf of the National Executive Committee. Conference, all we have to do as a National Executive is to produce the questionnaire, then it's over to you. So therefore we are happy to produce it if you are happy to do the work, so it's a matter for you whether or not you pass this motion. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Send, would you like to come back? To the vote, all those in favour please show? All those against? That falls.

I've had an indication from The Verne that they wish to withdraw 128, do they have permission, please show? That's withdrawn.

129 – Andy Darken speaking on behalf of the NEC.

MOTION 128

Whilst facility time is unavailable at present to attend Conference and to minimise time away from delegates families and to maximise attendance at Conference in our own time, we propose that Conference is moved to a location more centrally located until such a time facility time is re-introduced.

THE VERNE

MOTION 129

Conference accepts Conference Paper 2 and endorses the recommendations made within it pertaining to the provisions for accountancy services to the POA.

NEC

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Conference, speaking on behalf of the NEC. This is an easy one, there's no confusion on this one. You've all read your packs, you've got Conference Paper 2, you probably spent all night reading all the Conference papers in detail, particularly Conference Paper 2. I don't think I'll waste Conference time at this late stage reading it out, it is there and I urge you to support Conference Paper 2 so we can try and get the best value for money over the next 12 months. Thank you, Conference, please support this.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Do we have a seconder? Feltham. Straight to the vote, those in favour? Any against? That's carried.

130 – Do we have a seconder for this? Thank you, Wandsworth. Steve Gillan on behalf of the NEC.

MOTION 130

That Conference accepts Conference Paper 3 Political Fund Ballot Rules for Northern Ireland, under which a ballot could be held on a resolution approving the furtherance of the political objectives of the POA within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (NI) Order 1995 (as amended). Further that, if those Rules are given formal approval by the Certification Officer, a ballot will be held in accordance with them.

NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Thank you, Chair, thank you, Conference. I'll be very brief on this, this is looking for approval, the motion is self-explanatory to re-do the political fund for Northern Ireland which has different rules pertaining to them as we have for England, Wales and Scotland Certification Officer. Just to remind everybody it's got to be done every ten years, the last one was done in 2007. Just so that there's no misunderstanding, this isn't about being

affiliated to the Labour Party, I wish it was actually, but it's not. This is so that we can continue the work of the union engaging with all political parties so that we can work on your behalf to try and make things better. So any political expenditure that we do comes out the political fund and there's very strict guidelines now under the Trade Union Act that was passed, although Northern Ireland always had to opt in anyway, as opposed to the England, Wales and Scotland one, which was an opt out. We had to get preliminary approval from the Certification Officer on the Conference Paper 3, we have that preliminary approval if you go forward with this then it will be a ballot of the membership for further approval. It doesn't cost the membership any more, there's 15 pence taken out already of your subs to go into the political fund. Thank you, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: No speakers, straight to the vote. All those in favour please show? Any against? That's carried.

MOTION 131

That Conference accepts Conference Paper 4 Political Fund Ballot Rules for England, Wales and Scotland, under which a ballot could be held on a resolution approving the furtherance of the political objectives of the POA within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Further that, if those Rules are given formal approval by the Certification Officer, a ballot will be held in accordance with them.

NEC

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Yes, Chair, that is Conference Paper 3 so please familiarise yourself with it. Again, we've had preliminary approval from the temporary Certification Officer; there's got to be a few typos so we'll get that done on the model rules and so forth. The same scenario is Northern Ireland but instead actually we had an opt-out situation, we need to be then compliant because it will be an opt-in in the future. So we will have to do some work in relation to that, but once again, put it for your approval.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Do we have a seconder? Thank you. All those in favour? Any against? That's carried.

Andy Darken on behalf of the NEC for 132. Do we have a seconder for this? Thank you.

MOTION 132

That this Conference re-affirms that the POA is the appropriate union for all workers within the Criminal Justice Sector, Secure Hospitals or any other secure custodial environment in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales & the Isle of Man and as such the Union actively pursues recognition, legislation changes and organisation within every applicable workplace.

