



Civil Service Group  
Conference 2020

nipsa  
Protecting Public Services  
Supporting Public Servants

Civil Service Group  
Annual Delegate  
Conference  
Online

Agenda 2020

Thursday 11 February 2021

[www.nipsa.org.uk](http://www.nipsa.org.uk)



## Timetable

### Thursday 11 February 2021

10.00	Chairperson's Address	
10.15	Appointment of Scrutineers and Tellers Adoption of Standing Orders Report No.1 Adoption of Standing Orders Report No.2	
10.30	Pay and Allowances	Motions 1-3
11.00	<b>Tea break</b>	
11.15	Health and Safety Issues I	Motions 6-9
12.00	Policies, Terms and Conditions	Motions 12-16
12.40	General	Motions 19-20
13.00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14.00	Health and Safety Issues II	Motions 23-26
14.45	Recruitment	Motions 29-33
15.30	<b>Guillotined Motions</b>	
16.00	<b>Close of Conference</b>	

## Special Notice to Delegates

The Standing Orders and Standing Orders Committee Report No.1 should be read in conjunction with the list of motions. In accordance with Standing Order 37, Branches wishing to move reference back to Standing Orders Report No.1 or at any part of it, should notify their intention to do so in writing to the Secretary, NIPSA Standing Orders Committee, Harkin House, 54 Wellington Park, Belfast, BT9 6DP not later than **12.00 p.m., Thursday 4 February 2021.**

Those branches who have so notified their intention to move reference back of Report No.1 will be required to meet the Standing Orders Committee prior to Conference on **Monday 8 February 2021.**

Only those branches who have complied with Standing Order 37 will be permitted to move reference back of Standing Orders Committee Report No.1.

Branches should note that reference back of Standing Orders 1 to 43, or any amendment to them, is not permissible. This rule does not apply to any additional Standing Orders included in Standing Orders Committee Report No.1.

# Standing Orders for Conferences

1. These standing orders will apply to General and Group Conferences until they are amended or rescinded by a motion adopted by an annual Delegate General Conference. If any such motion is adopted it shall not come into effect until the conclusion of the conference at which it is adopted.

## Reports of Standing Orders Committee

2. Subject to the provisions of these standing orders, the Standing Orders Committee will draw up reports for each conference, setting out its recommendations on the timetable, agenda and such other matters as it considers necessary for the business of the conference. The reports of the Standing Orders Committee will be presented to the conference for consideration and decision.
3. The Standing Orders Committee may, if it considers it necessary recommend **additional standing orders** on matters not covered in these standing orders. Such additional standing orders shall apply only to the conference at which they are adopted.
4. The first report of the Standing Orders Committee to an Annual Conference hereinafter referred to as "**Report No.1**", shall comprise the agenda, which shall contain all the motions received in accordance with these standing orders and the Committee's recommendation on the timetable and other matters.

## The Agenda

5. The Standing Orders Committee will include in a **primary agenda** those motions which require a decision by conference and will place the remaining motions in a secondary agenda.
6. In each section of the primary agenda any motions which relate to pay and conditions of service shall be placed at the beginning of the section.
7. The **secondary agenda** will include the following categories:
  - (a) Category A - motions which are covered by a composite or comprehensive motion on the primary agenda.
  - (b) Category B - motions which restate existing union policy.

(c) Category C - motions which can be dealt with by correspondence with Union Headquarters.

(d) Category D - motions which are competent to be dealt with by a body established under rule 6.9(a) of the rules of the Union and which are to be remitted to the General Council for reference to that body.

(e) Category X - motions which the President has ruled are out of order.

8. **Composite motions** will be used whenever possible to cover a number of motions directed at the same issue. The motion selected as a composite is the one which, in the opinion of the Standing Orders Committee, incorporates the points made in motions covered by it.

9. **Comprehensive motions** will whenever possible be constructed by the Standing Orders Committee to cover motions, when although directed on the same issue, contain a number of diverse points. The Standing Orders Committee will recommend who should move a comprehensive motion.

10. The passage of a **composite or comprehensive motion** does not imply acceptance of the detailed variants in the motions which they cover.

11. Motions which seek to **amend the rules of the Union or the annexes to them or which would require an amendment to the rules of the Union or the annexes to them** will be out of order, unless they are presented in a form which sets out clearly the wording of the amendment(s) necessary.

12. An emergency motion shall deal only with urgent business which has arisen since the final date for the submission of motions to conference and shall require a decision by conference. The Standing Orders Committee shall include in Report No.1, the procedure for dealing with emergency motions.

13. The Standing Orders Committee shall have the sole authority to decide whether or not a motion is competent for consideration as a matter of urgency. It shall publish those motions which it considers to be emergency motions in a report which shall also include provisions for their discussion.

