

# Standing orders committee report No 2

for Left Unity Policy Conference Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014

- 1. Correction** - SOC member Claire Riley is from Wigan Branch (not Manchester)
- 2. Standing Orders for Conference** - We recommend the adoption for this conference of the Standing Orders for LU Conferences set out in Appendix 1
- 3. Selection of speakers in debates** – SOC has been consulted on how speakers (other than proposers of motions) should be selected in debates. The SOC has no view on the method and believes this is a matter for the Chairs of Conference to decide.
- 4. Notice of Withdrawal of motions** – **The following motions have been requested to be withdrawn by the mover – SOC recommends withdrawal.**  
Motion 52 – Robert Eagleton’s campaign to become elected to the National Union of students’ National Executive Council – Robert Eagleton & Lucy Stoneley
- 5. Change to motion 3 Austerity** – West London now only want to accept the Loughborough amendment but not the Sheffield amendment so that item would become:  
**Motion 3 – West London as amended by Loughborough**  
Left Unity is an anti-austerity party. We will support and build national, regional and local campaigns against cuts and privatisation of our NHS, our public services, our welfare state and our publicly funded education system  
**Amendment 3A - Sheffield**  
Replace the second sentence so that it reads:  
“Left Unity is an anti-austerity party. We will campaign to unite the existing anti-cuts campaigns and campaigns against privatisation of our NHS, our public services and our welfare state.”
- 6. Composites** – **The following Composite motion has been submitted – SOC recommends acceptance of the composite onto the agenda.**  
NB. Standing orders committee would like to thank the branches and individuals involved for their work in compositing their motions and amendments .

## **Composite A – Housing**

(Liverpool, Birmingham, Loughborough, LGBTQ Caucus, Milton Keynes, Waltham Forest, West London, Richard Farnos/Joseph Healey)

Replacing motions and amendments 14, 14A, 15, 16 & 17

## **Housing crisis**

There are many aspects to the housing crisis in Britain:

- the bedroom tax
- relentless attacks on and removal from democratic control of social/council housing,
- the virtual end to the concept of housing based on social need,
- the cost and insecurity of private rental,
- the prevalence of short term, insecure lets which damage the construction of viable communities and impact on children’s schooling,
- The enforced movement of people from their local areas to wherever available housing is cheapest, thus breaking the links with the community and support.

- The consequent human misery and disruption to Social Services and Educational requirements arising from forced movements of vulnerable people, the shortage of mortgages and the lack of affordable housing,
- the unequal demands for income between Buy to Let and home ownership mortgages
- the scandal of viable housing standing empty,
- the movement of right to buy houses into the private rental sector
- the use of housing as speculative capital once again,
- the rise in homelessness
- and the slowdown in the house building industry.

These all make housing a key policy issue for Left Unity.

### **House building**

A publicly-owned building corporation should be established, to ensure that planned targets for house-building are reached and to provide permanent trade union recognised employment and ongoing training for building workers. The capacity of local planning authorities must be supported and increased, including investment in training and education programmes for the planning sector.

### **Campaign issues**

Conference resolves that Left Unity should campaign for:

- Dignity in housing for all.
- The right to accommodation for all.
- The immediate end to the bedroom tax and support for campaigns (including direct action and organisation in the communities) to see the bedroom tax abolished.
- A publically owned and democratically controlled council house building programme funded by central government at minimal interest rates.

Conference therefore resolves to campaign on, and instructs future elected representatives to implement, the following:

- To increase the building and renovation of Council, and truly affordable housing to at least 250,000 units a year.
- Planning for housing to be within an overall town or city plan to ensure full access to social and recreational facilities for residents.
- Planning of housing to be linked to plans for schools and health care and to integrated provision for elders and to
- Provision of outside play areas for children close to family housing.
- Vacant accommodation should be brought into use, by compulsory purchase if necessary.
- Accommodation to be allocated on the basis of need, with right to life-long tenure and rents set at an affordable\* level within the living wage <sup>\*[Amendment 16A]</sup>.
- The rights of short-term tenants in both public and private sector housing be protected with respect to length of rental contract and termination of tenancy
- Housing design to be aesthetically pleasing and to take account of existing designs of properties in the local area, with most social housing built to Parker Morris standards, with back and front gardens.
- Housing design to be eco-friendly and sustainably sourced and run, reducing the carbon footprint of all housing stock and improving energy efficiency. Heating for all houses to be included within a neighbourhood plan to aim for the most efficient use of fuel, including utilisation of solar, wind

and ground source energy wherever possible, and to promote use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