NEC

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Did you get a seconder?

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Yeah.

ANDY DARKEN – DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: Speaking on behalf of the NEC. This is a simple motion but an important motion for us to be able to carry out the work over the next 12 months prior to Conference. Conference, we'd look to re-affirm the POA the appropriate union in the custodial sector, in many areas as well. Now, yesterday was a very important day and a unique day – we had a fringe meeting with the private sector and in the private sector we had two senior directors from Sodexo and G4S. Very important, very interesting meeting as well for those that attended, and I thank all the delegates that did attend, put some difficult questions to them. But we need to be the right union; we need to be in there fighting, we need to get recognition more and more within the private sector. We don't know what's going to happen over the next few years, there's six new prisons to be built, I am sure that already the private sector companies are lobbying to get control of those prisons. So we need to be in there, we need to be re-affirming our commitment to be the right union in this sector. Conference, we are the right union, support this motion, let us carry out this work, let us lobby the private sector and the public sector to be the right union to represent all those in the custodial sector. Conference, please support this motion.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: All those in favour? Any against? That's carried.

132a which is emergency motion three from the NEC. Speaking on our behalf is Terry Fullerton. Do we have a seconder for this motion? Thank you.

MOTION 132A

Following the report from the Standing Orders Committee to Annual Conference 2016, Conference accept that the terms of ACM 84/15 are creating administration difficulties in managing the Conference Agenda. Therefore, Conference remove this from the unions policy framework.

NEC

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Chair, Conference, speaking on motion 132a on behalf of the NEC. Conference, bringing this Conference together on behalf of the NEC and for yourselves is a huge piece of work, it's very time consuming and takes a lot of effort from those individuals within Cronin House who put a lot of effort in. This Conference motion, Annual Conference motion 84 of '15 was the motion that Parkhurst brought, Dicky Knox spoke on it with regard to the motions being returned to branches because of the wording and because of NEC speakers speaking against motions because of the wording asking for them to be rejected, and quite rightly, Conference, adopted the Parkhurst motion. But what's been happening lately for the Standing Orders Committee, because your cut-off point for receiving motions is the 31st January, it's becoming extremely problematic for the Standing Orders Committee to get in touch with branches to ask them to change wordings, 'cause there are quite a lot of motions that come that need wording changed, but it's becoming problematic. The other thing is, as you all know, that the motions aren't the property of the branch committee, when you get in touch they're the property of the branch. When you've had the branch committee meetings and had those motions accepted by your branch, then to get something changed within that motion needs you to have another branch meeting to get that sorted out. All that's time consuming, it's a timetable of events that have to take place to get this Conference running smoothly.

So we're asking Conference to give the Standing Orders Committee a little bit of help by allowing us to take this off the policy document and in doing so we will give a commitment from the NEC that we won't stand here and speak against motions just because of the wording, we'll speak to the motion as it's delivered by the mover and we'll act on that accordingly on the disposal of the motion and through the verbatim report from other speakers. So that's all we're asking for is to assist us in trying to get Conference running smoothly, 'cause this really is becoming problematic for the Standing Orders Committee so we're asking for that, please support.

DUNCAN WILLIAMS – BRANCH CHAIR, LITTLEHEY: Chair, NEC, Conference, speaking against this motion. The actual motion asks for advice and guidance to the branch, it doesn't ask you to send the motion back to the branch for it to be re-written, it's just simply advice and guidance. I don't believe we can go back to a time when we have motion after motion being rejected on the wording. I understand what Terry just said there, but at the moment we have a commitment and we have a mandate that that won't happen and I'm not prepared, and my branch are not prepared, to allow that to be kept on a promise now that they won't do it, 'cause I believe... we've already seen that happen this week, when they are actually mandated not to do that. If the NEC are not sure about the content of a motion just pick up the phone, ask the branch officials. The branch official has still got then the right to say, 'I'm bringing it anyway if you're unsure of the wording or not.' And the system is not perfect, I understand that, but maybe we should look at a better system rather than going back to the old system which also didn't work. So I'd ask you to reject this motion please, Conference.