## The Timetable

14. The Standing Orders Committee will arrange motions in the primary agenda into sections and specify periods of time for the discussion of each section and for other conference business. If alterations to the timetable become necessary during the course of a conference the Standing Orders Committee shall submit recommendations to the conference. For such an alteration it is not necessary to resort to the procedure set out in Standing Order No.35.
  15. The time allotted to each section of the agenda shall be adhered to as far as possible.
  16. The Standing Orders Committee may recommend an opportunity, before motions in a section of the agenda are discussed, for the General Council to place before the delegates any **factual material necessary to bring up-to-date the annual report** in respect of subjects to which the section relates. The time allocated for this purpose to a speaker for the General Council shall be limited to 4 minutes, subject to the President's discretion in exceptional circumstances.
  17. Motions shall be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda. The time allotted to each motion shall be at the discretion of the President.
  18. In order to make the maximum use of conference time for the discussion of motions on which there may be differing opinions, the General Council will indicate which **motions, if any, on the primary agenda it is willing to have adopted without discussion**. These motions will be listed in a report of the Standing Orders Committee and by adopting the report the conference will carry the motions.
  19. **Motions which are not taken because of lack of time** shall be dealt with as if they had been remitted by conference to the General Council.
- Orders Committee, his or her name and office before speaking on any point.
23. Speeches by movers of motions shall be limited to **4 minutes** and other speeches to **3 minutes**, but these times may be varied at the discretion of the President.
  24. The mover of a motion on the agenda shall have the **right of reply** at the close of the debate upon the motion, if anyone has expressed opposition to the motion.
  25. Immediately before the mover of a motion on the agenda exercises his or her right of reply or before the vote is taken if there is no right of reply or it is waived, a **speaker on behalf of the General Council** will be afforded the opportunity of addressing conference.
  26. A **motion may be withdrawn** only by the proposers with the approval of conference.
  27. No one other than a delegate or a member of the Standing Orders Committee may address conference unless authorised by the General Council.
  28. Speakers must on all occasions confine themselves strictly to the matter under discussion.
  29. **Points of information** shall be allowed only at the discretion of the President.
  30. If the President, rises **to call a member to order**, or for any purpose connected with the proceedings, the member speaking shall thereon resume his or her seat and no other member shall rise until the chair is resumed.
  31. **The ruling of the President** on any question under standing orders or on points of order or explanation, shall be final unless challenged by not less than 10 delegates. In the event of such a challenge the President shall vacate the chair. The Vice-President, failing whom a member of the General Council, shall then take the chair and shall put it to the vote that the ruling of the President be upheld. Unless two-thirds of the delegates present and voting vote against the motion that the ruling of the President be upheld, the ruling of the President shall stand. When the result of the vote has been declared, the President shall resume the chair and proceed in accordance with the result of the vote.
  32. Subject to the rules of the union, a **card vote** may be taken. Card votes for, against or abstaining on the motion under debate will be collected simultaneously.

## Conduct of Debates

20. It shall **not be necessary to second motions** or emergency motions included in a Standing Orders Committee report which has been adopted by conference.
21. If the **mover of any motion is not present** when it is called, the President may invite a Branch or the General Council, to move the motion. If the motion is not moved, it will be deemed to have fallen.
22. Each **speaker shall announce his or her name** and Branch or, in the case of a person speaking on behalf of the General Council or the Standing

33. No question which has not been included in Report No.1 of the Standing Orders Committee and no emergency motion shall be decided on a card vote.

### Procedural Motions

34. Motions on procedural matters must be moved **and** seconded by delegates or members of the General Council. The mover of a procedural motion may speak on the motion only once and no other speeches shall be allowed save as provided elsewhere in these standing orders.
35. **These standing orders** or any part of them or any provision of a Standing Orders Committee report made under them shall be **suspended** if a motion to that effect is supported by two-thirds of the delegates present and voting. The mover of such a motion shall be allowed by the President sufficient time to explain the purpose of the proposed suspension within the time limit for speeches then applying. If the motion is seconded the President shall similarly allow the Standing Orders Committee to reply before taking the vote.
36. When the motion to adopt a report of the Standing Orders Committee has been moved the President may call any Branch or the General Council, which wishes to move reference back to vary or delete a part of the report. The Standing Orders Committee may reply to such a **reference back** before it is voted upon. If subsequently the motion to adopt the report is carried, the report shall have effect as amended by any reference back accepted by the conference.
37. Reference back of Report No.1 of the Standing Orders Committee or any part of it, must be notified to the Committee in writing at least one week before the start of conference and should be discussed with the Committee before the conference. The Standing Orders Committee shall announce arrangements for such discussions.
38. A debate shall be closed if:
- (a) A motion **“that the vote now be taken”** is carried but such a motion cannot be put to Conference until the opportunity to oppose the motion under debate has been given. Then if such a motion is moved and seconded it shall be put to the vote without discussion. Such a motion shall not be moved or seconded by a delegate who has previously spoken in the debate. If such a motion is carried the mover of the motion under debate shall, before the motion is put exercise any right of reply that s/ he may have but no other speeches shall be allowed.