- Planning to recognise the need to build accessible homes and provision to remodel older homes where needed to meet access issues
- To pilot the return of local authority building and renovation teams
- To work to develop effective housing plans for flood prone areas.
- Every home to be equipped with fire alarms and sprinklers.
- Rent control to be introduced on private landlords with rent increases only where necessity in the context of repairing and refitting the rented property, can be demonstrated.
- Housing rights and benefits for under-25 year olds, to be respected and previous caps reversed.
- The legal right to rent strikes to be reintroduced and tenants organisations to be facilitated.
- To work with co-ops within an overall local housing strategy.
- To provide housing for workers in the area in which they work
- To protect the communities and allow people to live near family or friends
- Local Authorities to be given the responsibility to safe guard standards in the private sector and to intervene where required
- Local Authorities to be responsible for regular inspection and approval of all rented properties with a grading given in relation to provided facilities, state of repairs and heat insulation.
- To provide legal aid for housing cases.
- To legalise squatting for emergency housing need or to bring vacant property back into use
- To reverse cuts in emergency accommodation with the creation of a diversity of units that meet all needs. To at least equalise income requirements between buy to let and home owner mortgages and to reverse all discrimination in favour of duty to let mortgages
- To use idle industrial capital to build sustainable and high quality prefabricated housing as part of an integrated plan to address housing shortage.
- Any private housing development be obliged to provide some affordable housing in the development

Left Unity calls for a radical reform of the planning system, nationalisation of development rights, the introduction of mandatory housing standards, a new National Spatial Plan to provide a coherent and holistic strategic approach to planning for major housing and infrastructure investment and a large scale state construction programme, in partnership with local authorities and local communities, focusing on the regeneration of urban areas. All surplus public sector land put to use in order to support the programme.

Left Unity's housing policies will respect the needs and struggles of LGBTQ people, many of whom are estranged from their families, and have been hit by cuts and will be forced on to the street if the Conservatives scrap housing benefit for the under 25s. Left Unity notes increasing homelessness and 'sofa surfing' by LGBTQ youth because of cuts in emergency accommodation and refuges. No one should ever have to sleep on the streets or sofa surf. To ensure that the needs of LGBTQ, the elderly from all communities, and other minority groups are respected in housing and to build at least one LGBTQ shelter-extra care units in every major conurbation.

In the short run we want a crash course in house building and appropriation and renovation of empty properties, which will revive communities.

In the longer term, a determined program of building good houses for cheap rents will bring us up against the heart of the property relations of capital, mainly the private ownership of land and the commodification of property

Left Unity recognises that there is much more than house building needed to humanise and truly civilise our cities and wishes to work with international political campaign “The Right to the City”

To this end, we invite supporters of Left Unity and all campaigning for dignity in housing and our other demands to attend a meeting on this matter in Liverpool, the first city to develop social housing, but now one of the cities most damaged by the government’s policies.

### **16A - Amendment - Lee Rock & Laurie McCauley**

In bullet point 23 delete [affordable] and insert [token]

### **Order of Business for Section Two NHS and Housing becomes as follows: Section Two NHS and Housing**

*Policy Commission reports – 5 minutes*

*Proposal of Composite A – 5 Minutes*

*Proposal of a motion – 3 minutes*

*Proposal of an amendment – 2 minutes*

*Speakers from the floor – 3 minutes*

*Policy commissions right to reply – 2 minutes*

Session begins at 12.50

### **Health**

Health Policy Commission Report (Motion 11) (5 min)

Amendment 11 A from Hackney Left Unity branch (2 min)

Amendment 11 B from Lambeth branch (2 min)

Reply from Health policy Commission - (2 mins)

### **Vote on amendments 11A and 11B**

Motion 12 (composite) from Islington, West London and Barnet - NHS Campaigns (3 min)

Motion 13 from Birmingham Left Unity - Defending the NHS (3 min)

Speakers from the floor (10 minutes)