MARK FAIRHURST – ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Any other speakers? Terry Fullerton to come back?

TERRY FULLERTON – ACTING VICE CHAIR: Yeah, thanks Chair. That's what we did, Conference, we asked people to pick the phone up and ask for advice and guidance on wordings of motions if they weren't sure. Unfortunately, that's not what happened, we didn't get any. So I mean I'm not gonna labour the point, it will be a decision for Conference obviously but this would greatly assist the Standing Orders Committee in trying to get this Conference together because it does take a lot of work, so please support.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Go to the vote, all those in favour? Those against? That motion is lost. Now to the report backs, 133 Leyhill, and speaking on behalf of the NEC will be Joe Simpson. Thank you Leyhill.

MOTION 133

Update on ACM 28/2015 report back.

Motion 28

Conference mandates the NEC to challenge the ethics and legality of the mandatory fitness test regarding members aged over 60 years old. The present test based on the ability to carry out Control and Restraint when our employer fails to recognise Prison Officers as "front line" staff

LEYHILL

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, NEC, Conference, the report back on motion 28 of 2015 is that the legal advice received is, the employer can impose the fitness test on its employees. The union has run seven cases on the different protected characteristics, obviously gender, age, etc., and lost them all due to the employer informing the tribunal that they have an alternative fitness test. However, the National Executive wish to put this across to our membership is that any member dismissed due to failing the fitness test must seek immediate legal advice so we can challenge it. That's the report back, thank you Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you. 134 Parkhurst, reporting back is Glyn Travis.

MOTION 134

Report back on Motion 41/2015.

PARKHURST

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Yes Chair, looking at report back on motion 41 of 2015 which was lost, we could say that it was disposed of, but clearly there was a slight technical error that nobody picked up which is one of the problems that we face. And then doing that Chair, the actual report back that we're looking for is about the fitness test that PEIs are undertaking. The progress hasn't been successful, we haven't changed that at present, we are working that with the employer and we're given assurance that that will remain on the statue book because what you've got to recognise is that whilst PEIs are very fit, they have lovely suntans - apart from the National Chair, of course – medallions, and wear sun cream when it's hot, they still have to do a fitness test the same as you and they *do* get old and they do get bad knees, so we do need to seek the change and that's the report back, Chair. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: You just described me perfectly Glyn, especially the knees. 135 Holme House, reporting back again is Glyn Travis.

MOTION 135

Holme House branch request a report back on Conference 2016 Motion 34.

34- The NEC negotiate with NOMS to secure an independent appeal process against any dismissal. The appeal authority must not be part of the appellant's line management structure and must not be part of the dismissing manager's line management structure.

HOLME HOUSE

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Again Chair the report back to Conference is that the process has not been achieved, NOMS do not believe that there's a need to change 6 of 2010 and bring in an independent authority. It remains on the HR Whitley Agenda, it will be continued to be progressed and if we make any progress on this we'll report back to Conference or to the membership via a POA circular. Thank you.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Don't go away Glyn, 136, Holme House report back.

MOTION 136

Holme House branch request a report back on Conference 2016 Motion 42.

42- That Conference instructs the NEC to secure a review and revaluation of Factor 9 from the original NOMS Job Evaluation Scheme assessment, which were carried out prior to F & S and Benchmark. Furthermore, in any new JES, the work of all operational uniformed staff must be re-evaluated to provide a fair and accurate reflection of the operational demands, reduce benchmark staffing levels, impact of new psychoactive substances on the roles that operational uniformed staff must deliver.

HOLME HOUSE

GLYN TRAVIS – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Chair, Conference, 136. Seek a review of Factor 9, this has been the subject of Conference motions again, so the explanation has been fully detailed out. We haven't been successful, NOMS believe that Factor 9 is perfectly fit for purpose, we know it's not and we will continue to press for a review. Thank you Chair.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Glyn. Reporting back 137 from Elmley, Joe Simpson.