- (b) A motion **“that conference proceed to next business”** is carried but such a motion cannot be put to Conference until the opportunity to oppose the motion under debate has been given. Then if such a motion is moved and seconded it shall not be moved or seconded by a delegate who has previously spoken in the debate. If such a motion is carried, conference shall proceed forthwith to the next item on the agenda.

39. A motion **“that this motion be remitted to the General Council”** may be moved and seconded by delegates or members of the General Council. The debate on the original motion may continue after the motion to remit it to the General Council has been proposed and seconded, unless the President decides otherwise. At the conclusion of the debate the mover of the original motion shall exercise his or her right of reply, following which the President shall immediately put to conference the proposal that the motion be remitted to the General Council. If the motion to remit is carried, conference shall proceed forthwith to the next item on the agenda, otherwise the original motion will be put to conference.

### Miscellaneous

40. In the **absence of the President** the Vice-President shall preside at conference. In the absence of both the President and Vice-President, the General Council shall elect a member of the Council to preside. The use of the term “President” in these standing orders shall be construed to include the person, other than the President, who presides at conference in accordance with this standing order.
41. Delegates must give one week’s notice in writing to the General Secretary of their intention to ask any question on **the annual report** or the **financial statement**.
42. Delegates must give one week’s notice in writing to the General Secretary of their intention to move a **reference back** of part of the **annual report** and **financial statement** specifying which section(s) they propose to refer back. A motion to refer back the annual report or financial statement must be moved and seconded by delegates. The mover of the motion may speak on the motion only once and no other speeches shall be allowed, save that a speaker on behalf of the General Council will be afforded the opportunity of addressing Conference.
43. During conference **smoking** will not be permitted.



# Standing Orders Report No.1

1. A Primary and Secondary Agenda have been devised in accordance with Standing Orders 5, 6 and 7.
2. Composite Motions have been used in accordance with Standing Order 8. Comprehensive Motions have been used in accordance with Standing Order 9.
3. Delegates representing Branches whose motions are covered by either a Composite Motion or Comprehensive Motion which their Branch is not due to propose shall be afforded an opportunity to speak to the relevant Composite or Comprehensive Motion.

Motions	Motions covered by it
Composite Motion 2	34

4. If Motion 29 is carried then Motion 30 falls.
5. In order to expedite Conference business, Standing Orders Committee recommend that delegates wishing to speak to a Motion once it has been moved, occupy seats reserved for such persons at the front of the Conference hall. Only those delegates who comply with this procedure may be called upon to address Conference.
6. In accordance with Standing Order 12. Branches are hereby informed that Notice of Emergency Motions must be submitted in writing to the Standing Orders Committee at Harkin House not later than **12 noon on Thursday 4 February 2021**. Such submission must be signed by two Branch Officers and indicate the date of the General Meeting at which the Emergency Motions were adopted by the Branch.

**Signed: B Dornan** (*Chairperson*)

**A Boal**

**B White**



# **Primary Agenda**

**Motions in this Agenda are due to be discussed.**

## ● Pay and Allowances

### ***Motion No.1 (Executive Committee)***

Conference notes the outcome of the 2019-20 pay negotiations and the industrial action taken by thousands of members from 26 July 2019 until March 2020. Conference recognises the significant efforts made by everyone during the dispute and in particular wishes to acknowledge those members and their representatives involved in selection action. Conference also notes that the Management Side in offering a 2% pay increase also sought to tie in negotiations on terms and conditions to that offer. This offer came in the mouth of the lockdown caused by the pandemic and as a result the Civil Service Group Executive Committee were unable to consult with members in any meaningful way with the majority of members working from home and many of them without the IT facilities to allow for consultation. The Minister then imposed a 2% pay increase on all points without any conditions attached.

In considering the 2020 NICS pay claim the Civil Service Group Executive Committee carried out a limited consultation exercise with branches on the claim which was lodged as a joint claim with the FDA in early August 2020. The claim was for an above inflation pay increase, pay restoration to address the pay losses incurred by members over the years of austerity and further scale shortening on all grades from AO to Grade 6.