### **Vote on motions 12 and 13**

### **Housing**

Composite A – Housing: Liverpool, Birmingham, Loughborough, LGBTQ Caucus, Milton Keynes, Waltham Forest, West London, Richard Farnos/Joseph Healey (5 min)

Amendment 16 A from Lee Rock & Laurie McCauley (2 min)

Speakers from the floor (10 min)

### **Vote on Composite A and amendment 16A**

Session ends 13.45

**Standing Orders for LU conference**

**1. STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

1.1 The Standing Orders Committee shall be present at the Conference but shall take no part in its proceedings and shall comprise

1.2 Ten members as elected as set out in the constitution for all conferences beyond the founding and March 2014 conferences

1.3 For the March 2014 conference ten members as elected by the National Coordinating Group

1.4 The functions of the Standing Orders Committee shall be as contained in these Rules

**2. CONFERENCE TIMETABLE**

2.2 Before a National Conference, the National Coordinating Group/National Council shall adopt and publish within a detailed timetable enabling the following steps to be taken not later than the time stated:

2.3 Procedure: Weeks before the first day of Conference

2.3.1 Submission of motions: x weeks

2.3.2 Publication of preliminary agenda: x weeks

2.3.3 Submission of amendments: x weeks

2.3.4 Publication of final agenda: x weeks

**3. CONFERENCE QUORUM AND PROCEDURE**

3.1 The quorum of the National Conference shall be one-third of the members registered to attend and vote.

3.3 Motions may be submitted as set out in section 9 of the Constitution of Left Unity

**4. APPLICATION OF STANDING ORDERS**

4.1 These Standing Orders shall apply to all meetings of the National Conference and Special Conferences

**5. STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

5.1 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Conference until the end of the next National Conference.

5.2 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members.

5.3 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:

5.3.1 ensure that [Left Unity's] Rules and Standing Orders relating to the business of Conferences are observed, and notify the [National Coordinating Group/National Council] of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice.

5.3.2 draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with the timetable stated in the Constitution.

5.3.3 determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference

5.3.4 consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:

5.3.4.1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Constitution

5.3.4.2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially

5.3.4.3 Facilitate the compositing of motions and amendments by enabling discussion between the movers of motions and amendments; refer to another representative body within [Left Unity] a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing

5.3.4.4 have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.

5.4 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference.

## **6. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS-PRE-CONFERENCE**

### **PROCEDURE**

6.1 Motions, amendments and other appropriate business may be proposed for the Conference by the bodies set out in the constitution.

6.2 Motions and amendments shall be sent to the Standing Orders Committee in order that the Standing Orders Committee may consider them for inclusion in the preliminary agenda.

6.3 The date and time by which motions and amendments to be considered for the Conference shall be received by the Standing Orders Committee shall be stated in the timetable to be published in advance of the conference.

## **7 CONDUCT OF CONFERENCES**

7.1 The National Conference shall meet in public session, except that by direction of the [National Coordinating Group] or by resolution of the Conference the whole or any part of a Conference may be held in private. The only persons permitted to attend a private session of a Conference shall be paid-up members of [Left Unity] who are registered to attend the conference.

7.2 The agenda for the National Conference shall be arranged so that the first session of the Conference shall be in public, subject to Rule 7.1 above.

7.3 Apart from the members of [Left Unity] who are registered for the Conference, no other person shall speak except by permission of the Conference.

7.4 Any questions of procedure or order raised during a Conference shall be decided by the

7.5 Chair of that session of the conference whose ruling shall be final and binding.

7.6 Upon the Chair rising during a Conference session, any person then addressing

7.7 Conference shall resume her/his seat and no other person shall rise to speak until the Chair authorises proceedings to continue.

7.8 The Chair may call attention to continued irrelevance, tedious repetition, unbecoming language, or any breach of order on the part of a member and may direct such a member to discontinue his or her speech.

7.9 The Chair shall have power to call any person to order who is causing a disturbance in any session of Conference and if that person refuses to obey the Chair, she/he shall be named by the Chair, shall forthwith leave the Conference Hall, and shall take no further part in the proceedings of that Conference.

## **8 VOTING**

8.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of hands of the registered members of [Left Unity] present.