MOTION 137

HMP Elmley branch request a report back on Annual Conference Motion 65/2016.

ELMLEY

JOE SIMPSON – ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Thank you Chair. Report back on motion 65 2016 and that was Conference instruct the NEC to seek a partnership with a charitable organisation that specialises in PTSD and mental health issues to offer support and therapy to members who are struggling with these illnesses. The National Executive report back this is already achieved with the Fire Fighters Charity. We are also looking at Mind and other charities to look at what they can provide for our membership. Mind is not just a national organisation, it's also a regional organisation, so we need to look at what cost, is that gonna be easier to do it locally or do it as a national project whilst we'll be also looking at other organisations to assist in what we're doing. We're also looking at, some members might have heard of it, it's called the Mental Health First Aid Kit, something that we might be able to put on training for our branch officials at our new training venue which is JFTU.

Also, we wanna put it on record as well, the employer has got a duty to ensure the mental health of their employees. Now they've got an Employee Assistance Programme in place which they say is under-utilised by our members. Therefore the NEC would also say that you should be using that. Chair, that's the report back.

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Joe. Swinfen Hall at 138, seek permission to withdraw. Do we have permission to withdraw? Thank you Conference, that is now withdrawn.

MOTION 138

Swinfen Hall requests an update on the progress by the NEC from our motion last year calling for a proper commitment from NOMS on THEIR zero tolerance policy.

SWINFEN HALL

Conference, just a quick announcement before we bring a close to proceedings. The Francis House Hospital bucket collection raised a total of £813.65, that with our donation of £500 raises a grand total of £1,313.65, thank you so much for your generosity.

Acting National Chair closing speech

Conference, as Acting National Chair I have the authority to invite guests up to the top table to say a few words to Conference. It gives me pleasure to invite this next guest but also with a heavy heart. He will address Conference at the end of Conference, he should have been here this week but anyway he needs no introduction. Mike Rolfe please come to the stage.

<Applause>

Well Conference, we've come to the end. I've learnt a lot, a massive learning curve but we got there, and I sincerely hope that this isn't the first Conference that I Chair for you. I'd like to thank the hotel staff, the Conference staff, the POA providers and exhibitors, security teams, the National Executive Committee for the teamwork they've showed and the help they've given me, without them I would have been lost, the Scottish National Executive Committee and the Area Committee for Northern Ireland. Special thanks to the admin staff, particularly my secretary, who does a fantastic job and keeps me going in the right direction. But the biggest thanks are to you, the delegates, I know you work tirelessly on behalf of your members, mostly in your own time, thank you for your contribution and thank you for your understanding with me chairing this Conference.

Whether you work in the public or private sector, a special hospital or an immigration centre, we all face the same risks and we all need to unite and support each other. There's gonna be difficult times ahead, especially if we end up with a Tory majority government. If that happens we need to be realistic and we need to admit that we may well face further closures and threats of privatisation. We cannot lose our focus. But let me say this, we need to get the NEC elections out of the way, you need to elect a new Chair, we need to get the General Election out of the way, then we need to take a deep breath and stabilise this union. We've been too fragmented over the last couple of months, too many things going on that have destabilised us. Let's gather our thoughts and move forward.

You've indicated to us that you wish us to work within the law and that's exactly what we will do. Don't be thinking that's giving up, we have many benefits to that strategy and the biggest, *biggest* thing I can say to you about that is think about your establishment during a security audit week. You do everything by the book and you follow every PSI. If you did that

all the time eventually someone would have to sit down with us and with you and come to an agreement to keep your prisons and your members safe. We all use health and safety law against the employer but we've got to move forward as one, no splits, no fear and no more excuses. Don't get me wrong, I will do everything I can to protect your health and safety and I'll know when the tipping point is reached because you will tell me, and I will take, along with my NEC, any action that we deem appropriate and necessary to defend and protect your safety. I pledge to you this. I will not waiver in my desire to keep you safe and protect your terms and conditions. If you're not safe in your gaols then make yourself safe. We've got to stop the intimidation and bullying by managers who always insist on running unsafe regimes despite the fact they don't have the resources in place.