Conference further notes that at the time of the closing date for submission of motions in late November that real and substantive pay negotiations have failed to materialise. As a result, Trade Union Side wrote to the Finance Minister demanding a meeting to clearly and unequivocally state our clear position that we demand a proper and meaningful pay increase for members.

Conference therefore calls on the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to highlight to members, the media and the public that civil servants deserve and demand a decent pay increase that will assist in getting the local economy moving again as it is a fact that civil servants spend their hard earned pay in the local economy. Conference also calls on the Civil Service Group Executive Committee to urgently develop a strategy to ensure that in the current pandemic, with many members working from home, that if industrial action is required that there is a clearly worked out strategy.

### ***Composite Motion 2 (to be moved by the Executive Committee)***

Conference notes that the Civil Service Group Executive Committee established a Review Group to examine all issues, both positive and negative, arising out of the 2019-20 pay, terms and conditions dispute. This Review Group worked over the summer period and put together a detailed paper which was accepted in full by the Civil Service Group Executive Committee in September 2020, which then lead to a detailed implementation plan being drawn up and work has commenced on a range of issues on a short, medium and longer term basis.

Some of the work involves engaging and building inactive or less active branches and putting in place a programme to address inactive branches, build on membership penetration across all of Departments, engage with a media monitoring company, engage meaningfully with branches on a properly worked out industrial action strategy, including meaningful and deliverable action short of strike action and improve links between branches, Executive Committee members and Seconded Officers to improve communications and engagement not just in advance of any industrial action but also to improve communications generally with members.

Conference therefore welcomes the work undertaken by the Executive Committee in reviewing the pay, terms and conditions dispute. However, Conference instructs the incoming Executive Committee to make the ongoing work connected to this review a top priority and engagement with branches need to be at the heart of the implementation plan if we are to see real and sustained improvement in the strength of the union in any future industrial action strategy to deliver for members on pay, terms and conditions.

### ***Motion No.3 (Branch 13)***

Conference condemns the continual erosion of the ICT Allowance of the last 15 years.

Due to the nature of how they are paid, a significant amount of an ICT staff members' salary remains ring-fenced and frozen. When compared against basic pay during this time, the value of the ICT Allowance has decreased by as much as 30% for the lowest paid grades, resulting in ICT staff continually losing ground on their Admin counterparts. Obviously, as the value of the ICT Allowance continues to be eroded the situation has now become completely untenable; particularly given the increase in demand for ICT solutions to make up the shortfall of a reduced staff compliment post-VES.

Potential solutions may include revising the terms of the ICT Allowance Policy to link to future percentage increases in basic salary; or the option of bespoke pay scales, which are currently already being utilised for several other specialisms within the NICS.

After being promised for several years, in June 2020 a Terms of Reference was finally created for the 'Review of remuneration package of the Northern Ireland Civil Service ICT Profession'. Sadly to date, progress has been slow.

Conference requests that NIPSA apply pressure wherever possible to ensure that this review takes place in the timely manner that was initially indicated. We must also insure that at an absolute minimum, the review permanently addresses the way in which ICT staff salaries are paid, so that ring-fenced allowances frozen in time become a thing of the past.

### ***Motions No.4-5 unallocated***

## **● Health and Safety I**

### ***Motion No.6 (Executive Committee)***

Conferences recognises the vitally important role of a trade union-based approach to health and safety particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst Governments and some employers view adherence to a high level of health and safety as a financial burden and an inconvenience that costs money or eats into business profits, the trade union movement sees it as a vital part of protecting the lives of workers, their families and society as a whole. Conference does not believe that the value of a life can be reduced to a balance sheet entry.

With that in mind conference recognises that NIPSA must ensure that the position of the trade union movement is articulated and fought for throughout all NICS Departments and we thank our Health and Safety representatives and other activists across all levels of the union for the sterling work they have done in this regard.

In recognising that the NICS, along with other public sector employers, should set an example by implementing the very highest standards in relation to Health and Safety, Conference is concerned because this has not been the reality in all areas.

Conference, therefore, instructs the incoming Civil Service Executive to;

- Encourage activists to become Health and safety representatives
- Establish relevant and appropriate workplace health and safety structures
- Seek timely and appropriate health and safety advice

Take all necessary action, including industrial action, to protect the lives and safety of NIPSA members, their families and the public.

### ***Motion No.7 (Branch 33)***

Conference calls on NIPSA to insist that the employer (confirmed to be individual departments for the purposes of compliance with Health and Safety legislation per DoF/2020-0150) be held to the terms of all relevant Health and Safety legislation in order that staff are properly protected in the workplace.

The Covid-19 pandemic has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that those employers who think they can avoid their responsibilities under the legal duty of care they owe their employees in law will seek to do so.