## **9 TELLERS**

9.1 Conference shall appoint members to act as tellers for the duration of the Conference.

## **10 WITHDRAWALS OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS**

10.1 A motion or amendment which is shown on the final agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference.

## **11 MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS NOT ON AGENDA**

11.1 A motion or amendment which is not shown on the final agenda may not be considered by Conference without the prior approval of Conference, which shall be governed by the following rules:

11.2 Such motion or amendment shall be in writing, signed by the body or person on whose behalf it is submitted and shall be sent to the Standing Orders Committee at least five working days before the commencement of Conference, except if it relates to events which take place thereafter.

11.4 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the motion or amendment being considered, copies of the motion or amendment shall be made available for delegates at least one hour before Conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the matter being considered.

11.5 An emergency motion will not be given priority over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee decide that the purpose of the motion in question would be frustrated if it were not dealt with at an earlier session of the Conference.

## **12 PROCEDURAL MOTIONS**

The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:

12.1 that the question be now put, provided that:

.1 the Chair may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently discussed

.2 if the motion is carried, it shall take effect at once subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.

12.2 that the Conference proceed to the next business

12.3 that the debate be adjourned

12.4 that the Conference (or any part thereof) be held in private session provided that:

12.5 a motion under Rules 12.1, 12. 2, and 12.3 shall be immediately put to the vote without discussion and no amendment shall be allowed

12.6 the Chair may at her/his discretion permit a motion under Rule 12.4 to be discussed and amendments moved.

12.7 no motion under Rules 12.2 or 12.3 shall be moved by a person who has spoken on the motion or amendment in question.

## **13 AMENDMENTS TO A MOTION**

13.1 When an amendment to a motion is moved, no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, subject to Rule 16.

13.2 When an amendment is defeated, a further amendment may be moved to the original motion.

13.3 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as so amended, shall become the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.

13.4 A member registered for the conference shall not move more than one amendment to any one motion, nor shall the mover of a motion move any amendment to such motion.

## **14 LIMIT OF SPEECHES**

14.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment shall not be allowed to speak for more than five minutes and each succeeding speaker for not more than three minutes, except where the Standing Orders Committee have decided otherwise.

14.2 No person shall speak more than once on a question, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes, introducing no new material.

## **15 POINTS OF ORDER**

15.1 A member registered for the conference may at any stage in a Conference raise a point of order if she/he considers that the business is not being conducted in accordance with [Left Unity's] Constitution and Standing Orders.

15.2 Such a point of order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs or at the earliest practicable moment thereafter.

15.3 The Chair's ruling on the point of order is final.

## **16 GROUPED DEBATES AND SEQUENTIAL VOTING**

16.1 Where, in the view of the Standing Orders Committee, separate debates on specified motions and/or amendments dealing with the same subject matter would lead to undue repetition in the debates, a grouped debate and/or sequential voting may be adopted by Conference.

16.2 The following procedure will be followed:

- .1 The Chair will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others.
- .2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved.
- .3 The general debate shall take place.
- .4 The Chair shall again state the order of voting and shall advise Conference which, if any, motions or amendments will fall if others are carried.
- .5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.
- .6 A debate being conducted under this procedure may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

## **17 REPORTS BY [NATIONAL COORDINATING GROUP]**

17.1 After the opening of Conference the [National Coordinating Group] shall present its report for the past year. The items of the report shall be discussed on a subject basis and in conjunction with any motion on the agenda which bears directly upon any part of the report.

17.2 If the [National Coordinating Group] presents a report to Conference which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference, it shall submit it under a motion seeking such approval and adoption.

## **18 REFERENCE OF OUTSTANDING ITEMS TO THE [NATIONAL COORDINATING GROUP]**

18.1 If at the end of the National Conference, the business of the Conference has not been concluded, all motions and amendments then outstanding shall stand referred to the [National Coordinating Group]. The [National Coordinating Group] in turn shall then report back to the appropriate local group or platform its decision on these matters. All such motions and amendments shall be responded to at least one month before the deadline for submission of motions and amendments to the next National Conference.

## **19 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

19.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business properly before that Conference and to the proceedings thereon at that Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the members registered for the conference present and voting shall vote for the resolution.