We'll continue to campaign to get Section 127 repealed. And I say to you this, Conference, get off your knees and find the courage to fight back and you will discover the bravery to succeed. To change a law you must challenge a law and if that law refuses to change then we must change it. Don't be fearful, don't be tentative, don't make excuses, we act as one. I'm fed up working in unsafe conditions, fed up of staff being used as punch bags, fed up of not getting a pay rise, fed up having to work longer before retirement. The time has come to make a stand, we do that as one, we do it together. So get back to your gaols, stay safe and challenge bad decisions, like we must all challenge this bad law that is strangling us. Conference, let's do this. We are one. We are the POA. We will act together comrades, we will succeed. Let's do this.

Thank you, safe journey home.

General Secretary closing speech

STEVE GILLAN – GENERAL SECRETARY: Well, Conference, the Chair has already given the thanks to the staff and the organisers at Southport and so forth, so I will omit that, but there's a couple of things that I would like to say. We've had some excellent debates at Conference this week with some speeches of passion, wisdom and so forth. You've acted well, once again you delegates, giving up *your* time, your annual leave and we believe that is superb because you are the heartbeat, actually, along with the membership in the policy direction of this trade union and you've made some very positive contributions and set the policy for this Executive going forward and we will continue to strive to make things better in relation to that. And as General Secretary and someone who's done a variety of positions within the union, such as Vice Chairman, Assistant General Secretary and Finance Office and being your General Secretary for the last seven years, I've seen some things over the years. Some have been good, some have been bad, some have been indifferent, but the one thing we do need is unity and no individual is bigger than the trade union, whether it's me, whether it's any one of the Executive, no one is bigger, no one's indispensable, or anything like that.

But what I would like to say in the seven years I've been General Secretary I've worked with three National Chairmen and I've also now got an ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR, and each of them have been very, very good. Each of them have been excellent in their own right. Colin Moses... I wish I'd had more time in actual fact, to have worked with Colin because I'd worked with Colin since I'd been on the Executive as Vice Chairman and Finance Officer. That's not taking anything away from anybody else because I built up a very good relationship with the former National Chairman, PJ McParlin, who'd done some excellent work on behalf of this trade union and I understand it was a difficult period in the union's history during his tenure but make no doubt about it, he was a good Chairman. And yes, like all the Chairmen I've just spoken... I will speak about Mike in a minute, as General Secretary of course we had our fallouts behind closed doors and that's where it remained; that's where it should remain, not splattered all over social media, not dividing this trade union. We should have pure unity. This is the place where we debate things. Swaleside fought their corner today but I've known Dave Cook a long, long time and let me tell you, he spoke with passion, with eloquence, as usual, and fought on behalf of his members and I thought he'd done a very good job in articulating his argument. Some other debates that we've had during the course of this week has been done with humour, guile, and I applaud you for your professionalism.

Mike Rolfe. Now, Mike Rolfe was a guy that I wanted to work with for a long time, quite frankly, because the man is one of integrity and professionalism and yes, Mike's the first one to admit behind closed doors, sometimes we didn't always agree, but we were getting to know each other. Mike has made his decision but I wish him the very best of luck because whatever he does he's chosen a path to go into politics and that's Mike right to do so, and I don't think that should be frowned on by this trade union. I think he's done his best as an NEC member, I think he's done his best as National Chairman and I enjoyed working with him, so did the Executive. But, you know, there ain't no messiahs coming. We tend to build people up and then we knock them down. And when I go into Cronin House I look at the board that shows all our National Chairmen and the longest-serving National Chairman in our union is nine years. John Bartell and Colin Moses, I think Colin was just slightly ahead of him actually, but they've all been decent National Chairmen and yet we replace them with regularity. You know I read social media, people tell me what a wonderful Chairman Colin Moses was and he was, but you voted him out. So when the next National Chairman is elected let's give them our full support, don't build them up as a messiah, only to knock down, they're only human. And you know what, we shouldn't be talking about individuals, we should be talking about the Executive and delegates as a collective, because I'll say it again, we win together and we lose together, that's the issue. No one is bigger than this union and we make decisions on the Executive as an Executive, no individual makes a decision, the *Executive* make the decisions when Conference isn't sitting and I'm proud of each and