There is a requirement in law for employers to consult directly with Trade Union appointed Health and Safety Representatives who are best placed to represent the Health and Safety of staff at work. We can no longer allow the employer to “negotiate” (a word which does not appear in Health and Safety legislation) the Health and Safety of staff with third parties and others who have no legal authority to do so.

The lives and Health and Safety of staff are too important to be dealt with on a wing and a prayer basis or by those with no authority under Health and Safety legislation.

Conference recognises the need to involve the NIPSA members at all stages of consultation and negotiation in order to defend our hard won terms and conditions from attack by management.

With that in mind Conference instructs the Executive Committee and all Sub-Committees to fully consult with all NICS Branches in relation to the proposed introduction of new NICS Policies and proposed changes to existing NICS Policies.

Branches should also be kept informed and consulted at all stages of negotiations including; before, during and prior to any agreement being reached in order that Members may present any views, disagreements and / or concerns that they wish to be taken into account.

### ***Motion No.8 (Branch 13)***

Conference recognises the good work that is done throughout the NICS by our appointed Health and Safety Reps and their continued endeavours to keep our members safe at work. It goes without saying that in recent times their presence has never been more valuable, as we try as a society to deal with a global health crisis caused by COVID-19 and its knock-on effects.

However, conference notes with concern that there can often be a blind spot when it comes to buildings containing shared departmental accommodation. An obvious example of this would be Dundonald House, where four departments currently have staff located, and where Management have previously shied away from their legal responsibilities to consult NIPSA Health and Safety Reps on matters pertaining to Health and Safety by refusing to undertake responsibility for the function of administering a joint Health and Safety Committee for the building.

Conference believes that Health and Safety is everybody's concern and that it should be an area where TUS have the full support and cooperation of Management. Unfortunately, when multiple departments are involved, things can routinely fall through the cracks.

Conference reaffirms NIPSA's belief that ALL NICS buildings should have functioning Health and Safety Committees in place; and that committees of this nature should be serviced by Management Side of the host department carrying out the secretariat functions. Furthermore, where one department has staff stationed in a building which is managed by another department, Management and TUS from all these departments should be engaged to participate on such forums.

### ***Motion No.9 (Branch 119)***

The Covid pandemic has highlighted the necessity of proper risk assessments being carried out. Risk Assessments do not begin and end with the pandemic, it is vital that they become a staple of all areas and types of work.

To this end Conference instructs the Civil Service Group Executive to apply all possible pressure to hold management to account on this matter and to ensure that Risk Assessments are carried out as a matter of course prior to any changes to work practices.

### ***Motions No.10-11 unallocated***

## **● Policies, Terms and Conditions**

### ***Motion No.12 (Executive Committee)***

The Civil Service Executive notes and welcomes the publication of the NIPSA Policy and Research document "Re-shaping the future: the case for a four-day week." This publication followed debate at last year's conference about the importance of this topic and its merit as an issue upon which NIPSA should campaign – particularly with an employer of the size and presence of the NICS.

While the wider debate on the possibility of altering the nature of the working week long predated the crisis in our society triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic, the urgent changes and wider flexibility this has brought to the nature of working life has made the topic even more pertinent. In this way, the research not only reflected the new world in which we are living but also outlined how the campaign for a four-day week offers the chance to reject an unhealthy working culture and contribute to wider debates on how to improve society in the broadest sense.

Conference accepts the key role of the state in delivering this transition and that the largest employer, the NICS has to be at the centre of this change. Conference endorses the conclusions of the research document that "no going back" to the pre-Covid economy has to be about moving to a society based on a true "work/life balance" where we "work to live", not merely "live to work" as we struggle to precariously "survive" economically. In addition, Conference believes future economic focus has to be on the expansion, re-distribution and sharing of existing employment and that this has to be rooted in a re-configuration of the working week – without any loss of existing pay or diminution of terms and conditions.

Conference calls for the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to introduce the demand for a four-day working week for all NICS staff into negotiations with the Civil Service Management.

### ***Motion No.13 (Branch 92)***

Conference calls on the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to negotiate a stress management policy in the NICS. This year has highlighted yet again that a policy is needed to manage the risks associated with stress. The policy should follow the risk assessment processes and the principles of prevention as laid down in regulations 3 and 4 respectively of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000. The implementation of employee assist schemes is not sufficient to meet the criteria as laid down in the Regulations. A policy based on the principles of prevention is required. Support this motion.

### ***Motion No.14 (Branch 33)***

Conference continues to be aware of the negative impact that the reorganisation of the HR function of the NICS Departments has had since the inception of NICS HR in 2017. Conference notes with concern that members are being disciplined and dismissed by DoF staff irrespective of which Department that member is employed by.

