

GMB SOUTHERN REGION EQUALITY FORUM

WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2018

REPORT ON TUC DISABLED WORKERS CONFERENCE 2018

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I represented GMB Southern Region at the TUC Disabled Workers Conference held from 25 to 26 May 2018 in Bournemouth.

1. Access to Political Office

I submitted an Emergency Motion in response to the Government's response to my Judicial Review about the Access to Elected Office Fund for Disabled People. The Government had frozen this in 2015. The legal action called for an evaluation to be published and the AEO Fund restored. In response the Government announced £250,000 funding over the next year, with a view to push responsibility over political parties. The TUC DWC agreed our Emergency Motion.

EMERGENCY MOTION – GMB SOUTHERN REGION

Conference welcomes the Judicial Review action by three disabled former Parliamentary Candidates on the Access to Elected Office Fund (AEOF) for Disabled People evaluation report published and for funding to be restored.

Conference notes that:

- 1. On 17/05/18 the Minister for Women and equalities announced that £250,000 would be provided over the next year to disabled people seeking political office, whilst the Government carries out consultation.**

Conference believes that:

- 1. Standing for political office poses additional costs for disabled candidates and Government should address these needs and promote equality of participation. Currently the response to the Judicial Review action is short term, fails to provide adequate funding and seeks to shift responsibility away from Government.**

Conference resolves that the TUC should:

Collaborate with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, More United and disability groups to make representations to Government to publish the evaluation report and to restore the AEOF for Disabled People.

Encourage unions to have full inclusion of disabled people in their political strategies, provide practical support and endorsement to disabled candidates for selection.

Press the Labour Party to address the woeful representation of disabled people in both political office and internal positions, driving reform through the Democracy Review.

As the resolution calls on unions to have regard to the representation of disabled people in their political strategy, we should consider how to take this forward. Actions could include asking GMB NEF what steps it intends to take, write to GMB's National Political Officer and submit a similar motion to the GMB National Equality Conference in 2019.

2. Reasonable Adjustments

The motion submitted by GMB to the 2018 TUC DWC Conference concerned the development of Reasonable Adjustment Passports. This originated from GMB London Region and was agreed at GMB's National Equality Conference 2018.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT PASSPORT - GMB LONDON REGION

"Many members who have reasonable adjustments made in their workplace find that if they are moved to a different department in the organisation or a new manager takes over, they find themselves having to go through the whole process again.

This conference calls upon the National Equality forum to work with the London Ability Forum to:

- **Develop a Reasonable Adjustments Passport for our members with long-term health conditions and chronic impairments.**
- **Develop a model policy for employers to integrate this into their equality policies.**
- **To promote the policy to all GMB postholder's to use as a campaign tool in their bargaining processes.**

A Reasonable Adjustments Passport would alleviate the stress this causes to members and reduce the necessity for employers to have to keep going over the same ground.”

Again, we need to be aware of how GMB NEF intends to implement this resolution. As it is linked to our Access to Work motions agreed by both National Equality Conference and Congress this year, they could form the basis of a regional campaign and subject matter for a network meeting of disabled members.

3. Policy Adopted

Other policy positions agreed by TUC DWC 2018 included:

- **Train travel discrimination;**
- **Access to sports stadiums;**
- **Project Diamond – Positive change in perception;**
- **Stop and scrap Universal Credits;**
- **Disabled Workers and the Government's Industrial Strategy;**
- **Government failure to implement UNCRPD recommendations;**
- **Incorporating the UNCRPD into UK law;**
- **Brexit and disabled workers rights to healthcare in Europe;**
- **Impact of Brexit on disabled people;**
- **Disability hate crime;**
- **Disabled Workers Summit;**
- **Let me on stage and casting of disabled performers;**
- **Action on learning disability;**
- **Special Education Needs (SEN) cuts;**
- **Remove Govia Thameslink Franchise.**

The Emergency motion from Unite set out the negative experience of disabled people travelling on Govia Thameslink. It was agreed to call for the withdrawal of their franchise.

It would be helpful to know whether GMB is having any input to the Disabled Workers Summit.

A motion from Community relating to sustainable supported employment was withdrawn due opposition on the TUC Disabled Workers Committee. This was possibly due to some misunderstanding about the principles behind the motion. As GMB also represent workers in supported employment (co-operatives and social enterprises), we should consider collaborating with Community to draw up a future motion that rejects old style workshops, whilst identifying the potential for new models of supported employment.

4. Conclusions

The TUC DWC considered an interesting range of motions. It was also a helpful networking opportunity.

The GMB Delegation worked well and all members contributed. However, due to some changes in personnel shortly before the conference, pre-planning our involvement was not good enough. This could be improved, particularly if Southern Region's motion to Congress 2018 calling for a National Disability Network is implemented.