every one of them along with the full-time officers, and of course as General Secretary I will work with any National Chairman that the union elects because that is democracy. But we need to stabilise and move forward and I'm sure that we can do that with confidence, with cohesive policies that you've given us, and let's make this union march on to successes that give our membership better terms and conditions, better health and safety and together, and *only together*, will we achieve that.

Thank you very much Conference and I now would invite Mike to speak. Well done Mike, thank you.

<Applause>

Address by Mike Rolfe

MIKE ROLFE: Chair, NEC, Conference, Honorary Life Members, invited guests, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today and say my farewells.

I wanna start up by saying I'm sorry, Conference, and I genuinely mean that. When I took on the role of National Chair it was a great honour for me to be elected and to see the support that I'd got out there from you in the field and from our members and I truly, *truly* am sorry that I'm not there to finish the job off. I've made a personal choice and I've made a personal choice that fits with my own philosophy on the world, on life, what I wanna see in our society. That's not me abandoning POA principles, I fully support everything that this trade union has strived to do over the many, many years. And do you know what, it can be very frustrating. It's very frustrating for these guys, it's very frustrating for you and it's very frustrating for our members. And sometimes, yes, you feel like you're banging your head against a brick wall because that's what you are. You've got logic, you've got reason, you've got statistics and you have the moral high ground with the message you're taking forward but yet still no one listens to reason. So I've made my choice. I've made my choice because I want to do better, not just for POA members but for society as well and I know many of my colleagues that are sitting there today, upset, annoyed and frustrated with what I've done, I know you too have true principles beyond the POA, for our members, for our friends, for our colleagues, everywhere in society and I think we all, as a trade union, believe in a fairer society. So I don't wanna get political and I know the NEC wouldn't want me to get political but for me the opportunity has come up to do something that I truly believe in, something that I feel passionate about, and I didn't wanna miss that opportunity and so I do apologise to Conference for not staying and finishing the job.

But as colleagues have already said, not one person makes this trade union, in fact, we ain't the power brokers, the National Chair isn't the power broker, you the members are the power, you direct the direction of this union and you hold the power and the key to its success. And I hope that this Conference goes from strength to strength, I hope that this Executive continues to have your support and that you continue to support each other, because one of my key goals as National Chair was to try and find unity again because we'd lost it somewhere and we needed it back. And all I'd see was people looking at each other and fighting amongst themselves and I hope, if anything, we've started to turn the tide on that. I've seen members that would never have put a grievance in putting grievances in now; I've seen branch committees grow from strength to strength and say no when things are wrong and walk their branch out if they absolutely necessarily have to. And we have supported you and we will continue and whatever my future is I will continue to support you and I will continue to support the POA message.

Everyone in this union is very close to my heart and yes, it's been a tough, tough decision for me and I'm not gonna lie, I shed some tears when I made that decision because it meant a lot for me to be part of this union. So I thank you for giving me the opportunity to stand here today, I thank you all for your support, I thank the NEC for their long support of me. It wasn't always easy and as Steve's alluded to we had many disagreements but we came through fighting and I think we made the right choices and we tried to do the right things by our members. I thank the fantastic support staff that have always been there to back me and back this NEC and to back this union and they're not personally benefitting from it but they're there to make sure this machine continues to run and that it's well oiled. So Conference, I appreciate the opportunity to be here today and I hope that I can be successful in my endeavours and if I am then I promise, *I promise* to keep taking forward our fight. Thank you very much.

<Applause>

MARK FAIRHURST - ACTING NATIONAL CHAIR: Thank you Mike Rolfe, I have no doubt whatsoever that you will be successful, all the best, my mate. That brings Conference to an end, safe journey home.