The current situation with regard the pandemic further highlights the importance of a clear understanding of who our employer is.

Conference is reminded of Motion 13 unanimously adopted at the 2018 Civil Service Group Conference and Motion 32 which was again adopted at the 2019 Civil Service Group Conference, both of which instructed the then Civil Service Group Executive Committee to seek the necessary legal advice as to who the employer is and report back to Branches. Conference notes that to date this instruction has still not been carried out.

Conference therefore again instructs the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to investigate this issue, seek the necessary legal advice as to who the employer is and report back to branches without further delay and within a period to be agreed between the Civil Service Group Executive Committee and Branch 33.

### ***Motion No.15 (Branch 7)***

Conference notes the changes in working practices forced on members in NICS by the current pandemic.

Whilst some members have appreciated some of the advantages such as no longer having to commute, others have struggled with being unable to attend their workplace. Conference believes the NICS should ensure that all are given the necessary support by their line management in order to help them through these difficult times.

With the expectation that Covid 19 will be with us for some time it is important that appropriate cleaning regimes be maintained to ensure a safe environment for those attending the office. For those working at home the provision of suitable office equipment along with suitably designed DSEs can ensure that their working environment is as safe as possible and the Civil Service Group Executive Committee should continue to press for allowances for increased costs of home working such as heating and electricity.

There is now an opportunity to determine how NICS can work in the future. A mixed approach of remote and office based working can secure the best of both models.

Conference calls on the Civil Service Executive to ensure negotiations on all such arrangements proceed under the agreed Whitley arrangements, and that all T&C's of service, previously agreed, remain as they are.

### ***Motion No.16 (Branch 118)***

Conference condemns the outgoing Civil Service Group Executive Committee for its lack of action in regards to Covid-19 and its affects on those members working in the office.

Whilst members in the office are compelled to present for work, use public transport and navigate potential Covid-19 hazards on a daily basis, the Civil Service Group Executive Committee has been found wanting in devising a bespoke Covid-19 policy which safeguards their health. Members are rightly concerned that Civil Service Group Executive Committee appear indifferent to the risks to health.

We call upon the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to immediately set about draughting a Covid-19 policy which is fit for purposes and places a premium on protecting members' health and safety.

### ***Motions No.17-18 unallocated***

## **● General**

### ***Motion No.19 (Branch 7)***

Following the recent experience during the Covid 19 pandemic, Conference calls on the Civil Service Executive to ensure NIPSA in the NICS seeks to combine the best traditional means of organising along with the best of the new methods. Recruitment, branch meetings and advice can all be delivered in person or by remote means. Branches should be encouraged to discuss and agree future operating methodology that best meets the requirements of their reps and membership to deliver effective trade union organisation and representation in all workplaces.

### ***Motion No.20 (Branch 118)***

Despite repeated motions calling for the introduction of gender-neutral toilet facilities in all buildings occupied by civil servants, conference notes that no such facilities have as yet been opened.

We condemn the outgoing Civil Service Group Executive Committee for their inaction in this area, we charge them with failure to take cognisance of the needs and sensitivity of those members who do not identify in a binary manner in regards to gender.

In the spirit of diversity and equality, we call upon the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to immediately liaise with civil service management to install gender-neutral toilet facilities in all buildings in which civil servants work

### ***Motions No.21-22 unallocated***

## **● Health and Safety II**

### ***Motion No.23 (Branch 92)***

Conference congratulates the work of trade union reps during this Covid-19 pandemic and the amount of work which has gone into the implementation of risk assessments and the practical day to day issues on the ground. At the same time reps have continued to represent all members, including those with Covid-19 specific and more general issues. We call on the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to ensure that all reps are informed of existing support mechanisms and investigate how these mechanisms can be improved to better support reps. Support the motion.

### ***Motion No.24 (Branch 127)***

Conference commends all of the hard work of our members in ensuring that all of the services provided by the NICS are maintained throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Conference also recognises the difficult and stressful role played by the essential workers who continued to go to their places of work on a regular basis. We are not surprised that our members could be relied upon when needed.

Conference is alarmed that the guideline from NI Assembly, PHA and NICS that “if you can work from home, you must work from home” is not being properly adhered to or totally ignored in some departments. The Covid-19 related Blended Approach has seen members being recalled to offices to do the work that they have been doing in their own homes since March 2020. This is not only unnecessary, but irresponsible by increasing the risk of infections.

Conference calls on the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to redouble their efforts to ensure that working from home guidelines are strictly adhered to so that no Department can ignore them.

### ***Motion No.25 (Branch 7)***

Conference notes the difficulties experienced by many in getting established to work remotely especially in the early days of the pandemic. By now however the means to work remotely should have been extended to the great majority of our members.

Conference calls on the Civil Service Executive to seek equal treatment and ensure access to remote working is extended to as many NICS staff as possible and that this should not be dependent on which Department members are in. No Department should insist on full time office attendance if the job role can be delivered remotely.

### ***Motion No.26 (Branch 119)***

Conference notes that some areas in the NICS have implemented training for Mental Health First Aiders.

This is a welcome development in the early identification of mental health issues among our members and the workforces as a whole.

Conference therefore instructs that the Civil Service Group Executive push for the implementation of this training throughout all areas of the NICS.

### ***Motions No.27-28 unallocated***

## **● Recruitment**

### ***Motion No.29 (Executive Committee)***

Conference acknowledges that the NI Civil Service has over 2,500 agency workers with temporary employment status delivering vital public service jobs. Conference acknowledges further that NIPSA has put in significant resources to address a range of issues regarding agency workers. First and foremost, TUS pressed for a permanent Administrative Officer competition which was launched earlier this year. In pressing for permanent jobs both at AO and EOII this is the first step in a long road to getting proper permanent and pensionable jobs into the NICS.

Conference also acknowledges however that while we have agency workers in the NICS we should seek to recruit them. While it is acknowledged with the turnover rate of agency workers this can be a difficult task the significant improvements that have been gained for agency workers by TUS over the last

12 – 18 months should aid recruitment of agency workers. The improvements gained over that period, including their entitlement to be treated the same as permanent staff in relation to incremental progression and pay increases, entitlements to be treated the same as permanent staff during the pandemic in relation to receiving full pay if having to self-isolate and in the new agency worker contract the right to paid time off for medical and dental appointments and pay parity and annual leave.

Conference therefore instructs the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to keep up the work to continue to secure improvements for agency workers, but acknowledging that we must strive continually to put pressure on the Management Side reduce reliance on Recruitment Agencies and expand the number of permanent posts to match business needs and give agency staff a route to permanent employment.

**If Motion No.29 is carried, Motion No. 30 falls.**

### ***Motion No.30 (Branch 118)***

In light of recent published figures that show NICS has in the region of 1500 vacancies, and the startling amount of public money being spent on Agency staff, we call upon the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to immediately campaign for the end of all agency jobs within the NICS and all vacancies to be filled by substantive civil servants. Additionally we instruct the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to negotiate with CS MS the implementation of a joined-up, coherent workforce plan that will put at the foremost of its thinking to secure permanent posts and substantive full-time staff.

### ***Motion No.31 (Executive Committee)***

Conference welcomes the fact that the Administrative Officer competition, for which NIPSA has been campaigning for many years, has finally taken place and is satisfied that many agency jobs will now be filled by permanent staff. However, conference is concerned about the significant and growing number of vacancies across the NICS at all grades and the additional stress and pressure this is putting on staff in all areas. This work pressure has increased significantly because of EU Exit and the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst it is clear that NICSHR is seeking to develop a Workforce plan that will take account of current and future needs, conference remains concerned about the continuing intention of the NICS to fill posts both externally and through smaller competitions based on job roles rather than through volume promotion competitions.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive Committee to press for the urgent filling of all NICS vacant posts, to oppose external recruitment for general service grades above Administrative Officer and to campaign for volume promotion competitions as the most effective and efficient way to urgently fill the many vacancies across the service.

### ***Motion No.32 (Branch 118)***

Conference notes with great concern a recent report from Auditor General that produced a BBC headline that read, “NICS is at a critical crossroads and struggling to cope because of extra pressure on staffing levels”, referencing 1500 vacancies.

While Conference welcomes the swift and extensive response from the General Secretary to the “findings” of this report, we are dismayed that the Civil Service Group Executive Committee has, for whatever reason, allowed it to get to this stage.

We condemn this seeming indifference on behalf of Civil Service Group

Executive Committee on this matter and to the plight of those CS members who are working under this pressure.

It is obvious that the current process for filling vacancies is not fit for purpose and we instruct the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to take all possible measures to ensure the filling of each and every vacancy in each and every NICS Department.

### ***Motion No.33 (Branch 13)***

For many years now the NICS has sadly been providing an excellent unrewarded service to the burgeoning private ICT Sector in Northern Ireland by taking on ICT Placement Students and training them for 12 months before releasing them back into the wild to complete their degree course. The answers are generally positive when these students are surveyed about whether they would consider returning to the NICS once their degree has been completed. But as no mechanism currently exists within the NICS to make these students conditional job offers (as is done in every private sector ICT company in the country), they are invariably employed elsewhere (on higher salaries) by the time the NICS come to recruit.

Concurrently, the average age of ICT staff within the NICS continues to increase. Despite several efforts made to recruit externally this continues to be the case, largely down to the NICS's uncompetitive salaries in the profession.

Wouldn't it be an incredible thing if there was some way in which these two problems were able to be addressed?

Conference requests that the ability for the NICS to retain ICT Level 1 Placement Students be investigated as a matter of urgency.

This may include new provisions around conditional offers of employment. No doubt the mechanisms required may prove to be something that need to be navigated carefully, but Conference has every confidence that between NICS HR, Senior ICT Management and NIPSA's ICTCC, we surely must be able to overcome this challenge.

# **Secondary Agenda**

**Motions in this Agenda are  
not to be discussed.**

# Category A

## **Motions covered by composite/comprehensive motions contained in the Primary Agenda.**

### ***Composite Motion No.2***

#### ***Motion No.34 (Branch 171)***

Conference acknowledges that while the imposition of the 2% pay offer was far below what members needed and fought for, it is important to note that our pay campaign improved the likely offer of 1/1.25%.

It is important to note the tremendous work done by Branches, Reps and NIPSA HQ Staff and Officials who collectively prepared materials; organised protests and pickets; to deliver a series of one day strikes and selective action in our pay campaign. That action delivered the improved offer.

It is worth noting that while there were difficulties in some areas, the picket lines remained disciplined and resolute. The protests were a credit to our union and were a great advertisement for the industrial action, and for NIPSA.

We thank members of our sister unions, such as those in Translink and Royal Mail, who refused cross picket lines. Their actions were in stark contrast to those of the political representatives who showed no hesitation in crossing the picket line to get into Stormont.

Conference calls on the Civil Service Group Executive to build on this action; to provide further support to branches that require it, and to prepare members for future pay campaigns, both in the NICS and across the public sector.

# Category B

## **Motions which restate NIPSA policy, and therefore do not require a Conference decision.**

### ***Motion No.35 (Branch 118)***

Conference notes with concern that every year after CS lodge their annual pay claim with NICS MS, data in respect of yearly sick leave figures (and the cost of these to the public purse) appear as front page headlines in the press and other media, with little or no explanation given as to the historic or on-going reasons for same.

Conference believes that this is by NICS MS's design rather than any proper journalistic endeavour and is done so to weaken Civil Service Group Executive Committee's negotiating position; tarnish CS staff's reputation in the eyes of the general public and reduce any support and sympathy should industrial action ensue.

We instruct the incoming Civil Service Group Executive Committee to actively pursue a policy of fighting fire with fire by debunking NICS MS's programme of propaganda by engaging with the general public at every opportunity to highlight the factual reasons by figures.

# Category X

## Motions which the chairperson has ruled out of order

### *Motion No.36 (Branch 171)*

**Motion No.36** is ruled out of order as it is insufficiently clear as means of determining policy.

Conference notes that the claim for 2020/21 NICS Pay has been lodged and negotiations have begun with the employer. We also note that these take place against the backdrop of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

We are concerned that a debate has been initiated by the media and others on who should pay for the crisis.

Conference is adamant that workers in the NICS and public sector must not be made to pay for the crisis.

There should be no pay cap imposed on our negotiations, nor should there be additional taxes imposed on workers already struggling to make ends meet.

Corporations and billionaires have seen their profits and wealth increase during the period of the Covid-19 Pandemic. UK government and devolved administrations must ensure that these pay all due taxes.

**Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance**  
**Civil Service Group**  
**Annual Delegate Conference 2020**

The following candidates have been nominated for election at the  
Annual Delegate Conference 2020 (held February 2021):

**Candidate's Name**

**Candidate's Name**

**Chairperson (1 Vote)**

Creaney, T

Turner, P

Veighey, J

**Vice Chairpersons (2 Votes)**

Dale, P

Harvey, S

Lowry, D

Mulholland, B

**Executive Committee 22 (votes)**

**Candidate's Name**

**Candidate's Name**

**Candidate's Name**

**Candidate's Name**

**Candidate's Name**

Boersma, I

Dobbin, M

McGeough, C

Robinson, P

Brooks, W

Doherty, E

McKee, M

Rodgers, B

Callan, B

Harvey, S

McNulty, J

Rooney, J

Cammock, F

Hartin, L

McWilliams, P

Skelcher, C

Cobain, P

Larkin, J

Malone, G

Sloan, D

Collins, L

Loughran, M

Millar, T

Soto-Kelly, P

Creaney, T

Lowry, D

Mulholland, B

Toner, D

Crilly, D

McAtamney, E

O'Reilly, B

Trainor, A

Dale, P

McCloskey, M

O'Sandair, R

Turner, P

Davidson, J

McErlean, D

Robinson, M

Veighey, J

Welsh, W





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